

Is There A Doctrinal Difference Between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God?



The doctrine of a difference between the Kingdom Heaven and the Kingdom of God is connected to the doctrine of dispensationalism which John Nelson Darby taught and which was promoted by C. I. Scofield in the Scofield Reference Bible. That Bible has had a profound (and negative) influence on the thinking of millions of American Christians.

Scofield in the Scofield Reference Bible says:

"The kingdom of God is to be distinguished from the kingdom of heaven."

A website, kjvbible.org says:

"Knowing the doctrinal difference between the terms "Kingdom of Heaven" and "Kingdom of God" is the key to understanding the complete timeline of Biblical history past, present, and future, the proper place of the Church and the prophetic future of Israel." – quoted from <https://www.kjvbible.org/thekingdoms.html>

Is that really so? Pastor John MacArthur of "Grace to You" does not agree. He says,

*"There is no significant difference between "the kingdom of God" and the kingdom of heaven. The one phrase emphasizes the sovereign Ruler of the kingdom and the other emphasizes the kingdom itself, but they are the same kingdom. **Matthew 19:23–24 confirms the equality of the phrases by using them interchangeably.**"*

Matthew 19:23 ¶Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 19:24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the **kingdom of God**.

Let's make a comparison of the Scriptures in the synoptic Gospels that contain the phases Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven, the verses that are the parallel passages of the same discourse of Christ.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
Matthew 5:3 ¶Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven .		Luke 6:20 ¶And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God .
		Luke 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.
Matthew 8:11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven .		Luke 13:28-29 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God , and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God .
		Matthew 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven , but to them it is not given.		Luke 8:10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God : but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Matthew 18:3	Mark 10:15	
And said,	Verily I	
Verily I say	say unto	
unto you, Except	you,	Luke 18:17 Verily
ye be converted,	Whosoever	I say unto you,
and become as	shall not	Whosoever shall not
little children,	receive the	receive the kingdom
ye shall not	kingdom of	of God as a little
enter into the	God as a	child shall in no
kingdom of	little	wise enter therein.
heaven.	child, he	
	shall not	
	enter	
	therein.	
Matthew 19:14		Luke 18:16 But
But Jesus said,		Jesus called them
Suffer little		unto him, and said,
children, and		Suffer little
forbid them not,		children to come
to come unto me:		unto me, and forbid
for of such is		them not: for of
the kingdom of		such is the kingdom
heaven.		of God.
	Mark 10:25	
Matthew 19:23	It is	
¶Then said	easier for	Luke 18:25 For it
Jesus unto his	a camel to	is easier for a
disciples,	go through	camel to go through
Verily I say	the eye of	a needle's eye,
unto you, That a	a needle,	than for a rich man
rich man shall	than for a	to enter into the
hardly enter	rich man to	kingdom of God.
into the kingdom	enter into	
of heaven.	the kingdom	
	of God.	

The Bible is its own best commentator and interpreter. All too often Bible teachers do not compare verses with other verses of the same subject. If they did, their pet doctrines such as the promotion of Zionism would fall flat.

The above comparison of the synoptic Gospels tells me the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are the **same thing!**

As you see in the list of verses below, the phrase "kingdom of Heaven" is only found in the Book of Matthew and not found at all in the other two synoptic Gospels of Mark and Luke. A probable explanation for this is Matthew wrote his Gospel message to the Jews. Mark wrote his Gospel to the Romans and Luke wrote his Gospel to the Greeks. The Jews out of respect didn't want to say the word meaning God, but Romans and Greeks used the word in their language meaning God.

What do you think? Doesn't it make sense why Matthew would say the kingdom of Heaven rather than the kingdom of God seeing who he wrote his Gospel for? Matthew also says the Kingdom of God, but only in five verses.

The explanation Christian Zionists use to make their claim of a difference between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God is long and complicated. Unscriptural doctrines are *always* based on long complicated reasoning and convoluted arguments. Just look at <https://www.kjvbible.org/thekingdoms.html> for an example of that. Is that the type of reasoning God's Word teaches? I find true biblical doctrines are simple and easy to understand. They don't need a lot of explanation to understand them.

Preachers with doctorates in theology *may* teach true things that shed more light on certain Scriptures due to their knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and secular history, but beware when they preach major doctrines you have never read for yourself from the Bible!

Here's a meme that purports a difference between the Kingdom of Heaven and the body of Christ! It's also false.



Scriptures with the Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew says **kingdom of heaven** 32 times in 31 verses. *Only* the Gospel of Matthew has the phrase "kingdom of heaven".

Matthew 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the **kingdom of heaven** is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the **kingdom of heaven** is at hand.

Matthew 5:3 ¶Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the **kingdom of heaven**: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 5:20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 7:21 ¶Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the **kingdom of heaven**; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 8:11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is at hand.

Matthew 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the **kingdom of heaven** is greater than he.

Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the **kingdom of heaven** suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the **kingdom of heaven**, but to them it is not given.

Matthew 13:24 ¶Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

Matthew 13:31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

Matthew 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The **kingdom of heaven** is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Matthew 13:44 ¶Again, the **kingdom of heaven** is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Matthew 13:45 Again, the **kingdom of heaven** is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

Matthew 13:47 Again, the **kingdom of heaven** is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Matthew 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the **kingdom of heaven** is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

Matthew 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the **kingdom of heaven**: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:1 ¶At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the **kingdom of heaven**?

Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 18:23 Therefore is the **kingdom of heaven** likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 19:23 ¶Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the **kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 20:1 ¶For the **kingdom of heaven** is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Matthew 22:2 The **kingdom of heaven** is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

Matthew 23:13 ¶But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the **kingdom of heaven** against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Matthew 25:1 ¶Then shall the **kingdom of heaven** be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Matthew 25:14 ¶For the **kingdom of heaven** is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Scriptures with the Kingdom of God

The “kingdom of God” is found mainly in the Gospels of Mark and Luke. Matthew uses the phrase only five times.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the **kingdom of God**, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the **kingdom of God** is come unto you.

Matthew 19:24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the **kingdom of God**.

Matthew 21:31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the **kingdom of God** before you.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The **kingdom of God** shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Mark says **kingdom of God** in 15 verses:

Mark 10:15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the **kingdom of God** as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Mark 10:23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the **kingdom of God**!

Mark 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the **kingdom of God**!

Mark 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the **kingdom of God**.

Mark 12:34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the **kingdom of God**. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

Mark 14:25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the **kingdom of God**.

Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the **kingdom of God**, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

Luke says **kingdom of God** 32 times in 31 verses.

Luke 4:43 And he said unto them, I must preach the **kingdom of God** to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

Luke 6:20 ¶And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the **kingdom of God** is greater than he.

Luke 8:1 ¶And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the **kingdom of God**:

and the twelve were with him,

Luke 8:10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the **kingdom of God**: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Luke 9:2 And he sent them to preach the **kingdom of God**, and to heal the sick.

Luke 9:11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the **kingdom of God**, and healed them that had need of healing.

Luke 9:27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 9:60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 9:62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 10:9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The **kingdom of God** is come nigh unto you.

Luke 10:11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the **kingdom of God** is come nigh unto you.

Luke 11:20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the **kingdom of God** is come upon you.

Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the **kingdom of God**; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Luke 13:18 ¶Then said he, Unto what is the **kingdom of God** like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

Luke 13:20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the **kingdom of God**?

Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the **kingdom of God**, and you yourselves thrust out.

Luke 13:29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 14:15 ¶And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the **kingdom of God** is preached, and every man presseth into it.

Luke 17:20 ¶And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the **kingdom of God** should come, he answered them and said, The **kingdom of God** cometh not with observation:

Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the **kingdom of God** is within you.

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 18:17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the **kingdom of God** as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Luke 18:24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the **kingdom of God**!

Luke 18:25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 19:11 ¶And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable,

because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the **kingdom of God** should immediately appear.

Luke 21:31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the **kingdom of God** is nigh at hand.

Luke 22:16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the **kingdom of God**.

Luke 22:18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the **kingdom of God** shall come.

Luke 23:51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the **kingdom of God**.

Conclusion

There is absolutely no doctrinal difference between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God.

Further reading: [What's the Difference Between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God?](#)