

Dispensationalism — Kingdom (Israel)

THE KINGDOM FROM ISRAEL'S CONQUEST THROUGH CAPTIVITY

"The era of Moses experienced the development of Israel as a great nation. Israel received the Mosaic Covenant and the promise of many descendants was being fulfilled. With Moses' death the emphasis shifts to fulfillment of Israel's land promises. This occurs under Joshua as Israel occupies the land. Israel goes through a period of ups and downs under the judges and then the monarchy begins under Saul. Saul, though, acts wickedly and God uses David for His kingdom purposes. Through David, the Davidic Covenant promises an eternal kingdom for Israel in the line of David and blessings to mankind. Under the third king, Solomon, Israel begins to fulfill the promise of blessing the nations. But disobedience by Solomon and Israel alters Israel's trajectory and leads to a divided kingdom and withdrawal of God's blessings. Israel and Judah are both headed to captivity. Yet God is faithful to His promises although His people are not always faithful to Him."

—— Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, EPub, (Lampion Press, LLC, 2017), 109.

JOSHUA

"The events of Joshua reveal God is the ultimate King. Israel's success occurs because God is a divine warrior who fights for Israel. For example, the tactics of the battle of Jericho (see Josh 6), where the people walked around the walls of Jericho for seven days and then blew trumpets to make the walls fall, testify that victory is not based on Israel's genius or power. Such a tactic seems absurd from a human perspective. But God uses this to show victory belongs to Him. However, Israel fell short by not removing the Canaanites fully as the Lord commanded. Thus, the conquest was successful but incomplete. God kept His promises, yet the people did not always keep theirs. This failure to obey would later haunt Israel and contribute to the idolatry and downfall of the kingdom. The land was an essential aspect of the Abrahamic Covenant and Israel was to possess it just as God said. Since God promised that Israel's occupation of the land would be followed by dispersion and then restoration to the land at a later time (Deut 30), the initial conquest of the land in Joshua was not the final fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant."

—— Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, EPub, (Lampion Press, LLC, 2017), 110.

JUDGES

"Judges details the ups and downs (mostly downs) of Israel's experiences in the land under the leadership of the judges (see Judg 2:16). In spite of warnings that disobedience would lead to judgment, the people continued to sin, and the scourge of God's judgment would occur. Yet during times of peril for Israel the people would cry out for deliverance and a judge was raised up for this purpose. God himself is the ultimate Judge (see Gen 18:25), and the judges, while imperfect in character, would reflect important characteristics of this role, particularly that of deliverer."

—— Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, EPub, (Lampion Press, LLC, 2017), 111.

RUTH

"In the Septuagint and English Bible, Ruth is sandwiched between Judges and 1–2 Samuel. Judges revealed the poor state of Israel without a king while 1–2 Samuel introduced the monarchy to Israel. Ruth offers a transition between the two. Through a set of events that reveal the sovereign hand of God, Ruth, a Moabite woman, experiences God's grace and marries Boaz. Through this union Ruth gave birth to Obed, the grandfather of David, the man after God's own heart with whom the Davidic Covenant would be made. The book of Ruth, therefore, contributes to the kingdom program. The woman, Ruth, is an ancestor of David. Second, Ruth becomes an example of God's grace to those outside of Israel."

—— Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, EPub, (Lampion Press, LLC, 2017), 112.