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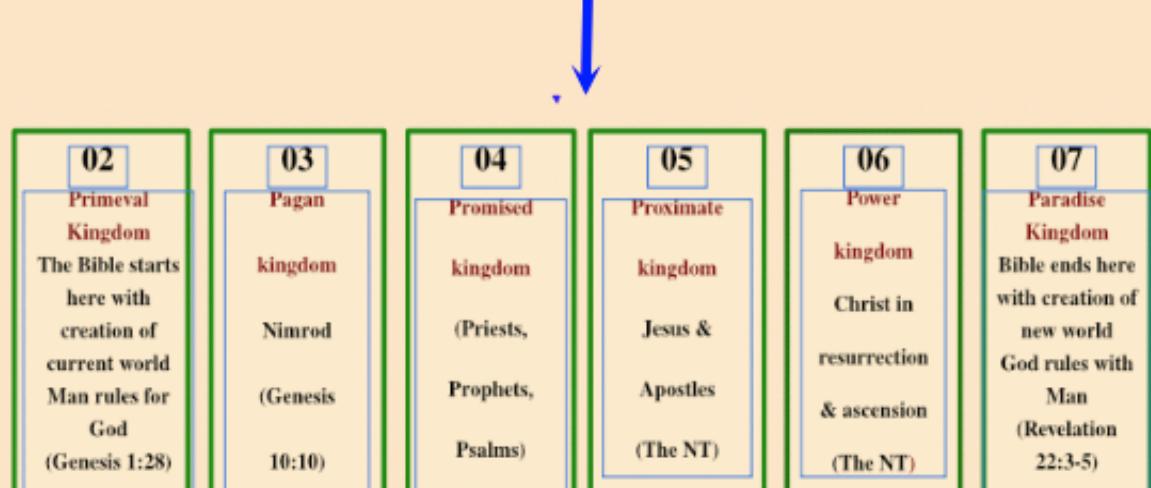


1. Introduction

This second **Sandwich** paper deals with the whole Bible, in which the first two chapters of Genesis record the creation of the first heaven and earth, and the last two chapters of Revelation record the creation of the new heaven and earth. That suggests there is something radically wrong with our current world if God is going to create a new one. This transformation from old to new frames the structure of the whole Bible and suggests at once its big idea. It's a story from beginning to end.

Below is a detailed graphic of the Bible's seven-step structure, which is taken from my eBook, *A Bird's-eye view of Sacred Scripture*, which is available on this website. (For an alternative seven-point structure of the Bible, see B. [Harrington, Story of the Bible](#). His seven steps are Creation, Curse, Covenant, Covenant People, Christ, Church, Consummation).

Progressive forms of all of the kingdoms



Bible's story progressively takes us from current to new world

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'Kingdom' is Bible theme

For me, the big idea or theme of the Bible is 'kingdom', firstly God is King, and secondly, mankind is king authorised by God to rule for Him on planet earth (Genesis 1:28). But the man failed to rule himself and wanted to be God. From this ruined kingdom, God's story of transformation works through four other kingdom phases until it reaches the seventh and final form of the kingdom in the new heaven and earth.

The Primeval kingdom

Adam's kingdom is the first on earth so it is the **primeval kingdom**. Adam's regal realm is planet earth, which he is to bring into subjection - the seas, birds, cattle, wild animals and plant life. Notable by its absence is any obligation or power to control earth's climate, and no wonder, because it was never part of God's delegating it to mankind. For, **the heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to human beings** (Psalm 115:16). That is, the aerial, planetary, and abode-of-God heavens are off limits to us. They are in the sphere of God's control; controlling the climate is part of God's job description, not ours. Mankind take note: climate change is above your pay grade, so pretending to control it is pure fantasy. So, be wise and read this:

The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory (Revelation 16:8-9).

The Preeminent kingdom

When we open the first page of the Bible, we are not told anything about the God-King and His kingdom that existed before His creation. Nevertheless, we will find the details about this elsewhere in the sacred text. His is the **preeminent kingdom**, existing before all other kingdoms, and controlling them all.

The Pagan kingdom

As far as earth and mankind is concerned, the first man Adam's disobedience began a downward spiral reflected in Nimrod's **pagan kingdom**, the first mention of 'kingdom' in the Hebrew Bible.

The Promised kingdom

At that time, God began to execute a correction to man's waywardness in His **promised kingdom**, which is progressively unfolded in the various forms of the Hebrew Bible, including the priests, the prophets, and the psalms.

The Proximate kingdom

All of these display God's character as ruler, and exemplified in the life and ministry of Christ as He taught that God's kingdom was the **proximate kingdom**, or near at hand. He, of course was slain, but His power kingdom has been on full display since His ascension.

The Paradise kingdom

When I go to the last page of this masterpiece the Bible, after Christ defeats all of His enemies, He will usher in a new universe, a new heaven and earth that supersedes the one we have now, a new paradise but with the same God-King of the universe on the throne (Revelation 22:3). This is God's final, and eternal **paradise kingdom**.

There, *the throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him* (Revelation 22:3), and *To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne* (Revelation 3:21). Notice the difference: in the first creation mankind rules **for** God; in the new creation redeemed mankind rules **with** Him.

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I have called the final form of the kingdom, the Paradise kingdom, because Paradise is mentioned in the new heaven and earth (Revelation 2:7). Further, what characterises this new heaven and earth is that God removes all the sad things associated with the present world: no more tears, or death, or mourning, crying and pain (Revelation 21:4). Positively, it gets a new capital city for the God-King and His redeemed people, the new Jerusalem, in contrast with Jerusalem of old, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, and Babylon (Revelation 11:8, 17:5). This new Jerusalem *that is above is free, which is the mother of us all* (Galatians 4:26), but Jerusalem of old is the *mother of whores* (Revelation 17:5). Sadly, the Jerusalem that was once *the city of the great King* (Matthew 5:35) is greatly fallen and destroyed.

Conclusion

What a delicious sandwich! After Adam as a disobedient king of earth and who ruined everything, could God could have abandoned his descendants to their own devices? No, He couldn't. So, He has steered humanity through thousands of years of history to recognise the perils of disobeying Him, and what it cost Him through His son Jesus Christ to rid the universe of the evil enemy. And, to bring us to a new creation, the original renewed and refurbished without all the flaws of the first heaven and earth, and unimaginative pleasures in the presence of the Creator for evermore. As Joachim Neander put it so beautifully in his hymn written almost 400 years ago, *Praise to the Lord...the King of creation* here.

1 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,
join me in glad adoration.

2 Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

3 Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriends you.

4 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the Amen sound from his people again;
gladly forever adore him.

References

Harrington, B, Story of the Bible: Scripture's Storyline in 7 Steps, <https://renew.org/story-of-the-bible-scriptures-storyline-in-7-steps/>