

THE THEOCRATIC KINGDOM

This study is based on the three volume book, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, by George N.H. Peters. Written in 1883, these volumes contain 206 propositions about the Kingdom of God. The work is the most exhaustive work on the Kingdom ever published. The three-volume set is available from www.DispensationalPublishing.com.

The entirety of the outline is either a quote, partial quote, or paraphrase of the words of George Peters.

PROP. 25. THE THEOCRACY WAS AN EARNEST, INTRODUCTORY, OR INITIATORY FORM OF THIS KINGDOM.

Obs. 3 – the Theocracy was not a *type*, but an *initiatory form*. This can be seen in-

- *the actual exercise* of Sovereignty by God, which is no *type*, but a *reality*
- the fact that when this Theocracy was overthrown, *all* the prophets, with one mind and voice, proclaim that *the same identical* Theocracy shall *be restored again* with increased splendor and glory;
- the fact that the Theocracy was covenanted to the Christ as David's Son, and is, therefore, His *real inheritance*.

Obs. 5. The blessings annexed to the Theocracy are numerous, and precisely such (*e.g.* Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, 30, etc.) as a people here on the earth earnestly desire to attain. They culminate in the expression (Leviticus 26:12): "*I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people,*" which is again reiterated (Revelation 21:3) at the restoration of the Theocracy.

Obs. 6. Briefly, attention is directed to the fact that while this Theocracy was a Kingdom *on* or *in* the earth, it cannot be strictly called *an earthly* kingdom. Many writers pronounce it an "earthly kingdom," which is a mistake, made and indulged to exalt the church by way of comparison. The Theocracy is *from God*; it was not of earthly or human origin, for it was *divine*, directly instituted *by God*, and having *God for its Ruler*.

PROP. 26. THE THEOCRACY THUS INSTITUTED WOULD HAVE BEEN PERMANENTLY ESTABLISHED, IF THE PEOPLE, IN THEIR NATIONAL CAPACITY, HAD BEEN FAITHFUL IN OBEDIENCE.

In this proposition, Peter's argues that the Kingdom could have been established in full had the people been faithful. I disagree with this proposition. As evidence, I would point out that the people of the Jewish nation never believed that faithfulness alone would establish the Kingdom, but were always looking for the promised Messiah who alone could do such work.

PROP. 27. THE DEMAND OF THE NATION FOR AN EARTHLY KING WAS A VIRTUAL ABANDONMENT OF THIS THEOCRATIC KINGDOM BY THE NATION.

"...they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them," 1 Samuel 8:7

Obs. 2. Some writers when adverting to this point are not sufficiently precise in their language.

- Burt (*Redemp. Dawn*, p. 242) says: "The idea of an earthly monarchy does not seem to have entered the Mosaic constitution," and "the idea of a monarchy did not enter the Mosaic system, and cannot be regarded as a natural development of that system."
- Notice:
 - The Theocracy was a monarchy, but God was the monarch.
 - It was a monarchy over a nation here on earth

PROP. 28. GOD MAKES THE JEWISH KING SUBORDINATE TO HIS OWN THEOCRACY.

According to Samuel's statement, God pardons the nation on the conditions that it still, with the king included, acknowledges him as *the continuous Supreme Monarch...* In this entire transaction God's theocratic rule *is preserved intact*.

Obs. 1. It follows, therefore, that Josephus (Ant. 6:3 §§), and those who receive his view, are mistaken when they end the Theocracy with the Judges.

Obs. 2. The safeguard: both King and Priest were to yield to the authority of the prophet simply because the latter directly revealed the will of the Supreme King.

PROP. 29. THIS THEOCRACY OR KINGDOM IS EXCLUSIVELY GIVEN TO THE NATURAL DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM, IN THEIR CORPORATE CAPACITY.

Obs. 1. God condescended only to act *as earthly Ruler* in behalf of that *one* nation.

Obs. 2. God threatened to extinguish the existing Jewish line and reestablish it through Moses. Later John the Baptist said God could raise up *descendants of Abraham* from the stones. Such instances teach that, rather *than fail*, God can work to any extent demanded, *but always in the Jewish line*—*i.e.* all who are ever to enjoy His special Theocratic favor must, in some way, be regarded as the descendants, the children of Abraham.

Obs. 3. This gives us one of the reasons why intermarriages with heathen were forbidden.

Obs. 5. This feature, the Theocracy alone pertaining to the Jews, was their proud boast, as seen *e.g.* Deuteronomy 4:32–40, Psalm 147:20.

PROP. 30. THE PROPHETS, HOWEVER, WITHOUT SPECIFYING THE MANNER OF INTRODUCTION, PREDICT THAT THE GENTILES SHALL PARTICIPATE IN THE BLESSINGS OF THIS THEOCRACY OR KINGDOM.

Obs. 4. The reader will notice, too, that this calling of the Gentiles is almost universally predicted by the prophets to occur *in connection with* the Jewish nationality.

PROP. 31. THIS THEOCRACY OR KINGDOM WAS IDENTIFIED WITH THE DAVIDIC KINGDOM.

Obs. 4. The identity of the Theocratic Kingdom with the Davidic is taken for granted in the New Testament as an indisputable fact.

PROP. 32. THIS THEOCRATIC KINGDOM, THUS INCORPORATED WITH THE DAVIDIC, IS REMOVED WHEN THE DAVIDIC KINGDOM IS OVERTHROWN.

Obs. 2. The highest position, politically, occupied by the nation afterward under the brilliant reign of the Maccabean Princes, was never regarded as a return to the Davidic or Theocratic rule.

Obs. 3. The highest religious position afterward arrived at, when the Temple was restored with magnificence, did not meet the Theocratic features. The second Temple, among other deficiencies, possessed not the manifestation of the Divine Presence of the great King in the Holy of Holies.

PROP. 33. THE PROPHETS, SOME EVEN BEFORE THE CAPTIVITY, FORESEEING THE OVERTHROW OF THE KINGDOM, BOTH FORETELL ITS DOWNFALL AND ITS FINAL RESTORATION

Obs. 2. Let the reader but pause and consider: God *has had* a veritable Kingdom here on earth; He was the earthly Ruler of the nation exhibited in and through this Kingdom; now is it conceivable that He, owing to unbelief and sin of the nation, will give up this Kingdom *forever*—that He will permit Himself *to be defeated* in the establishment of such an open, outward, manifested Theocracy?

Obs. 3. It has been generally acknowledged that the basis of prophetic teaching on the Kingdom is constantly and uniformly connected with the National and Religio-Political constitution of the people of Israel. Why, then, dare to *reverse* this, without the most explicit and direct command from God?

PROP. 34. THE PROPHETS DESCRIBE THIS RESTORED KINGDOM, ITS EXTENSION, GLORY, ETC., WITHOUT DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS.

Obs. 4. The manner in which the prophecies were fulfilled at the First Advent teaches us *how* we may expect the prophecies pertaining to the Second to be realized, viz.: in *the strict* grammatical sense contained in them.

Obs. 7. The Kingdom is *nowhere* (although it is currently believed) directly asserted to be a resultant of the First Advent, but in the declarations of Christ and the apostles it is distinctly linked *with the Second Advent*, as e.g. Matthew 25:34, II Timothy 4:1, etc.

PROP. 35. THE PROPHETS DESCRIBE BUT ONE KINGDOM.

Obs. 1. There is *one* Kingdom under the Messiah, David's Son and Lord, in some way linked with the election of the Jewish nationality, which is *the great message* of prophecy.

Obs. 2. This Kingdom, too, according to the grammatical sense, is one here *on the earth*, not somewhere else, as e.g. in the third heaven or the Universe.

Obs. 4. The Prophets describing one Kingdom, here on the earth, at some time in the future under the Messiah, and associated with the Jewish nation and the Davidic throne, it is therefore *a gross violation* of all propriety to take these prophetic descriptions and arbitrarily apply them, as many do, by dividing them—one part to the earth, another to the third heaven; one portion to the present time, and another to the distant future.

PROP. 36. THE PROPHETS, WITH ONE VOICE, DESCRIBE THIS ONE KINGDOM, THUS RESTORED, IN TERMS EXPRESSIVE OF THE MOST GLORIOUS ADDITIONS.

The prophets predict, from the Psalmist down to Malachi, a restoration of *the identical overthrown* Kingdom, the restoration linked with the most astounding events, which shall produce a blessedness and glory *unexampled* in the history of the world.

Obs. 1. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that such remarkable events (as, e.g., the resurrection of the saints, the restitution of the created order) *must accompany and be identified* with the re-establishment of this Kingdom. The Prophets *unite* them, and we are not at liberty to separate them; any theory that does this, is certainly unworthy of credence.

Obs. 2. Since the overthrow of the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom, these predicted events have *not* taken place as delineated, and, therefore, the predicted, covenanted Kingdom has *not yet* appeared.

Obs. 4. Those additions are so great in their nature, so striking in their characteristics, so manifesting the interference of the Supernatural, that no one can possibly mistake *when* this Kingdom is restored.

Obs. 6. The Prophets, too, describe this Kingdom as erected, and these additions as made, *not* by a Savior coming in humiliation and suffering, *but* by a Redeemer coming in glory with all His saints, as e.g. Zechariah 14:5, Revelation 19:11–16, etc.

PROP. 37. THE KINGDOM, THUS PREDICTED AND PROMISED, WAS NOT IN EXISTENCE WHEN THE FORERUNNER OF JESUS APPEARED.

Obs. 1. The Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom *is the Kingdom of God*; this has been proven. Now this Kingdom was *fallen*, and it *continued* in its fallen state down to John the Baptist.

Obs. 3. The Prophets, instead of pointing out *an existing* Kingdom, invariably represent it as *fallen*, and its *restoration as future*.

Obs. 4. This same Kingdom was promised in its *restored form* to a certain descendant of David. He was to be its *Restorer*. Now it is folly to hold, that the Kingdom existed just *before* His appearance.

Obs. 8. The only Kingdom of God, *distinctively announced as such*, is that one in which God Himself condescends to act in the capacity of an earthly King, exhibiting directly the functions of such a King in legislative, executive, and judicial action. After the overthrow of the Theocratic-Davidic Kingdom, *none such* existed on earth, but a sad, mournful vacancy transpired.

Obs. 10. That the Kingdom did not thus exist is very apparent from the language of John himself (Matthew 3:2): "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of heaven *is at hand*," implying, forcibly, that for some time it had *not* been near, seeing that it *now* drew nigh.

Obs. 11. that the Christian Church, as the Kingdom of God, is simply *a continuance* of an existing Kingdom of God in the Jewish nation. It is *fundamentally* erroneous.

PROP. 38. JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHED THAT THIS KINGDOM, PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS, WAS “NIGH AT HAND”

This Kingdom was to be offered to the Jewish nation, and John’s mission was to prepare the nation for its acceptance.

PROP. 39. JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS NOT IGNORANT OF THE KINGDOM THAT HE PREACHED.

Obs. 1. Any theory of the Kingdom which makes the first great preacher of the Kingdom—a preacher *especially* prepared, sent, and inspired—ignorant of the leading subject that he was delegated, specifically commissioned to announce, is not only open to the gravest suspicion, but *ought to be rejected* as unworthy of God.

Obs. 3. If John is *especially called* to preach this Kingdom, and yet labors under delusion, gross error respecting its nature, we ask, Whom, then, can we trust?

Obs. 5. The reader will find, in looking over authors, interpreters, etc., that many of them, while having much to say about John’s preaching repentance, omit, as a subject beset with difficulties, *all allusions* to his preaching the Kingdom, although repentance is only described as a means for attaining to the Kingdom.

PROP. 40. THE HEARERS OF JOHN BELIEVED THAT HE PREACHED TO THEM THE KINGDOM PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS, AND IN THE SENSE HELD BY THEMSELVES.

Obs. 3. The unity of belief in the same restored Kingdom is evidenced by John’s preaching of the Kingdom raising up *no disputation* concerning it. Had he preached the modern view, it would inevitably have excited disputes and appeals to the prophets.

Obs. 6. The unity of agreement also accounts for so little descriptive of the Kingdom being given in detail in the New Testament. It was fully known and described in the prophets.

Obs. 7. This unity of agreement is also seen in John doing his preaching in the wilderness—that is, east from Jerusalem in the open country, away from the large cities. He and his hearers, both believing in *a restored Davidic Kingdom*, and he endeavoring by repentance to prepare the nation for its coming, those large gatherings of Jews and the preaching of such a Kingdom would necessarily have excited inquiry and the pressure of Roman power.

PROP. 41. THE KINGDOM WAS NOT ESTABLISHED UNDER JOHN’S MINISTRY.

Obs. 1. John was not conscious of a Kingdom being established, as is noticeable in the message that he sent, shortly before his death, from prison to Jesus.

Obs. 2. That no Kingdom was established is evident from *the continued* style of preaching the Kingdom *after* John’s imprisonment and death, for Jesus, the disciples, and the seventy announced it, not as *actually present*, but as still future.

Obs. 4. This satisfactorily answers the question, *why* John continued his ministry *after* the public appearance of Christ.

PROP. 42. JESUS CHRIST, IN HIS EARLY MINISTRY, PREACHED THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS NIGH AT HAND.

Obs. 1. Jesus adopts the same style that John did, urges the same condition of repentance, uses the phraseology common with the Jews, and introduces the subject of the Kingdom, without any explanation, as one well known and understood.

Obs. 5. Because the Kingdom has not yet appeared as preached, we are not authorized to conclude that Christ *changed* His plan; because the Jews rejected Him, we are not at liberty to infer that their Davidic house will remain *forever* desolate.

PROP. 43. THE DISCIPLES SENT FORTH BY JESUS TO PREACH THIS KINGDOM WERE NOT IGNORANT OF THE MEANING TO BE ATTACHED TO THE KINGDOM.

To say that they were ignorant of that which they were *especially* to preach is an evident absurdity; and if true (which it is not) would severely reflect upon the Divine Teacher and Commissioner.

Obs. 1. What Kingdom they all preached is so evident (*e.g.* from *Acts* 1:6, etc.), that our opponents save us the trouble of stating it by frankly admitting it.

Obs. 4. Miracles (*Matthew* 10:1, 8, *Luke* 10:17, etc.) attend their preaching of the Kingdom, which is *a most convincing attestation* of the truthfulness of their. Would Christ give the power of working miracles to persons who *confirmed* themselves and others in erroneous doctrine?

PROP. 44. THE PREACHING OF THE KINGDOM, BEING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAT OF THE PREDICTED KINGDOM, RAISED NO CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE JEWS AND JESUS, OR BETWEEN THE JEWS AND HIS DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES.

We find no hint, not the slightest, that there was *the least disagreement* between the preachers of the kingdom and their hearers on the subject of the kingdom itself.

Obs. 4. The Jews did not find fault with the Kingdom, but in *the King* as believed in by believing Jews and Gentiles.

Obs. 5. It may be well to say here, that as long as Christianity taught a future Theocratic Kingdom, numerous Jews were converted to Christianity, but *just so soon* as this disagreement arose respecting the Kingdom, and the Jewish faith in their Kingdom was derided and scorned, conversions became less and less until they almost ceased.