

# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Over the years, I've wondered about 'The Kingdom of God' and gradually understood in my own simple way what it must be. This all happened when I was a catechist, teaching youngsters in our village parish, where no Catholic school exists.

My first clue came when I encountered those words in the Catholic Catechism, which states that God 'is infinite in all perfection'. To me, this means that:

**God cannot make mistakes, and everything he does must always have a purpose.**

All this led me to wonder what the Kingdom of God is exactly. As I thought about it, I remembered statements from the Bible giving it such names as Heaven, Paradise, and others, but none gave a definition.

The one thing I'd always been aware of was that it is where our immortal souls will live forever with God when we die, but only if we have obeyed his commandments.

This caused me to investigate our covenants with God since our creation. The first was with Adam and Eve, the original man and woman. He allowed them to live forever in that wonderful environment called the Garden of Eden, but only if they obeyed his law, which was never to eat the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge.

They failed in this and were cast out of the garden to live and die as ordinary human beings. From this, I knew that any covenant we have with God provides benefits if we obey and punishments if we fail.

After Adam and Eve, God's only covenant was that people should worship only him and not any false god. This did not work too well either, and as an example, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were burned to the ground, along with all their inhabitants, because of the false Gods they worshipped.

The next covenant was with the Israelites after Moses, guided by God, had freed them from bondage in Egypt. God gave them ten rules to live by called the Ten Commandments and told them that if they obeyed these, when they died, their immortal spiritual souls would live in the Kingdom of God forever. If they disobeyed, their souls would perish in the fires of Hell for all eternity.

To help people obey these commandments, God sent His Son to show and tell them how. He reduced the commandments from ten to two: to love God and our neighbours as ourselves. If we obeyed these, we would automatically obey the original Ten Commandments.

The Bible teaches all this and shows us that God had a purpose for doing it. It also means that there is a Kingdom of God.

Since God cannot make mistakes, what can we deduce about our souls living in the Kingdom of God for all eternity?

In simple terms, we know that the kingdom of God is where He lives and is sometimes called Heaven or Paradise. We also know that God is eternal and must have lived forever in the environment we call Heaven.

I had all this information, but what did it tell me about the Kingdom of God? I found the answer to be so easy.

If God has lived forever in an environment he created and will do so forever more, it must be so wonderful that it could never bore God. It must be something that we human beings cannot envisage. St Luke was correct when he said:

'The eye has not seen  
Nor the ear heard  
The wonders that God  
Has created for  
Those who love him.

We can only wonder what living in such an environment will be like. If it has been designed to keep God content and happy for all eternity, then it must be the greatest of gifts for those who earn it.