

Distinctions between the Kingdom from the Heavens and the Kingdom of God

Kingdom from the Heavens

- Rule of the heavens over the earth (Dan 4:17, 25, 32; Ps 2:2, 6)
- Christ will establish when He returns at His second coming to Earth (Zech 14:9, Rev 11:15)
- Entrance will be by the remaining believing Jews and the Sheep (of Sheep and Goats) from the tribulation period (Matt 25:32-33)
- Was promised to David (2 Sam 7:13-16; Luke 1:32-33)
- Offered to Israel by John the forerunner and by Christ through His disciples (Matt 3:2, 4:17, 4:23)
- Will contain believers and unbelievers (Rev 20:7,8; Matt 13:41-42;7:21-22)
- Is a visible Kingdom with Christ on the Throne and David as His prince (Ex 34:24, 37:25)
- Used by Matthew's gospel exclusively - 32 times
- Its inhabitants gained blessing by obedience and cursing from disobedience (Matt 5:21-48;Zech 14:17-19)
- Is difficult for a rich man to enter (Matt 19:24)

Kingdom of God

- God's rule over all the saved
- Includes Spirit Beings, and saints from all time periods, with no unbelievers (John 3:3,5, Acts 8:12)
- Also refers to God's rule over his universe
- Relates to the rule over the sphere of salvation
- Is invisible along side the visible
- Was also being offered by the Messiah alongside the Kingdom from the heavens (Matt 6:33, Mark 1:14-15;Acts 1:3)
- Used by Matthew's gospel 5 times, Luke 33, and John twice
- Our acceptance by God is through Christ (1 Jn 2:1; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21)
- Entrance is by salvation through faith by God's grace. (Jn 8:24; Matt 21:31; 2 Cor 3:3; 1 Jn 5:11-13)
- Is impossible for a rich man to enter - but possible with God (Matt 19:24-26)

A Comparison and Contrast Between Israel and the Church

Israel	The Church
Israel is a nation chosen by God and sustained by covenant promises (Deut. 7:6-9). Not all individuals in this chosen nation are saved (Rom. 9:6; 11:28).	The Church is a called out assembly of believers who have been baptized into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Every member of the body of Christ is saved, though there are multitudes of professing Christians who may not be saved (2 Tim. 2:19).
Israel traces its origin to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Jacob being the father of the twelve tribes).	The Church traces its origin to the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) when believers were first placed into the body of Christ.
In God's program for Israel, His witnesses comprised a nation (Isaiah 43:10).	In God's program for the Church, His witnesses are among all nations (Acts 1:8).
The hope and expectancy of Israel was earthly, centering in the establishment of the Kingdom of the Messiah foretold by the prophets (Jer. 23:5-8; Isa. 2:1-5; 11:1-16).	The hope and expectancy of the Church is heavenly, centering in the glorious appearing of Christ to take His people to heaven (John 14:1-3; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
God's program for Israel centered in Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37) and will again center in Jerusalem during the Tribulation (Matt. 24:15-20) and during the Millennium (Isa. 2:1-5).	God's program for His Church began in Jerusalem and extended to the uttermost parts of the earth (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). The Church is identified with the risen Christ, not with any earthly city.
God's purpose and program for Israel was revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures.	God's purpose and program for the Church was not revealed in the Old Testament, but was revealed by the New Testament apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:5).
Israel's history which is in view in Daniel 9:24 (the 70 weeks or 490 years) involved animal sacrifices. The last 7 of the 490 years involves the future Tribulation which will also involve animal sacrifices during the first three and a half years (Dan. 9:27). Israel's millennial	The Church's history does not involve animal sacrifices. Messiah's sacrifice is commemorated by means of the Lord's Table.

worship will also involve animal sacrifices (Ezek. 43:27).	
Israel's history which is in view in Daniel 9:24 (the 490 years including also the Tribulation) involves a temple in Jerusalem. The same will be true in the Millennium (Ezek. chapters 40-48).	During most of the Church age there is no Jewish temple in Jerusalem. In this age God manifests His glory in His believers, both individually and collectively, designating them as His temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; Eph. 2:21-22). This is accomplished by the indwelling ministry of God the Holy Spirit.
Israel's history which is in view in Daniel 9:24 (the 490 years) involves a priesthood limited to the sons of Aaron, and excluding most Israelites. The same applies to the Millennium when Zadokian priests (also sons of Aaron) will serve in the temple (Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15).	During the Church age every true believer is a priest and able to offer spiritual sacrifices to the Lord (Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6). Whereas Israel had a priesthood, the Church is a priesthood.
Israel's history which is in view in Daniel 9:24 (the 490 years) will terminate with the coming of the Messiah to the earth to establish His Kingdom reign.	The Church's history will end at the Rapture of the Church when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in (1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rom. 11:25).
During Israel's history (the 490 years of Daniel 9:24 which also includes the Tribulation) the ethnic makeup of the world is bipartite: Jews and Gentiles. This division of all people into Jews and Gentiles will also apply to those in the Millennial Kingdom in natural bodies.	During the Church age from Pentecost to the Rapture the ethnic makeup of the world is tripartite: Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God (1 Cor. 10:32), the Church being composed of saved Jews and Gentiles united together in one Body (Eph. 2:15; 3:6).
During Israel's history, from Sinai to the Millennial Kingdom (excluding the Church age), Israel's role in the world will be characterized by PRIORITY [that is, they will have a leading role as God's chosen people]—see Deut. 4:6-8; Isa. 43:10; Matt. 10:5-6; Zech. 8:23.	During the Church age, Israel's role in the world will be characterized by EQUALITY—Jew and Gentiles united together in one body to bear testimony to a risen Christ (Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28).

Israel was under the law of Moses as a rule of life.	The Church is under the “new creature” rule (Gal. 6:15-16). See our study: What is the Believer’s Rule of Life?
Male Jews were circumcised as a sign of the Abrahamic Covenant. Believing Jews were circumcised in the heart (Jer. 4:4)	Believers of this age enjoy an internal circumcision not made with hands (Col. 2:11; Phil. 3:3). Physical circumcision is not required.
Unbelieving Jews were physical children of Abraham and spiritual children of the devil (John 8:37-44)	Every believer in Christ (every true member of the Church, whether Jew or Gentile) is a child of Abraham and a child of God (Rom. 4:11-12; Gal. 3:26-29). This statement does not mean that Church age believers are Israelites. See The Use of the Term “Israel” in the N.T.
Membership into the Jewish nation was by birth or by becoming a proselyte (a convert to Judaism).	Membership into the Church is by the new birth accomplished by the baptizing ministry of God (1 Cor. 12:13).
Israel was to observe the Sabbath Day (Exodus 20:8). Sabbath observance will also take place in the Tribulation (Matt. 24:20) and in the Millennium (Ezek. 46:1,3).	The Church is to be diligent and make every effort to enter into God’s rest (Heb. 4:9-11). This is a daily duty.
Israel is likened to the wife of Jehovah, often an unfaithful wife (Hosea).	The Church is the beloved Bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7-8), and although at times unfaithful, will one day be presented blameless and spotless (Eph. 5:27).
Israel’s place of worship centered in Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10; John 4:20) and this will also be true in the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27) and in the Millennium (Isa. 2:1-5).	The Church’s place of worship is “Where two or three are gathered together in My Name” (Matt. 18:20; John 4:21-24). Christ is in the midst of His Churches (Rev. 1:13, 20).
Believing Jews prior to Pentecost, believing Jews during the tribulation, and believing Jews during the Kingdom reign of Christ are not members of the body of Christ.	Believing Jews and Gentiles from Pentecost to the Rapture are members of the body of Christ.