

self, and 'in contradistinction from "kingdom of God"?

A. "Kingdom of heaven," occurring only in Matthew, means the rule of the heavens, consequent on the rejection of the Messiah, who is thereon ascended to heaven and thus introduces that rule, first, in mystery to faith (as now since the ascension); secondly, in manifestation (as by and by when He comes in power and glory). It differs from the larger expression in this, that, while "kingdom of God" might anywhere with truth be used substantially for "kingdom of heaven" (and so uniformly answers to it in the corresponding passages of Mark and Luke), in some places "kingdom of heaven" could not replace "kingdom of God." Hence even the latter phrase occurs in Matthew, where of course the former would not have duly expressed the idea of the Holy Ghost; and the same remark applies to Romans xiv., 1 Corinthians iv., and other passages in the Epistles where "kingdom of heaven" would have been quite improper. "The kingdom of God" could be said to be there when Christ demonstrated the power of God on earth; "the kingdom of heaven" could not be till He went to heaven. Hence "the kingdom of heaven" is never in the Gospels said to be nearer than at hand; whereas to a certain extent "the kingdom of God" might be and is said to have then come and to have been among them. The power of God displayed in miracles such as Christ wrought proved His kingdom there (and so power, not in word but in deed, the moral power of the Spirit in the Epistles); but "the kingdom of heaven" is a dispensational state of things, either true and known to faith, or actually manifested as it will be to every eye.