

Reign or Rule?

The difference between a Reign and a Rule (Reigning or Ruling) is often unclear. After studying both the Greek and several dictionary references to both Reign and Rule, I offer the following conclusions.

We lived in the United Kingdom (Britain) for several years while I worked on my Doctorate in Systematic Theology. There are no “citizens” in the U.K. They are “subjects.” Yet the Sovereign (Monarch, King or Queen) no longer has any significant political power. Her Prime Minister runs the government. Yet we found that the Monarch has tremendous Influence over values, loyalties and customs, especially in England and Wales, considerably less in Scotland and even less in Northern Ireland. Then I understood the difference. The Prime Minister Rules, but the Queen still Reigns. She is the Head of State in the U.K. and in 17 other Commonwealth Countries each of which has their own Prime (First) Minister (ruler). These 17 are called “Commonwealth Realms.”

Below is some research from the Greek dictionary and modern English language dictionaries:

REIGN

⁴Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of ^[a]their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and **reigned** with Christ for a thousand years. Revelation 20:4 (NASB)

βασιλεύω (basileuō) Reign (Mounce Reverse-Interlinear N.T.)

To possess regal authority, be a king, reign; to rule, govern, to be in force, **predominate**, prevail, to be in kingly case, fare royally.

Reign (Dictionary)

1. Exercise of sovereign power, as by a monarch.
 2. The period during which a monarch rules.
 3. **Dominance or widespread influence**: *the reign of reason.*
intr.v. reigned, reign·ing, reigns
 1. To exercise sovereign power.
 2. To hold the title of monarch, but with limited authority.
 3. To be predominant or prevalent: *Panic reigned as the fire spread.*
- <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/reign>

RULE

¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will **rule** them with a rod of iron; and He treads the ^[b]wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. Revelation 19:15 (NASB)

ποιμαίνω (poimainō) Rule (Mounce Reverse-Interlinear N.T.)

To feed, pasture, tend a flock, to feed with selfish indulgence, to pamper, to **tend, direct, superintend, to rule**

Rule Dictionary

3a: the exercise of authority or control

b: a period during which a specified ruler or government exercises control

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rule>