

Jesus Teaches About the Coming Kingdom

Luke 17:20-37

by David Servant

Jesus teaches about the coming kingdom, emphasizing that it is already present in His person, but will also be visibly manifest at His return.

Scripture: Matthew 24:23, Luke 17:20-31, 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Topics: "Kingdom Of God", "Second Coming"

Description

David Servant preaches about the anticipation of God's kingdom ruling over the earth, a promise awaited by both the Jewish people and Christians, with Jesus being the future ruler. Jesus revealed that the kingdom of God was already among them, as He stood before the Pharisees offering blessings to those who believed in Him. While Jesus will return to rule the world, He cautioned against being deceived by false reports of His return, emphasizing that His coming will be unmistakable, like lightning flashing across the sky, and will bring judgment upon the ungodly.

Transcript

There are many places in the Old Testament that tell about the time when God's kingdom will rule over all the earth. That promised future kingdom is something the Jewish people anticipated for a long, long time. As Christians, we also are waiting for that day, knowing that Jesus is the One who will then rule the world. It will be heaven on earth.

One day some of the Pharisees asked Jesus when God's kingdom would come. Knowing that they would not be citizens of that kingdom unless they believed in Him, Jesus answered their question by telling them that the kingdom of God was among them. That is, the God of that kingdom, the One who would one day rule the world, was standing right in front of them, offering blessings that would be enjoyed by every one of that kingdom's citizens. In that sense, God's kingdom isn't coming, it's here right now! Although Jesus is not yet ruling everyone in the world, He is ruling over everyone who has submitted his life to Him.

Later with His disciples, Jesus spoke more about the time when He would return to rule the world. He didn't tell us everything we might want to know, but He told us everything He wanted His disciples and us to know.

First, Jesus made clear to His disciples certain things that modern Christians know quite well: He would suffer and die and then be gone from earth for a considerable amount of time. His followers would want Him to come back much sooner than He would. Knowing how much we would long to see Him, Jesus warned us against being deceived by reports of His supposed return. When He comes back, Jesus said we'll know it, because He won't be sneaking back and hiding somewhere! His return will be as evident as lightning flashing across the sky.

Second, Jesus reiterated to His disciples what He previously said to the Pharisees: His return would not be ushered in with visible signs immediately preceding it. People would be caught unprepared and would be living their lives just as they always had.

Third, when Jesus returns to the earth, He will come with judgment. Many people will die, suffering God's wrath, just as they did during the flood of Noah and the destruction of Sodom. Because entire cities and towns will be destroyed, Christ's followers will have to be cautious not to put themselves into danger by joining the ungodly when God's wrath falls upon them. Jesus reminded us of Lot's wife, who died looking back to a city that God was destroying. However, although there is the possibility of one of us making a mistake, there is no danger of God making a mistake. We don't have to worry about Him accidentally killing us, because Jesus told us that two people could be working side by side or even sleeping in the same bed, and one would be taken and the other saved. God knows those who are His, and He won't treat them like the ungodly.

Q. If you heard a report on the television news that Jesus had recently returned and was living in France, would you believe it?

A. I hope not! Jesus told us not to believe any reports of His return because we'll all know it when it happens.

Q. Let's suppose you are alive when Jesus returns. You happen to be driving home from a vacation and have just about arrived at the outskirts of your city when fire falls from the sky over and on your entire city. Should you drive as fast as you can to get to your house to rescue your prized possessions?

A. No, you should stay away from any area that looks as if God's wrath is falling on it.

Application: All true Christians hope that Jesus will return in their lifetime. But even if He doesn't, at death we get to immediately be with Jesus in heaven. Then, when He does return, we will return with Him. That might be even better than being on the earth and seeing Him return!

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