

Luke 17:20-24. Christ Prepares His Disciples for His Absence.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus prepares his disciples for his absence by foretelling that they will long to see him again and promising that they will see him when he comes again.

Scripture: Luke 17:22

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

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the Pharisees' failed attempt to entangle Jesus with questions about the kingdom of God, only to be confounded by His answers. Jesus reveals that the kingdom of God is within true believers' hearts, emphasizing the importance of receiving Him personally. While the Pharisees sought signs of His glory externally, Jesus instructs His disciples about His second coming, assuring them that His return will be unmistakable and glorious, visible to all. The brightness of His coming will transform saints into His image, while sinners will face darkness and judgment.

Transcript

When the Pharisees asked questions the Lord disappointed them by his replies. They made inquiries in the hope of entangling him, but they themselves were confounded by the answers they received. They asked when the kingdom of God should come. The Lord, instead of acquainting them with that great secret, taught a more important truth. Jesus will one day be declared "King over all the earth;" but even now he reigns in the hearts of true believers; therefore he said to the Pharisees, "The kingdom of God is within you." It was useless for them to be looking for the appearance of the Lord in his glory, while they had not received him into their hearts.

The Lord would not converse on this subject with his enemies; but he turned to his disciples, and gave them much instruction concerning his second coming. He said, "The days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and you shall not see it." What did he mean by one of the days of the Son of man? Was not the day in which he was speaking one of the days, and is not the day in which he will come again another of the days? The Lord prepared his disciples for his approaching departure, and foretold that when he was gone away they should long to see him again--that is, they should desire to see one of his days. Were not these words fulfilled? How earnestly John, when banished to the Isle of Patmos, desired to see the glorious day of the Son of man! Almost the last words he wrote were

these--"Come, Lord Jesus." And do not all the disciples of the Lord long to see his day of glory? This is one of the marks by which they are distinguished--they "love his appearing." (1 Tim. 4:8.) They pray for it constantly in the words, "Your kingdom come."

But though they do not know when it will come, they do know how--for Jesus has told them that "as the lightning that lights out of one part under heaven, shines unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day." This promise is a great comfort to all his disciples. It would have disturbed their minds, if they had thought it possible that their Lord might return to the earth without their knowing it. They would have been interrupted in their holy pursuits by the idea, "He may now be at Jerusalem, or in the desert, or in some hidden chamber, or in some retired spot." But they now feel sure that when he comes, they shall see him, wherever they may be, or whatever they may be doing. Only a few disciples saw him ascend in the clouds from the Mount of Olives--but every eye shall behold him when he comes again. How exceedingly great will be the brightness of that day! When the Lord Jesus appeared to the persecuting Saul, the light was beyond the brightness of the sun at noonday, and its dazzling splendor blinded the eyes of the astonished man. (Acts 26:13.) But when he comes again, the light will spread over the whole world; saints will be strengthened to gaze upon the scene, and will be changed into the image of their Lord; while impenitent sinners will find the day of brightness a day of darkness to them. How striking are the words of the prophet Amos on this subject! Amos 5:18-20--"Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord--to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?"

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