

08272023 The Kingdom Now and Not Yet....

In Jesus day the religious and ethnic culture he was a part of ... Judaism and the Jewish people were waiting for a messiah...They believed one sent from heaven would free them from the oppression of the current Roman occupying army and to remove them from the influence and immorality of the Greek culture..... And that the Messiah would reestablish a Kingdom where the religious and national Jews would reign ...they change position from being the weak and oppressed to strong and powerful...and righteousness would rule the land and evil would be judged and banished...

We often have similar aspirations... in our culture we simply hope to do it ourselves or have the government provide the change... and for us believers we await the return of Jesus ...to accomplish the same ends .

This topic was of such importance that as we are studying the Gospel of Luke, we discover thirty occurrences of the phrase The Kingdom of God. This is understandable because the NT is about the Kingdom's King- Jesus Christ.

And to the Religious leadership especially the Pharisees There was no more burning question, than that concerning the time when the kingdom of God would be called into being by the Messiah.. when finally **God's people will be restored to God's land under God's rule... righteousness will rule and Evil will be Judged and banished**

Which takes us to today.s passage...Jesus had previously sent out seventy disciples...to the towns and villages he would visit on his way to last time to Jerusalem...and his destination the cross

NLT LK 10: ⁸ "If you enter a town and it welcomes you, eat whatever is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick, and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God is near you now.'

The religious leaders are well aware of this message of Jesus stating the Kingdom of God is near...but to enter the Kingdom you must receive it's King ...but they have rejected Jesus as the Messiah and King .. but they want to hear his take on it anyway ...
NLT LK 17: ²⁰ One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, "When will the Kingdom of God come?" Jesus replied, "The Kingdom of God can't be detected by visible signs. ²¹ You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is already among you."

- **The Pharisees thought the Kingdom would be revealed by the King and have a location...and they being the most religious would of course recognize it first and be the first to participate in it. ...but Jesus said it is already among you ...you just wont receive it...you have rejected the signs the message and the message bearer**
 - **For you are looking for a Kingdom of your own imagination...if you receive the King the Kingdom becomes visible!**
 - **Jesus reply...the kingdom of God is like no other Kingdom... The kingdom of God will not be able to be discerned by careful observation of certain signs...it is not a location it is a person...**
 - **If you will not receive the king who is among you , as your King...you will not receive the kingdom period...**
- ...there were people all around the Pharisees who had entered into the Kingdom of God...by believing the king was inviting them...**
Even in our day the King is present and must be receive..
*****Now Jesus turns to his disciples... and members of the Kingdom already...and speaks of the future of the kingdom is now present but NOT YET FULLY ...**

NLT LK 17: ²² Then he said to his disciples, "The time is coming when you will long to see the day when the Son of Man returns, but you

won't see it. ²³ *People will tell you, 'Look, there is the Son of Man,' or 'Here he is,' but don't go out and follow them.*

- *First...The disciples would witness the resurrection and the Asension...they would see Jesus gloriously ascend to the Father in Heaven...but none will witness his glorious return...it will be delayed...we are still waiting for it today!*
- **And He tells his disciples... hard times await them ahead !! and when these times of suffering are heaviest... they will long...greatly desire...hunger...to see the day when Jesus returns!!**
- *But you wont see it... one must continue to be patient...walk in faith and endure ...don't fall for deception!*
- **Because of great trouble...be careful to not fall for false prophets who will claim...he is here or there...or go running after the latest and greatest religious experience...or false prophet proclaiming where he is.. **the way out will be through...****

*****But when I do return you will know and so will the whole world! It will be like lightning striking the whole world at once!**

NLT Lk 17:24 For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other, so it will be on the day^[g] when the Son of Man comes.

Second...So Don't worry about missing me coming back...you will not... For **JESUS WILL COME LIKE LIGHTNING**. Not only will it be suddenly, as lightning strikes, but it will be public and universal. A lightning strike visible to the whole world!

His light seen everywhere at the same time. So when Jesus comes there will be no mistaking it. But first things first...

NLT LK 17:25 But first the Son of Man must suffer terribly and be rejected by this generation.

****Then he tells them again he will suffer many things and ultimately be rejected by the generation he manifested himself in... which his disciples still don't quite understand ...**

- **As the Pharisees could not grasp Jesus as King... did not fit their expectations His disciples still could not grasp Jesus suffering, dying and resurrecting... it did not fit their expectations ...so a principle here...you will not usually understand the work and wisdom of God until later ...so keep on keeping on**

***Now Jesus goes on to give a more complete information about his return and what the times will be like the times of Noah and Lot**

*NLT LK 17:26 “**When** the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. ²⁷ In those days, the people enjoyed banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ “And the world will be as it was in the days of Lot. People went about their **daily business**—eating and drinking, buying and selling, farming and building— ²⁹ until the morning Lot left Sodom. Then fire and burning sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. ³⁰ Yes, it will be ‘business as usual’ right up to the day when the Son of Man is revealed.”*

- **First Jesus does not mention in this discussion any of the great and overt evil of the times when he comes back so we wont either...though it will be extremely evil...like in the imes of Noah and Lotin speaking to His disciples ...**
- **what he does emphasize is the Key phrase “business as usual”...**

NLT Luke 17: ³⁰ Yes, it will be ‘business as usual’ right up to the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

- None of these things mentioned are wrong... but it appears they will be what's most important to people...Key phrase "business as usual"...
- there will be great apathy in the world regarding Jesus...a who cares attitude... as described by Peter ...who was present in this discussion with Jesus

NLT 2 Peter 3:3 Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. ⁴ They will say, "What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created."

- They had heard of Jesus coming...and their attitude yeah so what heard it before ...they are unconcerned, indifferent
- Their concerns are their daily life...following their desires as far more important...eating and drinking...relationships, marrying and families, work, homes, making money, cars, retirement, Buying and Selling...minimizing discomfort and maximizing pleasure... all these things consume their thought life, most of their time, robs them of sleep... and are constant sources of life draining fear and worry.... a life focused on the here and now as if that is what life is about!...
- They are, spiritually complacent, while being comfort driven driven... just want to be comfortable, safe and secure.
- Despite the evil in the world.. business as usual will be going on when the return of Jesus and Judgment commences ...just as in the time of Noah and Lot!

*****But take heart disciples... just as God protected both Noah and Lot who were considered righteous by God though we know they were flawed? Know this He will protect his own!**

So the question is What made them righteous ? they believed God by faith *One escaped by obedience Noah building an Ark anticipating the Judgment and one escaped by obedience to an angel fleeing Sodom before Judgment...* **both acted in response to the word of God...before witnessing the word of Judgment take place...**

NT Hebrews 11:1 Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. ² Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation.

- **both Lot and Noah and the rest of us disciples who live by faith! Gain a good reputation with God!**
- *And both were raptured rescued right before Judgment...*

NLT Luke 17:31 On that day a person out on the deck of a roof must not go down into the house to pack. A person out in the field must not return home. ³² Remember what happened to Lot's wife!

Don't forget what the Lot's wife did... For she could not imagine her existence without her possessions ...she spent her life gathering...

NLT Gen 19: ²⁶ But Lot's wife looked back as she was following behind him, and she turned into a pillar of salt.

- **The point...if this life is your focus and treasure...you won't be ready to leave even when Judgment comes...**

The antidote ^{NLT Luke 17:33} If you cling to your life, you will lose it, and if you let your life go, you will save it.

- **Don't place more value on this life than our future life ...live life here but focus on living life there! Be always ready!!**
- **And know this the protection of the elect will happen right before god's Judgment ..it will happen unexpectedly**

34 That night two people will be asleep in one bed; one will be taken, the other left. 35 Two women will be grinding flour together at the mill; one will be taken, the other left.”

Where will this happen the disciples asked...everywhere

37 “Where will this happen, Lord?” the disciples asked. Jesus replied, “Just as the gathering of vultures shows there is a carcass nearby, so these signs indicate that the end is near.

- **Just as vultures know when death is immanent....these signs indicate judgment is close....**

Paul gives us the same message 1 Thess 5:1 *Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don't really need to write you. 2 For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. 3 When people are saying, “Everything is peaceful and secure,” then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape. **We like the disciples ask in our own corrupt and disinterested generation When will the Kingdom be finally established ?** *Peter give us the quick answer...**

NLT 2 Peter 3:8 But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. 9 The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

Keep on Keeping on being light and salt ... end

End