



World Christian Fellowship

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Visible King and invisible Kingdom

Luke 17:20-21

Luke 17:20-21, *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."*

How the kingdom is in the presence?

Before we can understand the future reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to understand the present reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The kingdom and King is foreign to us.

Please take moment to understand about the kings and kingdoms from the History.

God is Supreme King:

God absolute supremacy, sovereignty, free exercise of His will without any consultation or restraint.

Romans 11:33-36, *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!* ³⁴ *“For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?”* ³⁵ *“Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?”* ³⁶ *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

- ✓ God has supreme wisdom!
- ✓ God has supreme knowledge!
- ✓ God makes supreme judgments!

It is unsearchable.

What God does we cannot understand because His ways are unfathomable!

No one has given Him counsel. He has not asked the advice of anyone, nor is He obligated to anyone who did anything for Him as if He needed to pay him back.

God is absolutely supreme and sovereign.

The apostle Paul received the understanding of that great doxology on the absolute supremacy and sovereignty of God from Isaiah because in

Isaiah 40:12-14, *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust*

of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?

Who is equal to Me?

Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord?

Who has given advice to God?

Whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding?

Who taught Him in the path of justice?

Who taught Him knowledge?

The answer to all those rhetorical questions is no one. Based upon His absolute perfection, based upon His

- perfect knowledge,
- perfect wisdom,
- perfect power,
- perfect will,

He does exactly what He wants, when He wants, with whom He wants, and for the purpose He wants.

Job understood this in chapter

Job 42:2, *“I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.*

Psalm 33:11, *The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.*

Isaiah 14:27, *For the Lord of hosts has purposed, And who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, And who will turn it back?”*

God is sovereign, plans what He wants, purposes what He wants and does exactly what He plans and exactly what He purposes, and no one alters it.

Isaiah 46:8-10, *“Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’*

It is because of this truth about God that we are instructed.

1 Chronicles 29:10-13, *Therefore David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said: “Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, And You are exalted as head over all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all. ¹³ “Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name.*

Sovereignty, God is the absolute sovereign over all. God is King.

God is presented as a King who rules over a kingdom.

There are two kingdoms.

1. **Material kingdom / Visible Kingdom**
2. **Spiritual kingdom/ Invisible Kingdom**

When God created out of His sovereign will, He made things material and He made persons spiritual.

God is King over both domains.

1. Material kingdom / Visible Kingdom

There is the external universal kingdom over which He rules by creation.

Everything He created is under His sovereign power.

Psalm 10:16, *The Lord is King forever and ever; The nations have perished out of His land.*

Psalm 103:19, *The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.*

God is the King of everything that He has created!

Psalm 145:10-13, *All Your works shall praise You, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You. ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, ¹² To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom. ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations.*

This is the grand, universal, external kingdom of God by which He rules sovereignly over everything that He has made. It was a king who thought that he could compete with the sovereign of the universe, a king by the name of Nebuchadnezzar, who ended up being judged by God.

Nebuchadnezzar, attempting to steal the glory from God, he ended up as a raving maniac seven years living like an animal. When he finally came to his senses, he understood!

Daniel 4:34-37, *And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. ³⁵All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?" ³⁶At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.*

This is the universal, external sovereignty of God over everything He has made.

- Everything animate and inanimate.
- Everything material, and spiritual.

Everything spiritual in the universe is in this kingdom under Christ's rule. Every molecule, every atom, every component of an atom belongs in this kingdom.

But as true as that is, this kingdom is in a state of rebellion. It is cursed by sin and that curse has stained this kingdom spiritually and materially. The universe is winding down. The second law of thermodynamics is operating.

The universe is in the process of disintegrating. It is headed toward a disastrous dissolution in the uncreation described by Peter as all the elements of the universe melting with fervent heat in an atomic implosion. So, this universe exists groaning under the curse.

The rebellion is not just manifest in the material part of this universal kingdom but in the spiritual part as well. There are demons who, having been thrown out of heaven and led by Satan, manifest their rebellion by designing ways in which they can thwart the kingdom of God. It will end up foolish and useless.

They have been aided and assisted by mankind, who succumbed to the temptation of Satan in the garden. The whole human race fallen into sin and rebellion. So, we have a whole humanity with a host of angels who have rebelled against God. God is still sovereign over them.

God is the devil's God and God is the God of the demons as He is of all the ungodly sinners who ever lived in this world. He is sovereign over them all.

Even though His Kingdom has been cursed, He cursed it. It has been judged, He judged it.

- One day He will restore it.
- One day He will recover it.
- One day He will gain the paradise that was lost in the garden.

2. Spiritual kingdom/ Invisible Kingdom

Jesus speaking here in Luke 17 is not about that kingdom. Jesus speaking about a kingdom within the kingdom.

God is King over the external, universal kingdom which includes everything He has created.

God is also King over the internal, personal kingdom, which includes everyone He has recreated.

God is King universally by creation.

He is King personally by revelation.

He is King personally through special revelation of Scripture.

- ✓ God rules the Kingdom of the universe.

- ✓ God also rules the kingdom of the heart.

God rules the material kingdom creation.

God rules the spiritual kingdom by recreation.

We can see the rule of God in His universal kingdom by just looking outside.

Romans 1:20, *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,*

Everyone on the planet is without excuse if he doesn't see God, the Godhead and His massive power and wisdom in the creation. God has revealed Himself in that creation.

God is the King who has manifested Himself.

There is a form of revelation, it is that natural revelation in human reason and in the moral law written in the heart and the conscience that makes a man responsible for the knowledge of God as King over His created universe.

But inside that larger kingdom, that smaller kingdom where God rules personally over the heart, over the soul, internally, not by virtue of creation but by virtue of recreation.

God rules inside not through natural revelation but through special revelation that is by the Scripture.

In this kingdom, God is also King.

God is sovereign over who enters and how they enter?

God exercises absolute sovereign authority in the internal personal Kingdom which He rules by recreation through special revelation.

God exercises absolute right, absolute power, absolute privilege, does exactly what He wills by the means of His Word. Just as He spoke the first kingdom into existence, so He speaks the second one into existence.

In the external, universal kingdom where everything and everyone He created is subject to Him, He rules.

Spiritual Kingdom, internal, personal kingdom where everyone who responds to His revelation and is recreated is subject to Him, He also rules.

a) Jesus Christ is Lord- Mediator

The most and obvious implication of this is Jesus Christ is Lord and King over His spiritual kingdom, as He is over His material kingdom.

- ✓ His external, universal rule is direct.
- ✓ His internal, personal rule is direct.

God rules the universe directly.

God rules the internal, personal, spiritual kingdom directly by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

- ✓ He is sovereign in the universe,
- ✓ He is sovereign in His people.

God's rule in the universal kingdom is immediate, without a mediator.

- He does what He wants the way He wants.
- He does it by Himself.
- He controls everything in the created universe on His own.
- He brought it into being.
- He upholds it by His power.
- He is the unobservable, unknown, invisible, mysterious, unidentified power in the molecules of this universe that holds everything together.
- He doesn't mediate His rule in the universe through anyone.

It's direct and immediate.

But in His personal kingdom, His rule is also direct.

He comes to live inside His own people.

We become the temple of the living God. But this kingdom has been mediated to us through mediators who brought us the revelation.

Spiritual kingdom is brought to us through revelation and for that God chose mediators.

He spoke through mediators.

He spoke through angels, when He gave His law.

But for the most part, He spoke through people.

He spoke to and through Adam and He revealed Himself to Adam directly. No doubt Adam disclosed what he had learned of God to his family and to those who were a part of his life for the almost 1,000 years he lived. It was Adam's instruction given to him by God that informed Cain and Abel the proper sacrifice, which being violated by Cain led to the first murder. But God revealed Himself to Adam and through Adam.

God revealed Himself to Noah, who became a preacher of righteousness, who preached to his whole generation for the full duration of 120 years while he was building the ark.

God mediated His Word and His wisdom and His message through Abraham, giving Abraham a covenant.

- ✓ God spoke through Isaac.
- ✓ God spoke through Jacob.
- ✓ God spoke through Joseph.
- ✓ God mediated His rule through Samuel.
- ✓ God mediated His rule through priests.
- ✓ God mediated His rule through prophets.

The prophets who spoke the revelation that God gave them, and they all wrote it down.

Moses wrote the Pentateuch and Samuel wrote and then David wrote, and Solomon and the prophets wrote the revelation. The scripture is a message mediated through men.

Israel was a nation of mediators. God narrowed that mediation, poured it through one funnel. That funnel was the nation Israel. **Romans 9:4-5**, *who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.*

They were the funnel for every revelation about God into the World.

They were God's witness nation.

They were the mediators.

It's what makes their unbelief so sad.

Then came the one, true, all-glorious, unequalled mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus was the true, pure, exact expression of God.

Hebrews 1:1-3, *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

Jesus is the exact duplicate of God.

Jesus is God.

Jesus said in **John 14:9**, "*If you have seen Me you have seen God the Father.*"

John 10:30, *I and the Father are one.*"

One great mediator of God's revelation because He is the pure and exact representation of God.

b) Mediator- Saviour

Jesus makes reconciliation possible; He becomes the only saving mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5, *For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,*

Jesus is the ultimate mediator because He is the perfect representation of God. He is the ultimate mediator because He is the one who brings sinners to God by providing the perfect sacrifice.

c) Mediator - King

Jesus is not just this mediator because He is God. He is also King.

He comes into this world not to establish sovereignty over the material created universe which He has that.

He was born a King.

Gabriel visits Mary and proclaim that you are going to have a child and He is going to be a King and going to rule forever.

Psalm 2:6-8, *“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”⁷ “I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

Isaiah 9:6-7, *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting*

Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

God is the Father of eternity. Jesus Christ coming into the world is King because Jesus is God. He is the Creator God, the eternal God. He and the Father are one.

Isaiah repeats this in chapter 11, and 12.

Jeremiah repeats it in Jeremiah 23:5-6 and it's all through the Psalms.

So, Jesus came into the world not to establish universal kingdom, universal reign over the created universe.

Jesus had authority over the existing kingdom. Jesus showed it.

- He could control the sea.
- He controlled death.
- He controlled disease.
- He controlled creation.
- He could create food out of nothing.
- He could turn the water into wine.

He was God and He had power over His whole created universe.

Jesus said, *"If I wanted to, I could have instantly here a legion of angels."*

Jesus said, *"No man takes My life from Me. I lay it down by Myself."*

He wasn't looking for control over the universe. He came to establish the Kingdom in the heart.

Now the problem is that's not the way Jews saw it. The only thing they ever expected was the big, glorious kingdom as laid out in the Old Testament by the prophets. They had studied these prophecies diligently. They knew what the Old Testament promised.

They all believed the Messiah would come and establish a kingdom. They never believed anything but that.

What would that kingdom involve?

It would involve everything that was promised to Abraham in Genesis 12.

In Deuteronomy 30 which God promises them a restoration to the land and the occupation of the original grant of that land. The David Covenant in 2 Samuel chapter 7 and they are promised a kingdom and a glorious King out of the loins of David.

They were also promised a New Covenant, Jeremiah 31, where the whole nation would be blessed, the whole nation would become righteous, the whole nation would know God.

They were also told by the prophets that the kingdom would be glorious.

- A lion would die down with a lamb
- children could play in a snake pit
- a river flowing from Jerusalem out to make the desert blossom like a rose.
- peace and joy and comfort,
- the absence of poverty,
- the absence of sickness,
- long life. If you died at 100 years, the prophet said, you die as a baby.

They knew that the kingdom would be a time of obedience and people wear bells on their robes that sung out for holiness.

The prevailing truth, Isaiah 65, would dominate the world.

The Holy Spirit would be poured out, Joel 2.

Messiah would rule as King and there would be nobles around Him ruling as vice regents with Him in the glory of that kingdom.

Jerusalem would be the centre of the world.

All nations would come to fight against the King when He came, and the King would defeat all those nations in a great battle.

He would triumph and all nations would be subjected then to His rule and He would reign.

Israel would be the crowning nation of the world and the jewel in the crown would be the city of Jerusalem which would rise to the prominence over all cities.

They knew all that. The prophets had spelled it out.

In short, they had developed a coming of Messiah!

1. Coming of Messiah would be preceded by a time of tribulation or trouble, even like birth pangs.
2. In the midst of this trouble and turmoil there would appear a prophet like Elijah, heralding the coming of Messiah.
3. Messiah would establish His kingdom, age and glory and vindicate His people.
4. The nations would ally to fight the Messiah. They would literally interrupt all their wars to come and fight against Him.
5. Messiah would destroy all the opposing nations, subjugate them all.
6. The restoration of Jerusalem would occur.
7. Jews from all over the world would return to Israel.
8. Israel would become the centre of the world and all nations would be subjected to the Messiah.
9. Messiah would establish the kingdom and the kingdom would be a time of eternal peace, righteousness and glory.

Very accurate according to the word of God.

That is good eschatology and ours too!

The only trouble was that they didn't see two comings!
They only saw one.

They did not expect that Messiah would come to establish a spiritual kingdom.

They weren't looking for an internal kingdom.

They weren't looking for a spiritual kingdom.

They weren't looking for a Saviour because they didn't need to be saved. This is the reason why His message was so offensive.

They tried on several occasions to force Him to be a King,

He had to prevent that from happening.

In their minds they have had enough tribulation. The time was right for the King and the kingdom. They were weary of the subjugation and the oppression of a series of conquerors who had occupied their land, currently the Romans.

When Jesus came along, He just couldn't be the Messiah because where was all the promise?

Not only did Jesus didn't overthrow the Romans and establish His throne, but where were all the signs in heaven?

Because they had developed around this basic eschatological scheme the ideas that there would be signs in the heavens, there would be signs in the earth.

When Jesus started talking about dying, it was an absolute ridiculous because their understanding of the King is, He comes to conquer, not to be conquered.

Even the disciples were struggling with their own expectations of this kingdom. They knew those covenants in the Old Testament. They knew those prophecies, the Pharisees did, who asked the question to Jesus. They knew that God keeps His Word. They knew that God had to fulfil His promises.

Luke 17.

Their question is when?

Having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming?

He answered them and said that you have got it all wrong, completely. Your whole understanding is a misconception.

V 20-21, *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."*

Even the disciples were confused about the kingdom.

Luke 17:37, *And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."*

The disciples asked Jesus:

Where is the kingdom?

- The Pharisees wanted to know when.
- The disciples wanted to know where.

Jesus to both says, "You have got it all wrong. That shouldn't be your preoccupation."

It's not about where, it's not about when.

Remember the last week sermon from **Luke 13:18-21** about the kingdom is like a mustard seed and leaven.

In His first coming then, He establishes the internal, spiritual kingdom.

In His Second Coming, He takes that to its consummated end in the glory of the millennial kingdom.

After that this whole universe as we know it is destroyed and He creates the new heaven and the new earth in which eternally and for the first time since the Fall both kingdoms are merged into one.

That's basically the big picture of the kingdom.