

## “UNTIL THE KINGDOM OF GOD COMES”

Luke 22:14-20

When I was a boy I used to hear people use the expression “till kingdom come” to mean on and on into the future. I haven’t heard that expression for a long time. I guess people were recalling the Bible. In the New Testament the phrase “kingdom of God” is used 69 times. In addition Matthew uses the phrase “kingdom of heaven” 32 times. It is clear that “kingdom” of heaven” means the same thing as “kingdom of God”. However, Jews are reluctant to use even the word God and usually find a substitute (in this case “heaven.”) Often, when you read an article written by a rabbi, he will spell God “G\*d” so that it can’t be pronounced.

Whole books have been written on the Kingdom of God. I am not under any delusion that I can adequately cover the subject in a sermon. About the best that I can do is label some file folders for you so that when you are reading your Bible you can say “Oh, I think this use of “kingdom of God/kingdom of heaven” belongs in that folder.” Maybe later you can ponder all the passages in a certain folder and say, “I think I understand what Jesus meant better than I did before.”

### 1.) The Kingdom of God Has Come.

The Jews of Jesus’ time were expecting the kingdom of David and Solomon to be restored. The Christ they were expecting was really two persons. There would be a king in the line of David who would restore the kingdom to Israel. They assumed he would be a military leader who would drive the Roman occupying army out of their land. They

were also expecting a prophet as great as Moses who would bring religious revival to their land.

Both John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries preaching “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.” When Jesus selected twelve of the disciples to be apostles and sent them out on their first mission trip, He told them, “As you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” Just before He took Peter, James, and John up to the Mount of Transfiguration, He said to all the disciples: And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power." (Mark 9:1 NKJV)

The mixing of their previous expectations concerning the kingdom of Israel and Jesus’ announcement that the kingdom of God had come caused the disciples to ask Jesus, just before He ascended to heaven: Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority." (Acts 1:6-7 NKJV)

2.) Jesus Tried To Separate Their Expectations For Restoring the Kingdom of Israel from the Kingdom of God By Describing Its Nature.

In David’s Kingdom men were given honor for their bravery and valor in battle. At the top were the three, next to them were the thirty. Joab, the leader of the army gained his position and kept it by cunning, ruthlessness, and deceit. Even David feared him.

When Jesus’ disciples wanted to know who was the greatest among them, Jesus replied, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:3-4 NKJV)

But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." (Luke 18:16-17)

Teaching "the first shall be last and the last first", "how hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom", of the widow's two mites "she has given more than all the rest", "whoever will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was like no earthly kingdom.

The kingdom of David was a distinctly Jewish kingdom. There were some foreigners in David's army. Their presence emphasized their unique position in a kingdom where genealogical records were kept and where land and leadership was passed down from father to son. Jesus taught that the kingdom of God would be a universal kingdom with people from every race and continent.

"There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. "They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. (Luke 13:28-29 NKJV)

### 3.) The Kingdom of God Has Boundaries And Yet Is Invisible.

It has become a hot button political issue to guard the borders of the United States against the entry of illegal aliens. Throughout Jesus' teachings are given requirements for entering the kingdom of God. The word "enter" implies walls that define who is inside and who is outside.

"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:20 NKJV)

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. (Matthew 7:21 NKJV)

"Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." (Mark 10:15 NKJV)

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5 NKJV)

Although the kingdom of God has boundaries, it is invisible. Its growth was described by Jesus as like the action of leaven in container of meal or the growth of a seed underground before a plant emerges.

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; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. (Luke 17:20-22 NKJV)

#### 4.) The Kingdom of God Is Yet To Come.

When we partake of the communion elements and do it in remembrance of Jesus, we are not only to remember those things He has done for us in the past including dying on the cross, rising from the dead, ascending to heaven to sit on the right hand of God and intercede for us and to prepare a place for us. We are also to remember His promise to come again. When He comes again, it will not be in the form of a servant, but He will come as a king to rule His kingdom.

"For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. (Luke 17:24 NKJV)

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31 NKJV)

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:31-34 NKJV)

"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: (Matthew 25:41 NKJV)

Remember that Jesus said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

