

01-06-2019

Message: Behold, the Kingdom of God Is in Our Midst

Text: Luke 13:10-21

Introduction

- A. Christ, our sovereign King, reigning at His Father's right hand, has providentially appointed us to feed on a text of Luke's gospel that includes both an incident of Jesus's healing a bent over woman and His two short parables about the Kingdom of God.
- B. You might ask, "What does Jesus's miracle of healing have to do with His teaching on God's kingdom? Why would we include both of these in one message? Well, the answer begins with Jesus's inspiring Luke to link the two with the word, "therefore."

Luke 13:11 And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. ¹² **When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness."**

Luke 13:18 **So** (Gk: "oun" = "**therefore**") He was saying, "What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it?"

- C. So this miraculous healing has something to do with God's kingdom. Let's look deeper into the text to better understand and respond to this word of Christ about His kingdom. For as we will see, every one of us here today, believer or unbeliever, has a relationship to (not necessarily "with," but "to") God's King/Messiah/Christ, and to His kingdom. And that relationship will determine our futures forever.

I. God's promised King and Kingdom is the focus of God's gospel to the world.

- A. According to Jesus, with the beginning of His ministry and that of His forerunner and prophet, John the Baptist, the good news/gospel of God's promised King and kingdom is now proclaimed in a different way than it was in the Old Testament law and prophets.

Luke 16:16 "The Law and the Prophets *were proclaimed* until John; **since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached**

- B. It isn't that the gospel of God's promised King and Kingdom was not revealed in the law and prophets, for it was.
 - 1. Quoting from the law in Genesis 12, Christ's apostle Paul identifies God's promised gospel to Abraham at least 1900 years before the coming of Jesus ...

Galatians 3:8 **The Scripture**, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, **preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL**

BE BLESSED IN YOU."

2. And through His prophet Isaiah 700 before the coming of Jesus, God promised ...

Isaiah 9:6 For **a child will be born to us**, a son will be given to us; **And the government will rest on His shoulders**; And His name will be called **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace**.⁷ There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, **on the throne of David and over his kingdom**, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness **from then on and forevermore**.

- C. But what changed with the coming of this promised divine King, descended from the lineage of Israel's king David, is that instead of promising that the King and His kingdom would one day come, John and Jesus could begin proclaiming "the kingdom of God is at hand" - because the King is now at hand!

Matthew 3:1 Now in those days **John the Baptist came**, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying,² **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

Mark 1:14 Now after John had been taken into custody, **Jesus came** into Galilee, **preaching the gospel of God**,¹⁵ and saying, **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."**

- D. After Jesus's death and resurrection, Christ and His apostles continued to proclaim the gospel of God's kingdom and His crucified, risen, reigning, and returning King - Jesus. Messiah/Christ is not Jesus's name but His God-given title - KING! Jesus has inspired Luke to include the phrase, "kingdom of God" 31x in Luke's gospel account. It is too often omitted from the presentation of Christ's gospel among evangelicals today. When we proclaim the gospel, we are to proclaim Jesus once crucified, raised by God as both Lord and Christ, and proclaim to the nations that through repentance and faith in Him, He not only delivers us from eternal hell, but delivers us unto His eternal kingdom (Luke 24:46,47; 2 Tim 4:18)!

Acts 1:3 To these **He also presented Himself alive after His suffering**, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over *a period of* forty days and **speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God**.

Acts 8:12 But when **they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ**, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

Acts 28:23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by **solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus**, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, ...³⁰ And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was

welcoming all who came to him,³¹ **preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ** with all openness, unhindered.

E. But what does this have to do with Jesus's healing a bent over woman?

II. Christ's miracles manifest the present encroachment of His promised kingdom upon the kingdom of this world.

A. Have you noticed so far in our study of Luke that there is a relationship between proclaiming the presence of the kingdom of God and the miraculous healing of those sick and afflicted by demons by Jesus and His disciples? What is this relationship?

Luke 9:2 And He sent them out **to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.**

Luke 9:11 ... He *began* **speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing.**

Luke 10:9 and **heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'**

Luke 11:20 "But if **I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.**

B. We have already seen in Luke's record of the temptation of Jesus by the devil what the apostle John tells us in 1 John 5:19. Satan has dominion over our sin cursed world, which at times glitters like gold veneer, but underneath is a kingdom of oppression, misery, deterioration, and death.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and that **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.**

Luke 4:5 And **he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time.⁶ And the devil said to Him, "I will give You **all this domain and its glory**; for **it has been handed over to me**, and I give it to whomever I wish.⁷ "Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours."

C. But now in the ministry of Messiah/King Jesus and those ministering in His name, we see Him invading Satan's domain, we see an incursion of the kingdom of God into the kingdom of this world.

D. The setting in our text is the Sabbath day in the synagogue, where God's rule should have dominion, yet an oppressive spirit from Satan was having dominion over this woman's body. This would set up a clash between Satan and Jesus as we see in verse 16, a clash between Satan's reigning authority and power versus King Jesus's authority and power.

Luke 13:10 And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And there was **a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit**; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. ..¹⁶ "And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, **whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years**, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

- E. But seeing her bound in body by Satan for 18 long years, heaven's promised King brings His royal power to overcome Satan's power and immediately heal her. He pushes back Satan's dominion, replacing it with His own. His dominion is a dominion of unlimited compassion, power, and peace (shalom = wellness, wholeness). Isaiah 9:7 There will be **no end to the increase** of His **government** or of **peace**, On the throne of David and over his kingdom,

Luke 13:12 When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness."¹³ And **He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and began glorifying God.**

- F. The kingdom of God and Christ is now a present reality, but it has come in measure and not yet in its fulness. When Christ returns to create a new heavens and earth, His kingdom will manifest itself both spatially and in dominion, rule, power. But at present, Christ's kingdom is manifested not so much spatially - in terms of a visible location, as much as in rule, authority, power.

Luke 17:20 Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when **the kingdom of God** was coming, He answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed**;²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here *it is!*' or, 'There *it is!*' **For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst** (among you)."

Colossians 1:13 For **He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son**,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- G. Examples of the presence of the kingdom of God and His reigning Christ.

1. I observed it at the wedding of Alex Blevins, where in the midst of a world under the power of the evil one, within the space of the barn where the ceremony took place, the worship of Christ was preeminent, and what Christ wanted said ruled. The officiating pastor said things about Christ that would be shouted down in the gathering of our federal legislative bodies. But in this time and space, the governments of this world were not ruling, Christ the King was manifesting His will, His rule and dominion.
2. We observe it in the gathering of the church under Christ's authority, for believers have been and are being saved by a faith in Christ that is protected by the miracle power of Christ's indwelling Spirit.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for **you,⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

a. Both His power and royal rule are manifested in such times and places as gathered believers submit to His Royal Lordship from a heart of faith and love. We should not want to forsake our assembling together as a body of believers, not simply for the sake of our own obedience to Christ, but for the sake of the manifestation of His glory to one another and to the world!

Proverbs 14:28 **In a multitude of people is a king's glory,** but in the dearth of people is a prince's ruin.

Hebrews 10:25 **not forsaking our own assembling together,** as is the habit of some, **but encouraging one another;** and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

b. This is why we must not cede a place in our church, a place in our homes, and place in our hearts to the devil by sinning. This is why Christ had His apostle Paul write to the church ...

Ephesians 4:26 BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your (plural) anger,²⁷ and **do not give the devil a place** (Gk: topos).

H. Reactions to Christ's kingdom which is now and is to come in fulness at His return.

1. The reaction of receiving God's King and kingdom.

a. The healed woman responds with praise to God, recognizing God's power and authority over what was Satan's dominion has been exercised through Jesus.

Luke 13:13 And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again **and began glorifying God.**

b. Many in the synagogue gathering were rejoicing over the manifestations (plural) of God's kingdom that He was producing by His royal power and authority.

Luke 13:17 As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated; and **the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.**

2. The reaction of opposing God's King and kingdom.

a. The synagogue official was indignant at Jesus, for what He did was a violation of rabbinic oral tradition. Cf. Mishnah 5.1ff; or E.g., Mishnah 1.1.

Luke 13:14 But **the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath**, *began* saying to the crowd in response, "There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day."

b. To challenge that tradition was to challenge his/their position of leadership.

Luke 11:43 "Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the chief seats in the synagogues and the respectful greetings in the market places.

John 11:48 "If we let Him *go on* like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and **take away both our place** and our nation."

c. But their oral tradition was opposed to the rule and authority of God's King and kingdom. So the synagogue official in effect opposed the encroachment of God's kingdom on Satan's kingdom on, of all days, the Sabbath. The miraculous healing Jesus did on the Sabbath foreshadowed the eternal blessing of peace, wholeness, freedom from suffering and oppression that the Sabbath itself foreshadowed for the people of God (Heb 4:9,11). Jesus had previously in a synagogue exposed their oral law's opposition to God's law.

Luke 6:9 And Jesus said to them, "**I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to destroy it?**"

d. Jesus refutes and humiliates the official and those alligned with him against God's King and kingdom versus Satan's dominion, exposing their hypocrisy.

Luke 13:15 But the Lord answered him and said, "**You hypocrites**, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead him away to water *him?*"¹⁶ "And **this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?**"¹⁷ **As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated**; and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.

III. Be wise to know how God's King and Kingdom come.

A. Jewish expectation was that God's King and Kingdom would come with unmistakable visibility and glory, with God's glorious Messiah bringing final judgment to God's enemies and final blessing to God's faithful ones.

B. Because it would be wise to recognize the presence of God's Messiah and kingdom and not

dismiss and oppose God's master plan, Jesus gives two parables to explain that, contrary to expectations, God's King and kingdom would have humble, small beginnings, but in the end, would encompass all the earth.

1. Analogy to a mustard seed's beginning and ending.

Luke 13:18 So He was saying, "**What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it?**"¹⁹ "It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES."

2. Analogy to a small piece of leaven permeating a whole lump of dough.

Luke 13:20 And again He said, "**To what shall I compare the kingdom of God?**"²¹ "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."

Conclusion

- A. There are only two reactions we can have to God's King and Kingdom. We can welcome Jesus, now crucified and risen, as the Lord and Christ God made Him, or we can reject and thus oppose God's King and the advance of God's kingdom, and thus remain under the domination of Satan and his kingdom of this world.

Luke 11:23 "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.

- B. This section of Luke follows sections that warn us to discern the nature of the time. Just like thunder requires those out on Lake Murray to make a wise decision to avoid being hit by lightening, so the miracles of Jesus require us to make a wise decision to receive Him as God's Messiah/King and pledge our faith, love, loyal obedience. We cannot receive Jesus as Savior if we do not receive Him as God's Christ/King. Jesus said ...

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

- C. So respond to His gracious call ...

Mark 1:15 "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.**"