

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon July 12, 2020
Luke 17: 20 – 37 “About the Kingdom of God – Part 2”

Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well." 20 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." 22 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. 23 And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 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. 25 But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 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."

I. Introduction

- a. Last week, we saw Jesus responding to the confused question of the Pharisees about “when the Kingdom of God would come”. (v20,21) Jesus taught them some important things about the kingdom of God:
 - i. Their search for the arrival of the Kingdom of God was a search for signs and wonders, but instead that search should have been for the Messiah Himself.
 - ii. Where Jesus is, there is the Kingdom of God.
 - iii. The Kingdom of God was in their midst because Jesus was standing right there before their eyes, speaking to their very ears.
 - iv. The Kingdom of God was already present in Seed form at that moment when Jesus spoke those words. Jesus is the Seed that fell into the earth and died, rising up to fill the earth.

- v. The Kingdom of God is not limited to the internal heart/soul, but is also expressed externally wherever Jesus Christ is. We are the Body of Christ.
- b. In the text about the Kingdom of God that follows (v22-37), Jesus turns to His disciples. The emphasis in this section is upon the coming kingdom judgment, and Jesus is teaching His disciples how to avoid the coming judgment.
 - i. He teaches them how to avoid being tricked by premature false claims, especially as they are longing for the beginning of the days of the Son of Man. (v22,23) The key to avoiding deception is knowing that the onset of this timeframe (the Son of Man in His day) will be obvious, like lightning in the sky. (v24) The onset of this timeframe of judgment will not occur until after “this generation” (those people to whom Jesus is ministering) rejects Jesus and causes Him to suffer many things. (v25) The “this generation” time clue brings in a natural sense that Jesus is describing things that His disciples need to know in order to avoid the judgment coming upon apostate Judaism of that time.
 - ii. Jesus then goes on to compare the time preceding His coming judgment to the past days preceding the judgment of God at the Flood (v26,27) and at Sodom and Gomorrah (v28-30), even using Lot’s wife (v32) as a warning not to look back for their prior life when it’s time to escape (v31-33). When the days preceding the judgment come to a close, and the judgment arrives, it will come too swiftly for those not watching, those unprepared, and they will be suddenly snatched from their beds and their work. (v34-36)
 - iii. Taking all of this in, now having a sense of the timing of the coming judgment, the disciples want to know where this will occur. Similar to His prior response about timing, Jesus uses the image of birds circling over a dead body to emphasize to His disciples that not only the timing, but also the location of His judgment will be obvious, as obvious as a rotting carcass surrounded by vultures. (v36,37)
- c. An important OT text that helps us see these events Jesus is describing more clearly:
 - i. Daniel 2: 34,35...44,45
 - 1. “While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were all broken to pieces and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth....“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. 45 This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands”

- d. This section of Luke occurs before the arrival in Jerusalem, so even though this text has numerous parallels with the Olivet Discourse (Mt24,Mk13), this teaching is given at a separate time. Jesus emphasizes the importance of this message by giving it in several locations at different times.
 - i. My views on Matthew 24 and 25 – reconsidering which is 1st century and which is 2nd Advent.
 - ii. Is this the transition point?
 - 1. Mt 24:34 “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”
 - e. This week’s sermon: The Timing of the Coming Judgment (v22-25)
 - i. Don’t be tricked by false claims (v22,23)
 - ii. The beginning of His judgment will be obvious (v24)
 - iii. Judgment will not begin until after His suffering and rejection (v25)
 - iv. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. Don’t be tricked by false claims (v22,23)
- a. “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. 23 And they will say to you, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’ Do not go after them or follow them.”
 - b. The desire of the disciples
 - i. Jesus now goes on to tell His disciples what they will experience in their future on the earth. This desire He describes is in regards to His disciples standing before Him at that time. While it could also potentially refer to others who would follow after them, the time clues in this section highlight the judgment occurring in that very generation.
 - ii. They will be longing for the vindication of Christ’s judgment. Why? Because they will experience much difficulty and persecution at the hands of the Jews and the Romans before the onset of the days of the Son of Man.
 - c. “you will not see it” – their longing for Christ’s judgment will persist unsatisfied for a long enough time that they will be disappointed. They will be looking, but not seeing.
 - d. In this context of suffering and longing for deliverance, they will be vulnerable to deceptions about Christ’s arrival in judgment.
 - i. “Look here” or “Look there” – there will be multiple people presenting false claims about Christ’s return. Jesus warns them about this and commands His disciples not to go after them or follow them. His disciples are commanded by Jesus to ignore these false messengers.
 - ii. Mt 24 “At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you ahead of time. 26 “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the wilderness,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. 27 For as lightning that comes

from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”

- e. So, these disciples need to know what to ignore in their personal future. Why would Jesus give this warning to them only to pass onto future generations, and not also tell them the message is for future generations? Why would our Lord lead them to wonder if this coming judgment and attendant deception would possibly come upon them, if He knew it would not?
 - i. Jesus v Jerusalem “The main lesson here, however, is to the disciples: the day of the Son of Man will not require strained observation or secret knowledge of His whereabouts. Rather, it would be a visible and clear to everyone as lightning streaking all the way across the sky. The key was that the disciples would be prepared for this, but faithless Israel would not; for the remnant already knew the hidden Kingdom that had come among them, and would thus be prepared for the great revealing in judgment to come. To the Pharisees that Kingdom was invisible, and they would still be looking for it when the great judgment came upon them.”¹

III. The beginning of His judgment will be obvious (v24)

- a. “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.”
 - i. When the judgment of Christ upon apostate Judaism begins, it will be unmistakable. The disciples are being reassured by Jesus here. If they listen to Him, and pay attention to His warnings and His descriptions of how things will unfold, they cannot miss it.
 - ii. Luke 21:28-32 “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.” 29 Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.”
 - iii. As we proceed through the eschatology sections of Luke, we will see the signs that Jesus gives to His disciples, the things for them to observe to know the days of the Son of Man have begun, which will lead to the day of the Son of Man, when the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple are completed, and the OT age brought to a decisive end.
 - iv. 1st Roman-Jewish War: AD 66-70, including the siege of Jerusalem. Suffering as described in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.
- b. So, as they are dealing with persecution and longing for vindication, they are to be patient, watchful and encouraged. They will not miss Jesus if they listen to Him and look for Him as He says.

IV. Judgment will not begin until after His suffering and rejection (v25)

¹ McDurmon, J. (2011). [*Jesus v. Jerusalem: A Commentary on Luke 9:51–20:26, Jesus’ Lawsuit Against Israel*](#) (p. 113). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

- a. "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."
- b. This is one of many crucifixion predictions Jesus gives to His disciples in advance. He wants them to know that this coming judgment cannot and will occur until AFTER this generation has rejected Him and brought Him much suffering. Their rejection is not only demonstrated in the crucifixion, but also in their refusal to acknowledge and believe in His resurrection. It is the rejection of "this generation" that brings Christ's coming judgment upon "this generation."
 - i. Bock "This is the fifth passion prediction in Luke (explicit in Luke 9:22 [= Matt. 16:21 = Mark 8:31]; Luke 9:44 [= Matt. 17:22–23 = Mark 9:31]; Luke 18:32–33 [= Matt. 20:18–19 = Mark 10:33–34]; implicit in Luke 12:50; 13:32–33; Tiede 1988: 302)."²
- c. The Seed must fall to the ground and die. The Mustard Seed must be planted. The leaven must be mixed in.
 - i. John 12:23 – 27 "But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. 27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour."
 - ii. Luke 13:18 -21 "Then He said, "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 put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." 20 And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."
- d. Then, the stone cut without hands, the invincible Kingdom will come in judgment, after the crucifixion, resurrection and enthronement of Christ. Then, and only then.

V. Questions to know, love and obey God

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1430). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.