

**“THE KINGDOM HAS COME
...IS COMING
...AND WILL COME”
LUKE 17:11-37
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Introduction

In our passage from Dr. Luke’s gospel this morning (Luke 17:11-37) ten lepers are healed as evidence that the Kingdom of God has been manifested with the coming of Jesus Christ. One of these ten lepers comes back to thank Christ and finds not only a healing of his body, but also his soul (v. 19). This “foreigner” (v. 18) to the covenant promises in Israel finds hope, salvation and the Kingdom of God *in Christ*.

In contrast to this, the Pharisees cannot see the Kingdom of God manifested in Christ (v. 20). Rather, they hopelessly and helplessly grope in the dark seeking news events, political and social movements, to determine the time and coming of the Kingdom. They are looking everywhere but in Christ for the Kingdom.

In light of this, Jesus teaches them about the Kingdom of God that is manifested in him. *This Kingdom has come in Jesus, is coming in Jesus, and will come again when Christ returns to judge the world* (v. 26). But as the Pharisees could not see and enter the Kingdom of God because of worldly preoccupations (cf. John 3:3ff), so will many throughout the world be unable to see and enter when the Kingdom is fully manifested in the days of the Son of Man. In fact, like the days of Noah and Lot, so will be the days of the coming of the Son of Man in his Kingdom.

I. Ten Lepers and the Kingdom (vv. 11-19; cf. Luke 5:12ff)

Dr. Luke reminds us that Jesus is traveling to Jerusalem in v. 11: “On the way to Jerusalem...” (cf. 9:22, 44-45, 51; 13:22- “He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem...”). Jesus is on his journey to Jerusalem specifically to die:

^{ESV} Luke 9:21-22, 51: And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one,²² saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." ^{ESV} Luke 9:51 When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.

As he entered a particular village (presumably a Jewish village) on his journey between Samaria (Southwest of Jordan river) and Galilee (northwest of the Jordan River), Jesus was met by ten unclean people with leprous skin disease (v. 12)- -who *kept their distance* from him because of their practice of staying far off from others because they would make them ceremonially unclean according to Mosaic Law (Lev. 13:46; Numbers 5:2-3).

a. What is leprosy and what kind of life would these men have lived?

- i. **Leprosy** (from the *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*): the biblical word translated “leprosy” [**le, pra**, a j f leprosy, skin disease] does not always refer to what we call leprosy today (Hansen’s disease). The biblical word covers a variety of skin diseases. The leprosy in the Book of Leviticus that contaminates clothing and house is mold or mildew.

The biblical meaning of the word we translate “leprosy” signifies diseases that are associated with uncleanness before God and man. If you have leprosy in the Bible, you are unclean and usually segregated away from others (Lev. 13:46; Num. 5:2; 2 Kings 15:5; 2 Chron. 26:16-21). Leprosy could be divine punishment (Numbers 12:9-16; 2 Kings 5:27), but God in his mercy could also heal leprosy- -and did by his grace!

- ii. **Lepers:** Lepers were not wholly isolated from people, but they were outcasts in society who had to make their presence known in public by crying out: “**Unclean, unclean**” (cf. Lev. 13:45); they were relegated to the margins of society:

^{ESV} **Leviticus 13:45-46:** "The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' ⁴⁶ ***He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.***

Professor Leon Morris wrote: “[Leprosy] was both disfiguring and fatal and the ancient world’s only defense against it was quarantine” (Luke, TNTC, pg. 126).

Lepers had to rely on the generosity of others to survive- -their entire existence was reliant on other’s charity!

- iii. **“The Living Dead”:** The Bible teaches us that lepers were not only unclean, but they were very much described as the “undead” or the “walking dead”. Numbers 12:12 says:

^{ESV} **Numbers 12:12** Let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his mother's womb."

^{ESV} **Job 18:13** It consumes the parts of his skin; the firstborn of death consumes his limbs.

^{ESV} **2 Kings 5:7** And when the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "***Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?***"

Leprosy can be a biblical picture or image of sin and its affects on humanity; it perhaps is best to see leprosy as how humanity is affected by the fall and men live weakly and without hope in a world of sin and misery.

Leprosy seems to signify not only sin itself, but the miserable consequences of sin on men made in God's image, making them unclean and as those who are dead.

Greek scholar R. C. Trench said that leprosy serves as a parable of our sin problem before God (unclean!). Leprosy is an "outward and visible sign of innermost spiritual corruption." (Quoted in Hughes, *Luke*, pg. 167).

Yet there is hope in Christ!

The lepers ask Jesus to have mercy on them (v. 13). While normally a leper would ask for help (financially or for food at a distance), they did not ask for mercy to be healed because no one could help them.

Jesus responds to their request of faith and tells them in v. 14 to go and show themselves to the priests. In light of the larger context of Luke 17, particularly verses 5-6, Jesus is showing what a little faith in God looks like. Jesus tells them to go *by faith as if they had already been healed by Jesus*.

This teaches us that they knew that Jesus could indeed heal them and that they already had faith that Jesus could heal them by asking for and seeking his mercy and compassion, so they were to go away to the priest as if it had already happened *walking by faith and not by sight*. The text tells us that "As they went they were cleansed" (v. 14b). Though the ten lepers were bodily healed by faith, not all were restored whole in soul to God through salvation in Jesus Christ!

Jesus telling the lepers to "show themselves to the priests" is a fulfillment of Leviticus 13:49:

^{ESV} ***Leviticus 13:49 if the disease is greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin or in the warp or the woof or in any article made of skin, it is a case of leprous disease, and it shall be shown to the priest.***

There is a long eight-day process whereby leprosy is detected and typologically treated in the Old Testament in Leviticus 13-14. As the *Dictionary of Jesus and the*

Gospels teaches: Central to the entire “cleansing from leprosy” process was the priest. Sacrifice is required to authenticate (not to effect) the cleansing of human beings and houses. Those who were unclean had to live outside the camp (Lev. 13:46) showing forth a picture of unholiness and uncleanness before God.

For the Rabbis, a cure from leprosy was as difficult as raising a person from the dead (*Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, pg. 463, *Leprosy*). For the Rabbis being healed from leprosy was usually impossible.

Here in contrast, it is not the leprosy that shall be shown to the priests, but the actual healed and restored skin from the leprosy disease. The priest would understand that the only way one had been healed from leprosy would be a miracle from God performed by one of God’s prophets (cf. 2 Kings 5:1-19) *as in the days of Elijah and Elisha*.

Why does Jesus send the man to the priests (v. 14)?

Culturally Significant: The priests would have served as an ancient “health inspectors” for Israel (Lev. 14:2ff- or “purity inspectors” Green, pg. 624). A priest was required to assess whether the skin disease had cleared up before the leper could be readmitted into society (Beale and Carson, pg. 346). If these ten men were cleansed of leprosy, the priests would officially declare it so after a proper ritual of sacrifice, then the men would be formally restored to the community.

Biblico-Theologically Significant: Jesus sends the ten men to the priests to show that in Jesus Christ, the priestly function is passing with the coming of the Great High Priest (although Jesus does not usurp the authority of the priests at this time, cf. Matthew 23:1-2- -The Kingdom has come!).

What the priests served God doing in the Old Covenant in the temple was typological for the coming of Christ. The reason Jesus sends the cleansed lepers to the priests is in order that the Messianic miracle would speak for itself (that the miracle would “preach” that the Divine Messianic Kingdom-Age that had been anticipated by Israel, had come in the cleansing of the lepers). Jesus says: “Go and show yourself...for a proof to the priests.” (Luke 5:14).

Matthew 11:2-5: Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"⁴ And Jesus answered them, "***Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.***"

As the priest went through detailed rituals to make a person only outwardly clean from the leprosy disease, Jesus the High Priest and Great Physician makes

the man fully clean from within before God and man, and sends him to show the priest that the New Covenant has dawned, and that the Kingdom is coming in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has invited the outcast man from the community, back into the community as clean through his divine compassion!

A Divine Healing...and Realization!

Not all of the ten former lepers, but one of them *realized his healing* (v. 15a) and turned back to praise God and worship Jesus as King and Messiah of the Kingdom of God (vv. 15-16). Ten were healed, but only one *realized his healing*; this does not mean that the others would not have been able to tell that they had been healed, rather the meaning here is that only one *realized that they were healed by God Himself through Jesus Christ!*

The one former leper's realization of His healing is an act of God's initiating divine grace! God has given insight and made known to this one leper that he has been healed by God (cf. 4:18) and therefore because of God's grace extended specially to this one former leper, the man praises and worships God in Jesus Christ!

The one leper turns back to realize that in Jesus Christ is God's healing power found. In Jesus Christ, the one man (1 out of 10?!) realizes the long-anticipated arrival and powerful presence of the Kingdom of God (Luke 16:16). God has made himself known, ruling and reigning over his people, curing his people of their diseases and inaugurating the dawn of the New Creation when sin and disease shall be fully abolished and obliterated from the earth!

And God has specifically made himself known to a Samaritan!

The former leper just happened to be a 'Samaritan' leper and this probably implies that the other nine were Jewish lepers but Luke doesn't say (In Luke's narrative this is meant to be a surprise: v. 16b: "...***Now he was a Samaritan***"; the question should be asked by Theophilus and other Gentiles (1:4): "Is there really such a privileged position merely for the Jewish people within the redemptive economy of God if they do not believe in live grateful lives before Him?"). This healing probably caused the Pharisees to be filled with wrath as those earlier in Dr. Luke's gospel who heard Jesus' words concerning Naaman the Syrian in the time of the prophet Elisha:

*^{ESV} Luke 4:25-28: But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land,²⁶ and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.²⁷ And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.²⁸ *When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.**

Like Naaman, a foreigner in Israel was healed by Elisha in the Old Testament (2 Kings 5:1-19), Jesus is acting out and fulfilling as the anti-type (or fulfillment) of

Elisha this healing as part of his Divine Messianic-Mission. As Greater Prophet than Elisha by healing a foreigner Samaritan, and Jesus is giving evidence that a greater manifestation of God's Kingdom has come to Israel than in Elisha's time (cf. Luke 24:25-27, 44ff).

Both Naaman and the Samaritans are described as "foreigners to the covenant in Israel" specifically which ties these two prophetic texts together as evidence that the Kingdom is present through these signs and miracles (v. 18; 2 Kings 5).

Professor Joel B. Green insightfully comments: "The point of this intertextuality [between Jesus and Elishah, the one Samaritan leper and Naaman] is partially Christological, indicating as before [in Luke's Gospel] the connection between Jesus and God's prophetic messengers in the OT, but it is even more theological. ***Jews are not the only ones who qualify for God's messianic blessings; outsiders may also receive the benefits of salvation and, indeed, may prove to be more discerning about Jesus' identity and role within the divine plan than Jewish insiders***" (my emphasis, Luke, NICNT, pg. 620).

This seems to be the case particularly with the Pharisees who are Jewish insiders NOT being able to see the Kingdom in Jesus and recognize the coming of God and His salvation (vv. 20-21). With the coming of Jesus' Kingdom, God more fully and clearly reveals that his salvation is for all the world (all the nations): "All who call upon the Name of the LORD" shall be saved (not merely those in Israel which was foreshadowed in the Old Testament times as well).

"Jews "did not associate with Samaritans" (John 4:9): The History of Israel vs. Samaria

- i. **There was a long history of Jewish-Samaritan antagonism.** In fact, Samaritans were particularly hostile to Jews who traveled through their lands in order to go to the temple in Jerusalem to worship (Geldenhuis, 292). This is what we learned that "the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem" (Luke 9:53) and probably why Jesus is traveling through this village of Samaritans on his way to Jerusalem.
- ii. During the time of the rebuilding of the second temple after the Jews' returned from exile, the Samaritans were not allowed to help in the building under Ezra and Nehemiah (Ez. 4:3; Neh. 2:20) and so the Samaritans hatefully tried to hinder the work being done.
- iii. The Samaritans decided to build a rival temple and a different priesthood to worship on Mt. Gerazim (see John 4:19-24). The hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans was particularly heated and bitter during Jesus time (cf. Luke 10:33ff).

- iv. The rabbis of Jesus' day said: "Let no man eat the bread of the Cuthites (Samaritans), for he who eats their bread is as he who eats swine's flesh."

Jesus asked why this "foreign Samaritan" the only one to give praise and worship to God (v. 18; cf. also 10:25ff).

"Your faith has made you well" (or "saved you") - v. 19; cf. Luke 7:50; 8:48; 18:42. All ten of the men were healed and cleansed in their bodies, but it seems that one of the men particularly had also saving faith. The text in verse 19 can mean "made you well" or literally "your faith has saved [Gk. **sw**, | **zw** save (of Christian salvation); save, rescue, deliver; keep safe, preserve; cure, make well] you. ***This implies that this man was saved, cleansed, healed not only in the body, but also in his soul.***

Professor Green writes: "The Samaritan was not only cleansed, but on account of faith gained something more—namely, insight into Jesus' role in the inbreaking kingdom. He is enabled to see and is thus enlightened, itself a metaphor for redemption" (NICNT, pg. 627).

Professor Geldenhuys wrote: "He who has received only blessings from His hand and does not come close to Him in humble but heartfelt gratitude will always forgo what is the highest and most glorious in life. But he who, on receiving gifts out of His hand, turns to the Giver Himself in real gratitude, will partake of fullness of life and happiness. There is nothing that can bind one more closely to Him than sincere gratitude—'we love him because he first loved us'." (*Gospel of Luke*, pg. 436).

The one leper in contrast to the other nine finds not only the True High Priest of God but also the Temple of God. Dr. Luke doesn't tell us if the other nine were Jewish lepers or Samaritan lepers, but this should cause us to ask: To which Temple (Jerusalem or Samaria, Mt. Zion or Mt. Gerazim (cf. John 4:21 ff) and to which priests (Jewish or Samaritan) would the other nine have traveled to show themselves to for restoration? Which direction would they have gone in after Jesus healed them (this direction would have been according to whether they were Jewish or Samaritan)? Should they have waited for Jesus' further instructions on ***where to go?***

One does not know because Dr. Luke does not say; what Luke does clearly indicate is that although the one will indeed presumably go to the priests and the Temple, he has first given thanks in recognition to the reality of the Kingdom of God in Christ that is a revelation of the True High Priest and as well as the True Temple of God!

In the Samaritan's recognition of God's healing, he also seems to have spiritual insight into where God is specially found and that the old way of approaching God in types and shadows is passing away with the coming of Jesus!

This one former Samaritan leper has realized that worship and glorifying God is found at the feet of Jesus Christ!

Praise to God- v.15!

Here we have the root of why we praise God in Jesus Christ. The praise to God is because the man has been healed, but also more importantly because the man has found the Kingdom of God revealed in Jesus Christ and he is joyful about its presence! (cf. Luke 5:25-26; 7:16; 13:13).

In order to rightly praise and worship God we must reflect upon our condition before God and how he has made us clean in his sight through the mercy and compassion found in Jesus Christ. It is right to come to worship meditating on this grace that has been bestowed upon us in Christ, and thinking daily about the mercy that God has granted to us. In light of this, we can live thankfully and joyfully!

Kingdom people are those who give thanks to God in Jesus Christ! Kingdom people know of the compassion and mercy of God extended to them in Jesus Christ! There is a life of gratitude and worship before Christ who sits upon the throne; this is our earthly privilege, it will be our eternal heavenly privilege. Jesus Christ is acknowledged as King of the Kingdom and is given the praise and worship he deserves from one out of ten of the healed lepers!

II. The Pharisees and the Kingdom (vv. 20-31)

The Pharisees ask Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come showing that they were expecting God's Messianic Rule or Kingdom to be manifested at any time in history (v. 20; cf. Acts 1:6ff).

ESV Luke 17:20-21: Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed,²¹ nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

The Kingdom of God has come in Jesus (Matt. 13:11, 16-17; 12:28; Luke 11:20)...is coming in Jesus (Luke 9:27; Matt. 10:23; 16:28; Mark 9:1)...and will come in Jesus (Matt. 8:11-12; 13:39-42, 49-50; 25:31ff; cf. Luke 17:20-22). We should understand that according to the Gospels and the clear teaching of Jesus the Kingdom of God has three "acts" of being revealed; the Kingdom of God is present in Jesus, is continuing to be manifested, and will come again in a consummate and climatic way at the end of time.

The term "Kingdom of God" is used twenty-seven times in the Gospel of Luke alone. As we have learned in our past sermons, the manifestation of the Kingdom in Jesus Christ is the central theme of Dr. Luke's gospel (beginning with the birth narratives of Mary being told by Gabriel that she will give birth to the long-awaited Messianic Davidic King, and back with the clear historical comparison between the rule and reigns of Caesar Augustus and Caesar Christ at the time of Jesus' birth, see sermons on Luke 1-2).

The Kingdom of God as we have learned earlier in our Gospel of Luke series has been defined simply as *God's sovereign rule and reign over his people*. The Kingdom of God is the manifestation of how creation should live under God the Creator's rule that has been realized throughout history when God's people lived obediently by faith before the world. This Kingdom of God will one day fully expand to include the whole world when all things are restored in the New Creation (Romans 8:18-25; Revelation 21-22).

The Kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus is the realization of Israel's hope, the fulfillment of the Kingdom promises made to the fathers; the new and final order at the end of history that has at last arrived with Jesus (see *New Dictionary of Theology*, "Kingdom of God", ed. Ferguson, Wright and Packer).

Since the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve lived by faith under God's rule, the Kingdom of God has progressively been manifested through Biblical history (although the term "Kingdom of God" is not used in the OT, nevertheless the idea is pervasive: Psalm 47:2; 103:19; 145:13; Isa. 41:21; 52:7; Dan 2:44; 7:14; cf. Exodus 19:6;).

Although the Kingdom of God was lost in the beginning due to Adam's transgression and the subjects were sent "east of Eden", nevertheless the Kingdom has been progressively restored as God had made himself and his will known and his people have submitted by faith to his rule and will.

The Kingdom was especially manifested to Abraham and was received by faith that Abraham's true descendents *by faith* would one day live under God's rule and reign. This covenant promise was partially realized by Israel when she was obedient by faith to the rule of God found in His Law in the land God had given to them as a type of the whole world (cf. Rom. 4:13; Matt. 5:5; Rev. 21:1 ff). Especially during the times of Kings David and Solomon did Israel realize (albeit temporally and imperfectly) the coming reign of God over His people.

At the coming of Christ, the Kingdom of God was clearly and more fully manifested in those who followed the teachings and rule of Christ the King whether Jew or Gentile and still revealed in His visible Church on earth (there is no difference between Mark and Luke's *Kingdom of God* and Matthew's *Kingdom of Heaven*; Matthew seeks to avoid using the name of God because of Jewish interpretation of the third commandment at the time).

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

The gospel of Jesus Christ itself is the message or "gospel" of the Kingdom. This gospel or good news message is that in Christ, the Kingdom is found:

ESV Matthew 4:23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

ESV Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.

ESV Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

The gospel of the Kingdom was made manifest by Jesus Christ through preaching and through specific signs like the healing of lepers (cf. Luke 5:12ff; 17:11ff). Again, we should say that ***the Kingdom of God has come in Jesus...is coming in Jesus...and will come in Jesus*** (vv. 20-21).

The Pharisees in Jesus' time were looking merely for a future Kingdom; they were also looking for the Kingdom through scientific analysis of certain signs that they anticipated (παράτηρρ, σῶζ paratereseos is a Greek word used in medical and astronomical research or study). According to the popular Pharisaical interpretations of the Old Testament as well as evidence in the Intertestamental Jewish writings, the Messianic Kingdom was to be primarily revealed suddenly and politically with great military might- -at Jerusalem (or the Temple)- -and then the end would come immediately (Many people were only looking for Messiah on a white horse rather than a Messiah on a donkey! Cf. John 12).

And while they were looking for the Kingdom in a certain locale geographically upon the earth (like in Jerusalem or in the Temple), Jesus in contrast tells them that it is within their grasp NOW (not merely in the future) ***but it is found where they least expect it and not where they think it is found!***

In fact, the Pharisees seem to be looking for a political sign or a military victory for Israel over their enemies and thus why Jesus says: "The Kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed (like signs found in the *Headline News* on CNN or in the *Galilean Herald*)..." Certain political, social or military events will not give the revelation of 'Look, here it is!' with the overthrow and defeat of some military might in Rome or 'There' in another Jewish revolt against their oppressors (v. 21)!

You can imagine the Pharisees late at night around a lamp in a dimly lit room with shadows dancing upon their faces as they discuss quietly out of the hearing of Rome, the varying manifestations in recent events that they thought revealed the inbreaking of God's Kingdom: "We haven't had a Jewish revolt lately!" One would say, and another would respond: "One day, it will be again glorious like in the time of David and in the time of Judas Maccabeus when we shall overthrow these enemies of God!"

“Sinners all!” They say together as they silently exit into the night back to their homes smelling like pipe tobacco and good conversation, thinking that they have done their duties as worthy servants of God (cf. Luke 17:10).

Not there.

Not there (v. 23).

Here?

Not here (v. 23).

Where?

Where is the Kingdom to be found then? Where will the Pharisees and all people find the Kingdom of God manifested? Jesus is teaching that the Kingdom of God is found in Him! Jesus is teaching that the Kingdom is not merely future, nor can it be found in a certain locale. Why? God’s reign in Christ is cosmological in its implications and scope.

To look for the Kingdom’s manifestation apart from Christ is to miss seeing it and being a part of it. ***In Christ we see the Kingdom of God or the reign of God (incarnate!) fully manifested in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.*** In the fullness of the times, those who disciples (believers) by faith in Jesus Christ are part of the new humanity under God’s rule and reign or “Kingdom” (because Jesus is the second Adam, Rom. 5:14-21; 1 Cor. 15:21ff, 45ff), and Dr. Luke teaches us that Jesus was baptized by John as the representative of a new people (cf. Luke 3:21, 22).

In Jesus, the True and Faithful and obedient Israelite, we find the one who is the True Seed of Abraham and heir of all the Abrahamic promises (Gal. 3:16, 26-29); all who believe in Christ are children and heirs of the Abrahamic promise and Jesus is an Eternal King greater than King David.

In summary, the Kingdom is eminently and radically Christocentric- -to find the Kingdom of God, one must find Christ! One cannot find or enter the Kingdom without Christ. One cannot see or enter the Kingdom without being “born from above” by God’s Spirit so that they have eyes to see and believe (cf. John 3:3ff).

This is why Jesus answers the Pharisees’ question by saying that “The Kingdom of God is in the midst of you” (or “within your grasp” –v. 21b). The Kingdom has come in Jesus...is coming in Jesus...and will come in Jesus again. Some translations (KJV) inaccurately translate Jesus’ words as “*the Kingdom of God is within you*” but when comparing this translation with other scriptures, this is clearly not the case. Jesus would not have told the unbelieving Pharisees that the Kingdom was found within them.

Rather, Jesus is saying (as the ESV and NASB accurately render it) that the Kingdom of God is among you; or “in the midst of you” or better: “found in me” Jesus says! As biblical scholar T. W. Manson once wrote: “The Kingdom of God is a fact of history, not of psychology...the Kingdom of God is a state of affairs, not a state of mind.”

Remember Dr. Luke’s earlier teaching? Jesus says clearly:

ESV Luke 11:20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

The special time of Kingdom revelation during Jesus’ earthly ministry will soon be over; many will wish that they had heard and seen what Jesus had taught to them (v. 22).

Jesus’ temporal Kingdom Messianic-Mission will end in suffering and death, and he will be rejected by “this generation” of Israelites (v. 25). In other words, the victorious reign of Christ over His Kingdom will look like a failure to those *without eyes of faith*. The King will be killed and before the glorious manifestation of his power and reign, there will first be suffering and death! ***Humiliation and cross must precede exaltation and glory!***

But there is a future aspect of the Kingdom of God (but it is not merely future and this proves the Pharisees’ eschatological expectations wrong). This future revelation of the Kingdom will be when Jesus returns and consummates fully the Kingdom at the end of time (“The Days of the Son of Man”- vv.24-26).

“The Days of the Son of Man”

Comparison: Days of Noah and Lot (vv. 26-30) with the Day of the LORD (or “when the Son of Man is revealed”). Verse 26 begins: “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man...”). We should remember that neither Noah nor Lot were necessarily paragons of virtuous living; they are used as examples by Jesus to show the preparedness for His full revelation and Second Coming that His disciples should emulate.

Dr. Luke recording the words of Jesus, comments on the Genesis flood and the judgment of God that came upon all creation (except for eight chosen people), by contrasting it to the coming day of the Son of Man.

We should understand that the flood in Scripture and in Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament was understood by many people (particularly the teachers) of Jesus’ time as a prototype of the last judgment of God at the end of the world:

ESV Genesis 7:7, 21-24: And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood....^{ESV} Genesis 7:21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and

animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

^{ESV} 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6-7: ...If he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly....^{ESV} 2 Peter 3:6-7:And that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Jesus' focus here is the unexpected way in which God's judgment came in the days of Noah and Lot- -Judgment did indeed come, **but men were not expecting it and so they were caught unawares** (17:26-30). As the world "that then existed" was judged in the times of Noah, so the world "that now exist" (cf. 2 Peter 3:6-7) are also reserved for judgment.

As the world "that then existed" had people going about their daily business of "eating and drinking and marrying, etc" (v. 27) without a willingness to accept and understand that God's judgment was coming **so will be the same with the coming of the Son of Man.**

It is interesting to note in light of other passages of teaching from Jesus that the activities that characterized the people of Noah's time were normal daily activities (although they were indeed a greatly sinful people, Gen. 6:5, 11). These normal daily activities had taken priority in their lives and caused them to live sinful (but "normally sinful") lives without thought of the coming of the Kingdom.

Jesus' stress is that now that the Kingdom has been manifested in a fuller and clearer way now with his coming (vv. 20-21), it is especially odd that sinful men will not live with the understanding that God's judgment is coming- -and to take heed by repenting for the Kingdom of God is at hand (cf. John the Baptist's sermons of preparation from Luke 3:7-: "Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (v.7)...Even now the axe is laid at the root of the trees (v. 9)...His winnowing fork is in his hand...the chaff shall be burned with unquenchable fire..." (v.17), etc)!

As in the days of Noah, and also as "in the days of Lot" (v. 28) which reminds us of the people who lived sinfully on the cities of the plain in Sodom where Lot lived after his separation from Abraham, also recorded in Genesis (13:12-13; 19:1-11).

In contrast to the description of Sodom as a place of great sin (Gen. 13:13), Jesus' focus in Dr. Luke's gospel is again their lack of preparedness and expectation of the coming of the Kingdom of God and judgment- - his focus is NOT on their specific lives of sinfulness! Dr. Luke records Jesus as saying about Lot's day: "They were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building" (v. 28); Jesus doesn't deny their sinfulness and the just right of God to punish their sin, but his emphasis in this teaching is on their lack of expectation and unpreparedness.

Jesus' focus is that people are sinfully preoccupied with busy-ness and NOT aware of God's impending judgment.

As biblical scholar T. W. Manson commented in his book *The Mission and Message of Jesus* (pg. 436): “The things that happened in the remote past have a real bearing on the present. The most dangerous of all theological errors is that which says, ‘He’s a good fellow, and ‘twill all be well’, rashly assuming that our indifference and carelessness have their counterparts in heaven and that God’s holy purpose must inevitably come to terms with our shallow optimism.”

Dr. Luke’s focus seems to be on the fact that the sinful people in Noah’s and Lot’s days were guilty of “culpable nonchalance” (Beale and Carson, pg. 348). Another called the great sin as one of “indifference” (Hughes, pg. 180). I think this is correct.

Jesus is saying that the days of the coming (or full and consummate) manifestation of His Kingdom will be a time when men and women with no regard for their sins are just going about their normal daily business of eating, drinking, doing business, getting prepared for marriage, marrying, planting and building, and that these things have become such a priority and they have become so preoccupied by them that they are not concerned with anything but their own life-pursuits!

To put this in modern terms and images: Jesus is saying that when he returns people will be going out to eat at their favorite restaurants, preparing the grill for some hamburgers, inviting friends over for wine, going to work on a Wednesday morning in traffic, purchasing *Bride’s* and *Modern Bride* magazines, planning reception parties and picking out gowns, planting new trees in the back yard, and building new homes and building on to their present homes...when Jesus Christ comes back to judge the world.

The imagery is “normal living” that is focused on the fact that life will go on in the light on Main Street in “Our Town” USA, not that life in the sinful darkness with underhanded dealings, death, crime, murder etc. in the back alley of Gotham City - and Jesus will return. But that for many, their lives have been placed before God - even “good and nice” people—and they will be unprepared at Jesus’ coming!

The people will certainly NOT be looking for, nor prepared for the full manifestation of God’s Kingdom revealed in Christ’s return! This is why Jesus says the righteous person who is fully possessed by Christ and therefore an heir of the Kingdom will not be characterized by running off their roof on that apocalyptic day and seeking to protect his goods and possessions (which are images of their “lives” - v.31 - They won’t be trying to save their latest issue of *Bride’s Magazine* or their wedding dress, or their grills, or their hopes, plans, and dreams in this age that is passing away!).

Kingdom people are not characterized by looking back to retrieve and protect and save their own lives (v. 31b- Like those people who have already made many excuses as to why they cannot follow Jesus, 14:18-24).

ESV **Luke 17:30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.**

Jesus is contrasting by way of analogy the future full revelation or “apocalypse” (lit. *avpokalu,ptetai apokaluptetai* in Greek that is translated “revealed” in v. 30) of God’s Kingdom when the Son of Man will be seen and fully revealed as the Great Messiah and God as written in the Book of Daniel; Unlike the suffering, humiliation, rejection, and death that Jesus must face on the inauguration of the coming of the Kingdom (v.25), in the Second Coming, or full manifestation of the Kingdom, Jesus will be revealed as Messianic King in all his exalted glory! As the Prophet Daniel revealed of Messiah:

ESV **Daniel 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.**

Son of Man [Excursus]

The Son of Man terminology (he uses four times in the present passage of Scripture: Luke 17:22, 24, 26, 30), Dr. Luke has used many times before in his Gospel (see scripture below as well as Luke 18:8, 31; 19:10; 21:27, 36; 22:22, 48, 69; 24:7). In fact, the term “Son of Man” is Jesus’ most frequently used term to refer to himself and His ministry- -particularly his death and suffering that will come in time:

ESV **Luke 5:24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”- he said to the man who was paralyzed- “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”**

ESV **Luke 6:5 And he said to them, “The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.”**

ESV **Luke 6:22 “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!”**

ESV **Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’**

ESV **Luke 9:22 saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”**

ESV **Luke 9:26** *For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

ESV **Luke 9:44** *"Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men."*

ESV **Luke 9:58** *And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."*

ESV **Luke 11:30** *For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.*

ESV **Luke 12:8** *"And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God,*

ESV **Luke 12:10** *And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.*

ESV **Luke 12:40** *You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."*

The term "Son of Man" refers to Jesus' full Messianic revelation of His sovereign rule and reign over his Kingdom. This rule and reign is being revealed in their midst at the present time as Jesus is with them in the flesh (v. 21). However, the "Son of Man" must die as a substitute for sinners (v. 25; cf. 9:44ff); he must go through great suffering and humiliation in order to take his exalted and supremely regal position as the enthroned Son of Man-Son of God at God's right hand.

After the Son of Man suffers, he will rise from the dead and take the Davidic Throne in Heaven at God's right hand. He will rule and reign over heaven and earth (cf. Matt. 28:18-20) until he returns to fully reveal the Kingdom (1 Cor. 15:21-26).

ESV **Luke 21:27** *And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*

This is another reference to Daniel's prophetic vision of the Son of Man ruling sovereignly over heaven and earth as Great King and Judge (Dan. 7:13-14).

And during the time that Jesus is enthroned in his ascended glory at God's right hand, men like in the days of Noah and Lot will continue to live sinfully as they have always lived, *even though imminent judgment is due at any time!!!* (vv. 33-37). Remember the warnings of Jesus about being ready:

ESV **Matthew 24:36** *"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.*

ESV Matthew 24:50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know

ESV Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

III. “Remember Lot’s Wife” (vv. 32-37)

Lot’s wife looked back! The Bible describes this as:

ESV Genesis 19:24-26: Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. ²⁵ And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. ²⁶ But Lot’s wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

What was her great sin? Putting her hand to the plow and looking back- -she revealed that she wasn’t fit for service in Christ’s Kingdom. She was too preoccupied with her present earthly life; her hope was not in God but in her possessions and stuff!

ESV Luke 9:62 Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Lot’s wife in ancient Jewish literature was understood to be a “monument to an unbelieving soul” (or an image of an unbeliever- *Wisdom* 10:7). Jesus is telling all the people who have ears to hear to believe that the Day of the Son of Man which means Kingdom judgment for those who reject Christ- -is near- -and therefore look to Christ, and don’t look back.

Again, Jesus stresses the importance in light of the coming full manifestation of God’s Kingdom when Messiah returns to lose one’s life and all the things of one’s life that causes a disciple to be distracted and preoccupied!

ESV Luke 17:33 Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.

The suffering of Messiah would mean that Jesus’ Messianic-Mission had been accomplished in his work of humiliation here. In Jesus’ resurrection, God would vindicate his Son and seat him at his right hand. This would be for the entire world to see in real time and space history- -but men would not acknowledge his reign and his coming judgment and the full revelation of His Kingdom.

However, the accomplishment of his mission would signal the time of fulfillment when the Kingdom of God would be fully manifested for the entire world to see. Sinful mankind will be judged and God’s people will be fully redeemed and saved.

The future revelation of the Son of Man and his Kingdom will be for all to see (“as lightning flashes and lights up one side to the other”- v. 24); like vultures gathering and

circling dead corpses in a hot desert land, so the future manifestation of the Kingdom will be obvious to all!

Why? Because upon all who are spiritually dead to the Kingdom in Jesus Christ will one day experience havoc, devastating destruction, and eternal torment at the hands of God for failing to believe in Jesus and thus enter the Kingdom of God- - there will be no question as to whether or not this is the biblical apocalyptic event that Jesus spoke of; the Book of Revelation describes the ‘Days of the Son of Man’ and the Great Day of Wrath of the Lamb this way:

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" – Revelation 6:15-17.

The imagery in verses 34-36 is that there will be a separation of people between those who believed God and His Word and anticipated his coming Kingdom, and there will be those like Lot’s wife who do not (will not!!) lose their lives, but are part of a the great eschatological judgment of God (v. 32a). Two in one bed will be separated (v. 34); two women working (grinding) together will be separated (v. 35).

This separation of people is due to their relationship to the King of the Kingdom! Simeon prophesied that Jesus would divide and cause the “rising and falling of many in Israel” (2:34-35) and Jesus said that his Word and Kingdom rule and reign had been manifested to bring division at every level of society (12:51).

The imagery that Jesus uses here seems to indicate that Jesus is thinking of the example of Enoch and his separation from the judgment of the world. In the Old Testament, Enoch is described as a man who “walked with God” in the midst of a sinful and perverse generation. In the midst of this sinful world that was about to be a recipient of God’s wrath and judgment, Enoch who walked with God by faith was taken to be with God forever - -to avoid the coming wrath:

ESV Genesis 5:23 Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years.²⁴ Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

ESV Hebrews 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.

It should be noted that if Jesus is referring to the godly example of Enoch in Luke 17:34-36 as well as Noah and his family (as I think he is), then Jesus is teaching that those who walk with God, those who have found favor with God (like Noah- Gen. 6:5), will be saved and redeemed by Christ, and will not be judged.

Remember that in Genesis (which Jesus comments on much of the narrative of Genesis in our passage) Enoch is saved and taken to be with God and he is the builder and part of

the City of God by faith (Gen. 4:17). Enoch's city was in contrast to the City of Man built and established by Cain and his descendants. Noah was one who was a citizen of the City of God as Enoch's heir by faith (Gen. 5:28ff; 6:6-8). Dr. Luke particularly places Jesus Christ in Enoch and Noah's line in His genealogy (Luke 3:36-37).

All those who believe in Christ by faith will be saved and redeemed and kept from the coming Judgment of God on the Day of the return of the Son of Man- -even Enoch prophesied about this coming day in Old Testament times:

ESV Jude 1:14-15: It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

The Apostle Paul teaches Christians that our hope is in God who has loved and chosen us in Christ; we will not experience his wrath for we believe in Jesus who delivers (or saves) us from the wrath to come!

1 Thessalonians 1:4-10: For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹ For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

As Enoch and Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD, so do all men find favor and escape from God's just wrath in the LORD Jesus Christ!

The message is for all to see the Kingdom of God revealed in Jesus Christ. The message of hope is that in Jesus Christ we will find all of God's Kingdom blessings to his people, especially salvation and redemption. In Jesus we are heirs to all the eternal riches of the Kingdom of God.

We must live and serve God now as part of His Kingdom, as his Kingdom people in reliance upon his grace and seek to expand and pray for his present Kingdom to continue to grow as men and women throughout the world hear and believe the Gospel. We must live expectantly as we await the full and consummate manifestation of God's kingdom that is to come on the Day of the Son of Man.

We shall learn more about how to live now in light of the future Kingdom that has been revealed in our next sermon, Lord willing.

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Next Sermon: “***Kingdom Living Now in the Future Kingdom to be Revealed***”

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Scripture Lesson

^{ESV} Genesis 7:7, 21-24: And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. . . .^{ESV} Genesis 7:21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the earth 150 days.

^{ESV} **2 Peter 2:5; 3:6-7:** ...If he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly. . . .^{ESV} **2 Peter 3:6-7:**And that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

2 Chronicles 6:29-33:..."Whatever prayer, whatever plea is made by any man or by all your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own sorrow and stretching out his hands toward this house,³⁰ then hear from heaven your dwelling place and forgive and render to each whose heart you know, according to all his ways, for you, you only, know the hearts of the children of mankind,³¹ that they may fear you and walk in your ways all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our fathers.³² "Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for the sake of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays toward this house,³³ hear from heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.

^{ESV} **Daniel 7:13-14:** I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Luke 5:12-16: While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."¹³ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.¹⁴ And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them."¹⁵ But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

^{ESV} **1 Corinthians 15:21-26:** For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

^{ESV} **Revelation 4:9-11:** And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever,¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,¹¹ "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

^{ESV} **Revelation 5:11-12:** Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"