Thy Kingdom Come

Luke 17:20-21

October 2, 2022

Well, as we return to our exposition of Luke's Gospel, you can take your Bibles and turn to Luke 17 and verse 20, which takes us into the blessed subject of eschatology, eschatology. Eschatology is, it's the Greek word *eschatos*, which means last or final, and so eschatology is the study of last or final things.

God has given us, and, in the calendar a decent run, here, of Sundays that we can tackle the rest of Luke 17 according to his will because, and, and we need those Sundays, all the Sundays that we can squeeze out of this because this is such a rich and vital portion of our Lord's teaching. And there's more to come in Luke's Gospel as well. If you've read ahead, you know that.

Last time we were in the text, we noted Luke's comment there in Luke 17:11, and it reminded us that we are in the

travel section of Jesus' ministry. Luke said, there, that they were, "On the way to Jerusalem and passing along between Samaria and Galilee", and we talked about all that last time we were in the text. So, we'll pick it up from there.

After Jesus healed the ten lepers, and after this, what's probably a short stay in an obscure little village in that remote area to the west side of the Jordan, Jesus continues on into the region of Perea and crosses the Jordan to go to the east side of the Jordan. And then after that time, we're going to track as he comes back through Jericho and crosses the Jordan one final time on his final approach to Jerusalem.

So, we don't know exactly where he is geographically at this time. We've got a general idea; he's somewhere along the way. Luke hasn't been specific to tell us exactly where he is because that's not really the focus here. But along the way, Jesus receives a question from some Pharisees about the coming kingdom.

We'll pick it up and read from verse 20 through the end of the chapter. "Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom would come, he answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst

of you.' And he said to the disciples, 'The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, "Look, there!" or "Look, here!" Do not go out or follow them. For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.

"'First he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. Just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

"Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot-they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all-so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

"'On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken the other left.

There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.' They said to him, 'Where, Lord?' He said to them, 'Where the corpse is there the vultures will gather.'"

It's a lot there, right? A lot there. There is so much that I could draw your attention to just by way of observation, so many interesting things to see, to talk about. But I really want to point just one thing out to you by way of introduction, which really, especially seems to be a fitting way to introduce the subject of eschatology. But really, it does apply to any study of biblical or theological significance, is this comment.

We see that it's the Pharisees in verse 20 who introduced the subject. They're the ones who bring this to the floor, to the attention of Jesus, to ask for his comment. They ask about the coming of the kingdom of God, and Jesus answers their question. He does it concisely, but it's thorough. It's a thorough answer. And then he quickly turns to speak to his disciples in verses 22 and following. So there's a Pharisee question, there's a Pharisee challenge, and then Jesus turns to speak to his disciples, and he expands, and he elaborates, and he teaches and he instructs. We've been seeing that same pattern for quite some time now, but here's what I want you to notice here.

After Jesus answers the Pharisees' question about when the kingdom of God will come, as Jesus turns to teach his own disciples, notice that the language changes just slightly. He doesn't speak to them about the kingdom of God per se, though that is the subject. Rather, he speaks to them about what? The coming of the Son of Man. That shift, I believe, from the kingdom of God to the Son of Man, which they really are one and the same, but it is a different lens through which to see the eschaton.

I think it really reveals a basic dividing line in the interests of the Pharisee minded and those who are the true disciples of Jesus Christ. Maybe a subtle thing, but the shift is noticeable because those who love Jesus Christ, those who long for Christ, are totally and completely satisfied with the king. They are enthralled with him. They love him even as they wait for the kingdom of God to come. Even if that waiting takes a long, long time, they love him. We've made this point before.

And just to remind you, the Pharisees and the disciples of Jesus, they shared much of the same theology. Both of them shared a belief in the Bible. Both held the Scripture to be divinely inspired and inerrant and authoritative. Both were supernaturalists. They believed in coming judgment. They

believed in forgiveness of sins from God. They believed in salvation from God. They believed in resurrection, eternal life. Both believed, as seen here, in the kingdom. That's why the Pharisees are there in the first place. They're mixed in among the disciples, traveling along with them.

But where the Pharisees had an interest in theology and in orthodoxy, as we all do, as all believing people do, it was apparent that what they did not truly love was the God that they studied. Where the Pharisees had a high regard for the Scripture, they didn't truly obey the word of God that they studied. They were technically orthodox, but they were spiritually dead, which means they were not orthodox.

As we've said before, it's really not unlike, I would dare say, most of today's professing Christians. It's not unlike them. It's not unlike many church-going evangelicals, and perhaps there are some of you, even here today, who are like this. I can also tell you, that’s not unlike some who take up the study of theology and eschatology; sharp minds but sometimes sharper tongues or pens or keyboards.

There is an error in some of smug, self-congratulatory pride in some who study theology, some who study eschatology, as they measure others against themselves, who, they believe, has,

is the very canon of orthodoxy, the very standard of orthodoxy. They think they've mastered it, pat themselves on the back while they look down on others.

And Jesus' true disciples are of a very different kind. They have a very different nature. Jesus' disciples know that they are sinners. They know that even talking about the last things without cowering away in craven fear is a kindness of God that they do not deserve.

That they can look ahead to the coming of the Son of Man with joy instead of terror is an indication that they've been brought from death to life. They're poor in spirit; they are humbled before God, meek before their fellow men, and they're just happy to have their sins forgiven. They rejoice in the gift of divine righteousness that's been given to them, granted to them, that they're covered in. They marvel at being reconciled to God. They count it a daily privilege to walk in holy obedience to the Lord.

So when they study any theology, anything in Scripture, when they study eschatology, it's driven by faith because there is a longing, there, for the Lord. They see the kingdom not so much because of its benefits, not because of the gifts and the blessings that they're going to derive from the kingdom coming,

but because of the coming of the kingdom is the very vindication of God in Christ, that's what they want to see.

They pray, thy kingdom come, because they long, verse 22, they earnestly long, very strong word, *epithymeō*, earnestly long to see just one of the days of the Son of Man, and they live in a somewhat heartsick condition until he arrives. They're not fully, never fully at ease until they're rejoined with the savior, whom they know and they love.

My friends, that's how we want to pursue this study together. That's how we want to study any subject in Scripture, or any subject of theology. We are citizens of this kingdom because we've been converted to God, because we're filled with the fruit of the Spirit, because we're worshippers of the king, who is Christ.

And we pursue the subject not in any self-centered and prideful way, not in any dispassionate or academic manner either, as if there's many different views, and we're just going to throw them all up in the air, and just take your pick. We're not going to do that, either. But our pursuit of this subject of eschatology or any other subject is filled with affection for Christ. It's governed by the Spirit of God. It is sweetened by the fruit of his Spirit growing within us, when it's pursued in

a longing to see God as regarded as holy, honored as the God that he is, for his faithfulness to keep all of his promises. That's what we long to see.

So with that in mind, let's take a look again at that opening section and see what the Pharisees ask that started the ball rolling. Just two verses for today, verses 20-21, "Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'"

Notice in those two verses, we see that full expression, the kingdom of God, and it's used not once, not twice, but three times, the full expression. The word kingdom, *basileia*, is the Greek word, and in 39 out of 46 times that it shows up in Luke's Gospel, it refers to the kingdom of God. Out of the 39 times that *basileia* is used to refer to God's kingdom, in 32 of 39 times, Luke leaves no doubt because he gives the full expression, *ho basileia theos*, that is, the kingdom of God, the full phrase.

When the angel Gabriel came to Mary in Luke 1:26, this is the first use in Luke's Gospel of this expression, the kingdom,

kingdom of God. He told her, Gabriel told her about this miraculous conception, about this child that she would conceive supernaturally in her womb. She would bear a son, Jesus, and Gabriel told her, "He will be great and He will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

That's the first use of the word *basileia* in Luke, Gabriel telling the teenaged Mary about the eternal kingdom of God, about the king over God's kingdom, Jesus. And you can check the context on this. You will see that Gabriel, as he speaks of this, he does not elaborate, not at all, about the nature and the character of that kingdom. Why is that? I'd submit to you that he is using language and concepts that this teenaged girl already knows.

Same situation when Jesus spoke to the citizens of Capernaum. Later on, as he starts his ministry, he's healing, he's teaching, he's casting out demons, and the citizens of Capernaum want to hinder him from leaving the city. But Jesus said in Luke 4:43, "'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.'" There's no elaboration for them, either. There's no

extra explanation when he mentions the kingdom of God. Later in the Sermon on the Mount, just mentions as a concept. He knows people will get it.

Same thing with every use of the kingdom of God, not only in Luke's Gospel, but also in the other synoptic Gospels as well. When Jesus speaks to the Jews, whether they are friends or enemies, whether they are family or strangers, whether disciples or Pharisees, elders, scribes or Sadducees, this kingdom concept never seems to require extra elaboration or extra explanation. Some, some correction, certainly, but a baseline of understanding about the kingdom of God existed in the Jewish culture. From the greatest to the least, from angels to virgin teenaged girls, they all just seemed to know. They shared a common knowledge, a basic knowledge about the kingdom of God.

Obviously, there was some confusion about one's relation to the kingdom of God, for sure. The Pharisees, they thought, we're in. Some were deceived about their place in the kingdom of God, obviously. As in our text, the Pharisees needed a correction about the nature of the signs that accompany the kingdom of God. The disciples needed clarification too, so he gives them further instruction.

But the common denominator for the Jewish people is this shared hope in the coming kingdom of God. They are all looking for it, they're all eager to see it, and when Jesus comes, he preaches on it. In fact, he calls it good news. It seems to be one of his favorite subjects to talk about. "I must preach the good news," *euangelizō,* "of the kingdom of God to other towns as well." I must evangelize the kingdom of God message to the other towns as well because I was sent for this purpose.

Says he went on through the cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. When he chose the Twelve, he gave them power and authority all, over all demons, to cure diseases. He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

We like to use the expression God, Man, Christ, Response, Consequence. We use that expression. Doesn't say he did that. It says he went to preach and proclaim the kingdom of God. When the crowds came, he welcomed them. He spoke to them of the kingdom of God. He cured those who had need of healing. The kingdom of God was the Gospel that he preached when he appointed the seventy-two evangelists. He sent them out two by two to heal the sick and to say, "The kingdom of God has come near you."

I could continue on, going over and over, providing multitude of examples from Luke's Gospel. I could add, throw in other examples from the other Gospels of Matthew and Mark as well. The picture that emerges, the picture that clarifies for us and what I think is beyond dispute, Jesus preached the kingdom to a people who shared a basic and a common understanding about that kingdom, about its nature, about its character.

Where did they get that shared basic understanding? They got it from Scripture, didn't they? They got it from the Bible, which for them was what we called the Old Testament. For them it was just simply the Scripture, or it was the Law and the Prophets, or the Law of Moses, or simply the Law. Every single Sabbath they listened to the Law as it was read, Scripture as it was explained.

Kids, they would use the Law as their textbook at Sabbath school all during the week, learning how to read and write from the Law. The Law was the Jewish culture. It preserved language and custom and tradition. It prescribed moral and ethical behavior, and it handed that down generation to generation. Really, the Law itself, God’s word itself, was their culture.

Used to be that way in our country, too, didn't it? Long ago, the Bible was our textbook, referenced all the time by primers that taught reading and writing. The Bible was used for example, used for, used for essays and writing and thinking for kids growing up in our country. The Bible is what safeguarded and preserved our culture. It reinforced a set of morals given to us by God. It, it taught ethics.

Obviously, that's no longer the case. We can imagine the effect that that would have on a people if it were. Can you imagine what it would be like for the earth to be filled with "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"? Think that would make a difference socially, politically, culturally? Think it would make a difference if people were converted and loved the glory of the Lord?

Well, for the Jews, the Law gave them their identity. It provided their entire worldview. It was the lens through which they looked at life. It explained origins, fall, redemption, consummation. It explained what went wrong with the world, and what's going to be done to fix it. For first century Jews, the Law and the Prophets explain what had happened to them as a people, as a nation, because of the disobedience of their forefathers, because of the rampant idolatry in their nation, as

they tried to be like all the other Canaanite nations that hadn't been helped by their gods, but it, been defeated, driven out of the land. And what are these Israelites do but start taking on the same worship? What is that about? In Jeremiah, God says, "You've committed two evils. You've exchanged me, the fountain of living waters, for broken vessels that can't hold any water." Are you, are you nuts? Are you insane?

First century Jews understood from the Law and the Prophets what had happened to their people, why it was that the Romans are in their land, dominating them. And all of that passed on a warning to each and every generation. Jews read about the promise of judgment from God from way back in Exodus and Deuteronomy, read about those judgments prophesied and then fulfilled in their nation literally, visibly, physically. Judgments meted out on the land, in time and in space. It was a matter of their recorded history. It was a matter of, I mean, they could see the marks of battle in their own land, walls that used to stand strong, gone. They could see it.

They also read in Scripture promises of restoration, promises of divine salvation. The same God who promised literal, physical judgments on them, he also promised a future

restoration to Israel by grace through faith in a coming Messiah.

So, what they held as common knowledge, what didn't need to be explained to them because it was a part of their culture, this concept of the kingdom of God, this is not common knowledge for us today, is it? This isn't common. In some ways, we're just as ignorant as the Gentiles that the Jews knew back then, and we need a lot of study and understanding. There's a lot to understand.

In fact, I think many of the debates about eschatology today, as I observe them, as I read about them, as I listen to them, they seem to stem from a lack of shared understanding about the kingdom, the nature of the kingdom, the character of the kingdom. So, let's start there, verses 20-21, by setting up a basic foundation to understand the kingdom of God. And again, it's repeated three times: the kingdom of God, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of God. I think if that's important, we probably ought to understand just a little bit of what's in the Old Testament about it.

So, this first point, this is just about catching up with the conversation that's going on between the Pharisees, Jesus, and the disciples are all there. So, if we're going to be active

participants in this conversation, got a little, got to bone up a little bit. So, point number one, point number one, very simple, the kingdom of God is a mediated dominion. It's a mediated dominion.

Mediated, meaning there's a mediator. God mediates his dominion on earth through a mediator. Want to say just a little bit about this now, enough to give you a sense of what the kingdom of God means and kind of gives you, give you some basic baseline exposure to this. But obviously, we've got weeks to come to carry out this study, so we're not going to get it all in one fell swoop.

But the people, as I said, the people to whom Jesus spoke, whether virgin teenaged girls, whether it was fishermen turned disciples, whether it was educated scribes, they understood from the Law and the Prophets that the kingdom of God is a mediated dominion on the earth, which is God's intent from the very beginning. Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" and what? "'Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'"

That verb, "Let them have dominion," *rāḏâ*. Let them rule. Let them govern. Let them exercise authority. God stated his intention right there in verse 26 before he created them. And then after he created them, in verse 27 he tells them his purpose, which he'd already stated, tells them that in verse 28, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion'" rule, exercise authority, "'over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

God made Adam the federal head of humanity. He made him head of a race of what you might call coregents in exercising dominion. Created in God's own image, they exercise authority that's delegated by God, and they exercise that authority to rule over the entire earth and its creatures. So, Adam, he is a divinely appointed ruler, and he exercises dominion. It's a legitimate rulership over a physical realm, visible, the entire visible earth.

We see the same dominion pattern wherever and whenever God appoints a mediator like Adam to a position of authority. We see three things: a ruler, rulership, and a realm, a ruler,

rulership, and a realm. God appoints a ruler with, giving him adequate authority so that he can exercise a rulership, or what we call dominion, and he exercises that rulership, this legitimate use of authority backed by a legitimate exercise of his power, to rule over a visible, physical realm of subjects. It's kingdom of God. It's a mediated kingdom, the exercise of dominion by the agency of a ruler, by means of rulership, in a scope or a sphere called a realm.

Adam's the first ruler, mediator, exercising rulership in the realm of the earth. But as we know, recorded in Genesis 3, Adam was tested. Adam failed, and so God promised another mediator in Genesis 3:15, the offspring of a woman, the one who would be, his heel would be struck by the serpent, by the offspring of the serpent, but he would crush the serpent's head. That's the mediator, that's the Gospel, the *proto-euangelion*, the, the very first Gospel in Scripture points ahead to Christ.

We see, as we go through the Old Testament, not going to take you through every passage, but God appointed other mediatorial rulers as well, other types of rulers or types of Christ. The Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the judges, Saul, David, Solomon, all of them, as we know, we read about their reigns, we read about their triumphs, but also, what, their tragedies. We

read about their, their righteousness, but also we read about their sin, too, don't we? All of them failed, as well. All of them fell far short of perfect righteousness.

And along the way, as we read the story, all this, this story that's illustrated, punctuated by their failures, they demonstrate our deepest need. They, through their lives and through their failures as well, they make the case, God's case, really, for Christ. He would be the one to bring the kingdom of God. He fulfills prophet, priest, and king perfectly, with no flaw, but a total righteous perfection.

Moses himself said, Deuteronomy 18:15, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers-it is to him you shall listen-" God said to David, Davidic Covenant, 2 Samuel 7:12-13, "When your days are fulfilled, and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever."

To this point, I think, all Christians tend to agree. It's when we start talking about the realm of that dominion, whether it's spiritual or physical, that's when paths diverge. After reading commentaries and doctrinal treatments of the subject and

systematic theologies, not just in this study but over the years, it's obvious that each interpreter, each theologian, each commentator, comes to the text with a different set of presuppositions about the kingdom of God. They have their presuppositions, and then they read the text often through the grid of their own presuppositions.

We're all in danger of doing that, by the way. It's not just these guys; it's all of us, which is why hermeneutics is vital, the science and the art of biblical interpretation. We follow a grammatical-historical hermeneutic, rules of grammar, facts of history, setting boundaries and guardrails around our interpretation, trying to remove our subjectivity, trying to expose our presuppositions to us so that we can see what is the text saying and then what does it mean by what it says. It's hard work.

But one commentator, A. B. Bruce, he states the matter very, very clearly. He says this, "Each interpreter will be influenced by his idea of Christ's teaching concerning the nature of the kingdom." True, very true, then he gives his view. He says, "My own sympathies are with those who find in Christ's words a denial of vulgar or physical visibility, i.e., to the kingdom." End quote.

He sees Jesus in this text denying and overturning any expectation in the Pharisees, any vulgar, that is a common or unsophisticated or unrefined understanding, any vulgar understanding of the kingdom. That is to say, in his mind and in the minds of many scholars, by the way, he sees the kingdom of God not at all as a physical, visible reality, but as a spiritual reality. It's not something visible, it's invisible, and that the expression the kingdom of God, here, refers to what's hidden in the heart. It's the rule of God in the heart. That's actually the prominent view. It's the prevalent view and even dominant in modern scholarship.

That is not how any first-century Jew would have thought at all. That would have been so foreign to them. That spiritualized view would make no sense to them at all. That's not how the Pharisees thought about the kingdom, nor did Jesus' disciples, nor frankly, Jesus himself.

So let me give you some characteristics of the kingdom of God just in this first point, as we're talking about the kingdom of God as a mediated dominion, and use some characteristics about the kingdom of God, just in some sub-points that you can jot down as what every Jew would have in mind when he thinks about the kingdom of God.

And we don't have time to turn to every passage. I'm just going to give you enough time to write down sub-points, jot down some verses, and if, if it's going by too fast, look, I get it. I feel your pain. I've sat under teachers who've done the same thing to me. It's torture. It's cruel, I understand, but it comes from a place of love.

And it will drive you to our online, you know, repository of all the sermons where you can listen at your own speed, pause, take notes, and go deeper in your study. So, I'm just trying to, I'm, just look, I'm, I'm trying to help sanctify you. I'm just trying to give you more study for the week.

The kingdom of God, letter A, sub-point A: The kingdom of God will be a literal, visible, physical kingdom. Okay? And again, this is just what the Jews listening to Jesus, what the Pharisees listening to Jesus, this is what would be in their minds. This is what Jesus is saying. He's not correcting it, either. They believe the kingdom of God, letter A, sub-point A, will be a literal, visible, physical kingdom. There will be a real, literal, visible, physical king sitting on a real, literal visible, and physical seat of power. We call it a throne. Second Samuel 7:13, Psalm 132:11, Zechariah 14:9, so many other passages, as well.

It's is, it's just the same thing that Jesus said to the Twelve, Matthew 19:28, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." He doesn't add an asterisk to that. He doesn't put a parentheses and say, now guys, don't take that literally. I mean, in, like, the figurative, metaphorical way.

He's talking about literal judgment. There are literal, physical places in the Old Testament, like reinstated boundaries of Israel that they never fully occupied, according to Obadiah 18-21. There are literal, physical peoples, like nations who will stream to Jerusalem during the millennial kingdom to learn from Christ, that they might obey him and follow his judgements, Isaiah 2:2-4.

According to Isaiah 19:18-25, Egypt and Assyria will worship with Israel, if you can believe that. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt repenting and throwing off their Islam. The Sunnis and the Shiites in that whole area of Assyria and turned into Babylon, now it's modern-day Iraq and parts of Iran. They're going to worship with Israel. There's going to be a highway between them going back and forth, Israel in the middle

as they stop, worship, pay homage to the king and learn from him. So literal, visible, physical kingdom, that's sub-point A.

Sub-point B, the kingdom of God, sub-point B, will be the revived, restored dominion of the historical kingdom of David. It'll be the revived, sub-point B, the revived, restored dominion of the historical kingdom of David. According to Amos 9:11, the walls of Jerusalem, the entire city, will be rebuilt, and it will become the capital city, according to Isaiah 24:23, capital city of the entire world. According to Micah 4:6-7, even the weakest will be strong in that great city.

Hurrying ahead, sub-point C, kingdom of God, it comes in literal time and actual space, literal time, actual space. Hosea 3:4 illustrates this. "The children of Israel," Hosea says, "shall dwell many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or" any idolatry and "household gods." And that's what we're seeing right now, right? That's what we're seeing right now. No king, no prince, no sacrifice, no temple that they're sacrificing in. Ever since Hosea's prophecy, that's been reality. But verse 5, "Afterward the children of Israel shall return and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the Lord and to His goodness in the latter days."

That's what we're waiting for. That's what they're waiting for. The, even the saved Jews of Israel, those who truly know the Lord because they've bowed the knee to Christ, that's what they're waiting for, is this, as Romans 11 says, as Paul says there, the repentant return of Israel to God. And when that happens, the kingdom of God will come. It will be preceded by a series of worldwide judgments, according to Joel 2, cosmic disturbances, Joel 3, wars on a massive scale, according to Isaiah 24, earthquakes, flood, fires, famine, pestilence. All that's going to happen when the kingdom of God comes in literal time and space.

The kingdom of God, letter D, sub-point D, obviously will be ruled by Messiah, will be ruled by the Messiah. He is a human being, "a shoot from the stump of Jesse," according to Isaiah 11:1. But at the same time, according to Isaiah 9:6-7, he will be a divine being. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." And "On the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness." It will be ruled by Messiah. We'll have more to say about that.

Because of the righteousness of this Messiah's reign, sub-point E, the kingdom of God will be characterized by fundamental changes in society and culture because of the fundamental changes in the citizens of the kingdom that will bring unprecedented blessing upon the whole earth. I don't know how you want to summarize that in your notes, but good luck.

Adults who enter into the kingdom will be participants in the new covenant, Jeremiah 31:31-34. That means they'll be regenerate, they'll be spiritually cleansed, they will possess new natures, they will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, all that according to Ezekiel 36:25-27. They enter that kingdom with their sins forgiven, Jeremiah 31:34, covered in the Messiah's righteousness, Jeremiah 23:5-6, all of them knowing and loving and obeying and worshipping God.

Can you imagine the difference that will make when the citizens of a kingdom can be described like that? Wars ceasing. You know how much of our treasure and time and blood is invested into wars? You know much, how much of our technology is driven by war or mitigating against war? Can you imagine when wars cease and of all, all of our technology, all of our productivity is not driven by the negative, executing war or preventing war, but now driven by the pure love of righteousness and God? Pure

love of scientific discovery of the world that he made? A pure love of his righteousness and wanting to bring that forth, wanting to help most people?

Can you imagine when wars cease, politics are simplified due to the righteous administration of justice that comes out of Jerusalem, the nation of Israel united in the worship of God in Christ, and all the nations eager to not push them into the sea, but to join with them in worshipping the Messiah. Isaiah 60:10-14 talks about that.

This reign of righteousness is going to bring physical blessings: healing, according to Isaiah 35:5-6; long life, Isaiah 65:20-22; increased fertility, Isaiah 35:1-2; and, yes, there will be, wait for it, climate change. But always for the better, never for the worse. Climate change bringing increased fertility in the soil, greater productivity in the crops, Isaiah 32, Isaiah 35.

Even the animal kingdom will be at peace, Isaiah 11:6-9. I still have in my mind the image of the flannel graph on this one. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the lion and the fatted calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and

the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." That's a shared passage from Isaiah 11; it's also in Hosea as well, same language exactly.

Now, as an unregenerate little kid looking at the flannel graph, I thought, Man, no more wars? What a bummer. I want to fight and kill! As a little kid, I thought, Man, all the animals getting along? What's cooler than watching some Africa safari video of a lion chasing down an antelope? So cool! And I thought, that's going to be terrible!

But you know what? I was an unregenerate little kid. Now that I am a regenerate, well, it took a while, even as a regenerate adult, it took a while for me to get to the point where I'm like, peace sounds really wonderful, peace in the animal kingdom, peace across the earth. I've needed to mature to that point to understand that.

But the older I get, and I know you senior saints, you understand this perfectly as you look down at the ages beyond, below you and you see your children and your grandchildren, your

great grandchildren, and they suffer from the same malignancy that you did, which is called the malignancy of sin, what Bill read in Psalm 51, "In sin did my mother conceive me." We're born with a sin nature, and that sin nature affects us all. It affects us all to tear one another apart, to commit acts of violence and aggression against one another, to make us cower in fear when we ought to stand strong. It affects even the animal kingdom, it affects the world around us, it affects our health.

Listen, first-century Jews, including the Pharisees, including the disciples, and Jesus himself, they believed in a literal, visible, physical kingdom. They believed in the restored kingdom of David coming in time and space. They saw it as ruled by the Messiah, and all of that literally saves planet earth. Look, you want to really go green? You want to really be a true environmentalist? Then join us in praying, "Father, hallowed be your name. Thy kingdom come." Let's take that out to the streets of Fort Collins, right? Boulder.

Finally, sub-point F, sub-point F, the Jews saw the dominion of God's kingdom as covering the broadest possible scope of space and time. It covered the scope of space and the scope of time in the broadest possible way. According to Psalm 72:8-11, the scope of the kingdom's physical space covers the

entire earth, this kingdom of God. "May God have dominion from sea to sea and from the river," that's talking about the Euphrates, "to the ends of the earth! May the desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust! May the kings of Tarshish," that's in Spain, "and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba," that is in Yemen, Arabian Peninsula, "and Seba" that's North Africa, "bring gifts! May all the kings fall down before him, and all the nations serve him!"

So, there's this universal scope of space covering the entire earth in the dominion of God's kingdom. And according to Isaiah 9:7, the scope of the kingdom's time, that is, the extent of its history, it'll continue on into eternity. The, the reign of empires, typically, as we chart the reign of empires over, over time, go back to Assyria and Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, you know, Russia, you can see in, we're, we're coming up on our, end of our shelf-life date, goodbye date in our country, but it's about 250 years, 200-250 years.

Not so, not so with God's kingdom. "Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, and on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and forevermore." It's eternal. That's the scope of time.

Now, all of that, that's what these first-century Jews, Pharisees and scribes, tax collectors and sinners, even Jesus himself, they all believed this about the kingdom of God. They believed the mediatorial kingdom of God would be a literal, visible, and physical kingdom. They believed the kingdom of God would be the restored kingdom of David, restored in the temporal reality of actual time and in the physical reality of an actual place, capital city Jerusalem, ruled by the Messiah in the seat of power, literal son of David. And due to the righteousness of that kingdom, he literally saves the planet, permanently, forever and ever.

Okay, then, so as we come back to the text, what's the problem? They refuse to accept him. And second, they refused to see and accept the signs that clearly demonstrate God approves of this ministry. They refuse to accept the signs, and so they refuse to accept the Messiah, or it could be the other way around. They influence one another. They rightly see the kingdom as a mediatorial dominion, but they refuse to see Jesus as that mediator.

Jesus corrects them accordingly in a second point, and believe me, these points will be shorter. Second point, number two, the kingdom of God is a sudden dominion. The kingdom of God

is not only a mediatorial dominion, but the kingdom of God is a sudden dominion. "Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There!" for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'"

Now we have been conditioned by Luke to see the Pharisees coming to Jesus with latent hostility, haven't we? But here, Luke, he mutes this, any tenor of controversy to focus our attention on the bigger point that Jesus is making. He's shifting our attention, really rather quickly, to Jesus' instruction to the disciples in verse 22 and following. But, but nevertheless, Jesus provides a crucial corrective, here, for the Pharisees, which is also instructive to us and important to understand. We're going to see the negative correction in this point, point number two, and then the positive affirmation in point number three, two parts of the corrective that Jesus gives.

And here's basically what he's saying. The Pharisees come to him asking when the kingdom of God would come, and he answers them and he says, listen, you're wrong to think that you can sit back and watch for visible signs of the kingdom's arrival.

You're wrong to think that way. When the visible aspects of the kingdom do come, it'll be too late for you. What you see when the kingdom comes, that's going to be the aftermath, like damage left behind after a hurricane. And more problematic than that, second, the signs, when the signs have already come, you have failed to see them. You have failed to see the signs that have already come, and that means you've got a way deeper problem to deal with. That's what he gets to in the third point.

Back to verse 20, when Jesus says, "'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,'" the more literal reading, it's the kingdom of God is not coming with observation, *metaparatērēsis*, very unique word. It occurs only here in the New Testament. It could be used, this word could be used, interesting that Luke uses, you know, Luke is, is, he's quoting Jesus, but he's, he's using it here, drawing it out, and this is the only place we find it, not in the other Synoptic Gospels.

But there could be, this word *paratērēsis* could be used in a medical sense, watching the development of symptoms in a patient over a period of time, making observations of a patient, watching over a period of time to move from observation of symptoms to a diagnosis.

It's also used in the Hellenistic world, the Greek-speaking world, of those who calculated future events by observing the stars, ancient astrology. They believed the alignment of celestial bodies and the movement of celestial bodies signaled cataclysmic changes on the earth. That's the word that Jesus is using here, one that has to do with tracking changes and then coming to a conclusion.

So Jesus is saying, you're not going to be able to predict the kingdom of God by tracking any events, historical events, blood moons, you know, red heifers, and all the other weird stuff that's going on the internet. You're not going to be able to track, watching over a period of time, seeing one thing lead to another, and then bingo! Christ is going to return in 1988. Oh, wait a minute, that didn't happen. That Christ is going to return in 2024, after the next election, or whatever it is. Observations over time, tracking historical events, watching the headlines, none of that can be used to calculate the coming of God's kingdom.

And Jesus says, verse 21, "Nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!'" Why not? Because he's about to tell his disciples, verse 26 and verse 27, when the kingdom of God does come, it will bring worldwide cataclysmic devastation. It causes

destruction of epic proportions. That's why Jesus illustrates the coming of the Son of Man and the coming of the kingdom of God with the flood, with the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah.

I mean, if you asked Noah and his family, so where did the flood take place? Here? There? They'd look at you, like, did you not read your Bible? I mean, it was not localized as some of our non-believing biblical scholars say, it was a localized flood. No, no it was not localized. It was not particularized in in one place or another, in here or there. It was a global deluge. It drowned everyone, everywhere, all at once, in a literal baptism of watery judgment, burying them all except eight who were protected in the ark, burying them in a watery grave, cataclysmic destruction.

Jesus' point is that when the kingdom of God comes, it will arrive suddenly. There's no time to observe. And supernaturally, so it's unpredictable. It defies naturalistic or scientific observation. It defies all social, all political predictability because it is a sudden, supernatural event; therefore, it's an unpredictable event.

Or according to what we said in our second point, the kingdom of God is a sudden dominion. Sudden, supernatural, unpredictable, it will take the world by complete surprise. Look

down to verse 27. It'll come while people are "eating and drinking", while they're "marrying and being given in marriage." Or verse 28, while they're buying, selling, planting, building. In other words, they're just going about daily life. They are psychologically content, and they are physically satisfied. It's while they're comfortable, it's while they're at ease. They are utterly oblivious to the impending doom about to fall upon their heads.

So according to the first-century Jewish expectation, the kingdom of God is a mediated dominion predicted clearly in the Old Testament Scriptures. But completely contrary to expectation, or we should say contrary to an unbelieving expectation, kingdom is a sudden dominion. It's supernatural, it's unpredictable.

Brings us to a third point, point number three. I've already said this really, but it's, the kingdom of God is a messianic dominion. The kingdom of God is a messianic dominion. It's a dominion mediated by the Messiah. Now, that much the Pharisees believed. As I said, what they didn't believe, what they refused to accept, is that Jesus of Nazareth is that Messiah.

And this brings us, folks, to their most fundamental problem, and as a matter of fact, that is everyone's fundamental problem, when they don't see and they don't embrace Jesus as this Messiah, as this king of the kingdom, as the Lord of Lords. That's the problem. Jesus answered them in verse 20, he said, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed," which is true, as we've said.

However, it's not like Jesus failed to come to them with signs. He did. He came with signs. His ministry was filled with signs, which pointed to his true identity. We could survey every chapter of Luke's Gospel and illustrate what I'm saying here. Well, let's just look at two passages, and we'll start back in Luke chapter 4, Luke 4. Turn back there real quick. Luke 4:18, when Jesus preached that, that sermon in his hometown synagogue in Nazareth. It was a sermon almost got him killed, by the way, almost thrown off the, the brow of the hill.

But before that, when everybody thought, hey, here's Jesus. Come back to teach us, says he came back to Nazareth, verse 16, Luke 4:16. It's where he had been brought up. "And as was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was

written," and here's what it said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he's anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

"And then he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant." The attendant took that scroll and carefully placed it into the ark in front of the synagogue. Jesus sat down and it says, "The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'"

He's reading from Isaiah 61:1-2, and when he read verse 2, "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," if you are familiar with Isaiah 61, you know that he stopped reading in mid-verse. The two lines of Isaiah 61:2, they complete the picture of the Messiah's mission in both the first and the second advents. His first coming is pictured, and his second coming is pictured.

And here's what it says, "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor," that's the first coming, "and the day of the vengeance of our God," that's the second coming. Here in his first advent, though, "this is the year of the Lord's favor."

And that's why he stopped reading there, rolled up the scroll, and had them put it away for another time.

He proved that this is the year of the Lord's favor through his gracious teaching, powerful teaching, authoritative teaching, through his mighty miracles, demonstrating this kingdom power not to destroy, but to heal and restore and forgive and make whole.

In fact, that's his calling card. Turn to Luke 7, Luke chapter 7, verse 18. Remember, John the Baptist is there in prison, languishing in prison, thrown in there by Herod because he was preaching truth, saying, it's not righteous that you have your brother's wife. So, Herod threw him in prison, and he's there, he's with his disciples. But he seeks, he hears what's going on about Jesus and his ministry, and he seeks verification from Jesus and certainty from Jesus.

So, he sends his disciples to make sure they got it right. Look at Luke 7, starting in verse 19, "John, calling two of his disciples to him, he sent them to the Lord, saying, 'Are you the one who's to come, or shall we look for another?' And when the men had come to him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you saying, "Are you the one who is to come or shall we look for another?"'" That is, is there a part one and a part two?

They weren't denying that Jesus is the Messiah of God. They just thought, well, maybe we got something wrong. Let's clarify. Let's get it certain. Notice what it says in verse 21, "In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, 'Go and tell John what you've seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.'"

Those are the powers of the age to come. Those are the powers of the millennial kingdom, which Jesus himself will usher in when he's ruling and reigning from David's throne. And here he is showing that power, exercising that dominion. So, it's not like there were no signs to see. There were. It's not like there was nothing to observe scientifically, nothing to examine medically.

In fact, in the passage immediately preceding the one that we are studying, Jesus healed what? Ten lepers. And what did he do? He directed them to their priests, the public health officials, so they could be examined. His miracles were

immediate, thorough, public, and they provided verifiable proof to everyone. Nobody denied his miracles.

So, what was the problem? What's the problem? Look down to verse 28. Jesus identifies, here, the real problem. He says, "'I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.' Now, when all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just." Why? Because they'd "been baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers, they rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him."

Jesus observes this, and he says, tells a little bit of a parable, he says, "To what then shall I compare this generation," the people of this generation? What are they like? "They're like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you didn't dance; we sang a dirge, and you didn't weep.'" That is, you're not dancing to our tune.

"For John the Baptist has come" eating and, "eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He's got a demon,'" but "The Son of Man," he's come, oppositely, "eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a

friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

What's the problem with the Pharisees? What's the problem for those who reject Jesus as Messiah, reject Jesus, the signs of Jesus' Messiahship? It's willful ignorance. They suppress the truth in unrighteousness. It's a sinful refusal to see the signs of the kingdom in Jesus, refusing to accept this Galilean peasant as their Messiah.

So back to Luke 17, if you will, back to Jesus' answer to the Pharisees. "Jesus answered them, 'The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There," for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.'" In your midst.

That little phrase *entos humón*, it's given unnecessary trouble to interpreters, and I think it's given trouble to interpreters because they're trying to wedge their theological perspective into it, and those, this little prepositional phrase is very powerful and stubborn and resisting that. So, something Jesus is saying, keep in mind to these unbelieving Pharisees, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. It's in you, inside of you.

Makes no sense at all. It's not just the fact that Jesus is speaking to unbelieving, Christ rejecting Pharisees. More to the point, nowhere, nowhere in scripture is the kingdom of God regarded as something internal, merely, something merely spiritual. Jesus speaks of men entering the kingdom, but never the kingdom entering men, and the only men who enter into the kingdom are those who have had the miracle of regeneration take place in their life, only those who repent and believe the gospel, only those who repent and embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior, their Messiah, their King, only those enter into the kingdom. The kingdom doesn't enter into them.

Again, the kingdom of God is a visible, physical entity, an actual dominion. It's a dominion exercised by God's agent. It's David's kingdom restored with his actual son. It, he occupies the throne, the true seat of power and authority, located and centered in Jerusalem. So this, this cannot enter into a heart. It's bigger than that. But this kingdom fulfills a myriad of restoration promises. Starts with spiritual restoration, but then it guarantees the physical, temporal blessings of restoration, as we've said, such as the world has never, ever known.

So no, Jesus is not teaching that the kingdom of God is an internal reality, something found by looking inside. He's not talking about some psychological sense of self in which the kingdom of God is in them and ruling in their hearts. Jesus tells the Pharisees, the kingdom of God is among you, that is to say, it's in your very midst.

That's nothing new because he has been saying that for some time, repeatedly, over and over, ever since he came on the scene. He preached, Matthew 4:17, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That's the verb *engizō*. It refers to imminency, nearness. It's here, it's among you, it's, it's around you. So in Mark 1:14, after John is arrested, Jesus comes into Galilee, proclaims the gospel, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;" and so you'd better "repent and believe."

Later, when he left Galilee to go through Judea, he sent 72 missionaries ahead of him to heal the sick, to announce the kingdom of God and that, in the script that he gave them, same word *engizō*, to announce, he gave them, the kingdom is *engizō*, it's near, it's imminent, in, and that is in the arrival of the king.

So, when the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by the name of Beelzebub, by his power, he said in Luke 11:20, same kind of thing, "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons'" and it is, "then the kingdom of God has come upon you." You better deal with it. It's here, and if you don't repent, it's going to be upon you in judgment. But come right now while it's coming to you as offer of mercy.

Why can he say that? It's come near, it's in, it's, it's here. It's upon you. Why? Because resident within Jesus is the essence of the kingdom itself. So, when Jesus is on the scene, the kingdom of God is a present reality. He is the very head of state. He represents the kingdom of God itself.

So, when an ambassador is over in a foreign country, we say this, they represent the United States. The United the, the United States is entering into the room in the form of the President, or in the form of the Vice President, or in the form of an ambassador. Welcome the United States or welcome any other foreign ambassador in our own country, do the same thing. Jesus, his call sign is kingdom act, actual. Why? Because he embodies the essence of the kingdom of God. There is no kingdom of God without him, and when he's present, he represents the kingdom.

So, you know what their problem was? These Pharisees, they suffered from the exact same ailment as our friend Nicodemus. Let's close by turning over to John chapter 3, John chapter 3, and just very briefly look at the same issue with Nicodemus. Says there in John 3, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night. And said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.'"

Okay, so stop there for a second. You might think, man, this Nicodemus gets it. He sees the signs. He sees what the signs point to, that they affirm Jesus as a teacher come from God. Sign, and what the sign signifies, the acts of power and the miracles that he's doing, what they signify. He's a teacher come from God. How does Jesus answer? Hey, thanks a lot for the affirmation. Hey, I appreciate the fact that man, Nicodemus, you get it. You get it. Me and you are on the same page.

What does he say? Seems like a non-answer. Well, actually, did Nicodemus even ask a question? Nicodemus comes in the room, telling him, what we know because what we have seen. What does Jesus say? He answers him, verse 3, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again" or born from above, same, it could be

translated that way, probably translated that way, unless one is born from above, "he cannot see" unable to see, "the kingdom of God."

Far from affirming Nicodemus, far from saying, hey, we're on the same page, far from appreciating Nicodemus, the older man, probably in his 60s or beyond, giving, calling Jesus by a revered title, rabbi, to the younger man, 30 years old, far from that, Jesus corrects him. Nicodemus thought he could see clearly. He thought he knew who Jesus was. He thought, he's even giving Jesus high praise, paying him a compliment.

Actually, what Nicodemus said was an insult. He took a shot at identifying Jesus, but boy, did he miss. And when he missed, he missed way, way low. He was off by a mile. The King of the kingdom of God is standing right in front of him, and Nicodemus fails to see him for who he really is. So, did he see the signs really? No, he did not. He failed to see the signs. He failed to really accept Jesus for who he is: Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, your ruler.

If he understood who Jesus is, he would have come into the room bowing all the way and never coming near, wouldn't even lift his eyes to see him. Depart from, he would have said what Peter said in Luke 5, depart from me, O Lord, a sinful man. I'm

in the presence of holiness. I'm in the presence of greatness. Nicodemus failed to see the signs, failed to see who they really revealed, who they really pointed to.

Why? He was not born again. He was not born from above, the miracle of regeneration. According to Exodus, or Ezekiel 36:25-27, that hadn't happened to him. He remained blind, dead in his sins, so he's unable to see the signs, and he's un, unable to see who the signs point to, who they signify, that it's Jesus.

My friends, don't let that be you. If you're here today and you're not born again, and you're listening in to this, and you feel like, man, I have no idea what they're talking about. I just, I feel like I'm listening into somebody else's family business, don't stay on the outside. We've all been there. We've all been there. We would love to share with you the truth of the gospel so that God's saving grace can come upon you today, today.

For those who are here who are born again, listen, this is the kingdom that we're looking forward to. It's a mediated kingdom, comes suddenly. It's a messianic kingdom, and it's ruled by the one whom we love, the one we long to see. We don't care, I mean, honestly, it's not the stuff of the kingdom, the blessings of the kingdom, all the things the Old Testament

described that we're concerned about. We want to see his kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And so, we long for that day, we pray for that day, we share the gospel to others who don't know it.

For next week, were going to start looking at Jesus' teaching to us, the disciples. And so until then, think about this. Talk about this with one another. Share this with others who don't know the king, that they might come to know the truth that you know. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank you so much for the message of the kingdom. We thank you that your promises in Christ are yes and amen. We thank you that just as you literally, visibly judged Israel, we see the fulfillment of all those promises of judgment, of wrath, that gives us a warning and pause about the future, that we would not suffer the same fate as Lot's wife, but that we would join Lot and we would join Noah and his sons, those who come out from among them and be separate, those who enter into the ark of Christ and are saved.

We pray that you would help us to take heed to the warnings and turn away, and turn our eyes on Christ, but at the same time that we would also look back to all those promises, not just of judgment in the future, but of restoration, great promises that

you have yet to fulfill, what Paul rejoices in, in the salvation of Israel, in, in Romans chapter 11.

We pray, Father, that we, too, would share in that kingdom hope and the hope of the coming of the Son of God, the Son of Man. We love you. We pray that our life, we would live it worthy of you, worthy of this gospel, this great message, the good news of the kingdom of God, for your honor and glory, father. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.