

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Kingdom of GOD is all powerful, embracing the entire Universe; it is all Just, all Holy, and is essentially a Kingdom of Love ! GOD planned us out of a heart of Love. Gen.1-1 In the beginning GOD, Elohim, the 3 in 1; the Father Omnipotent, the Fountain and source of all things; the Son, the Omniscient One, who sees all that is in the heart of the Father and as the Living Word speaks it forth, and the Holy Spirit, Omnipresent, who brings to pass everything spoken by GOD by His Power; thus we see that the whole of the Godhead are involved in the creation of the Heaven and the Earth and everything contained therein. Rev. 10-6. (in *Gen.18, GOD in a theophany appeared to Abraham as 3 men; they were all called the LORD*). GOD also created billions of angels, rank upon rank, to be His servants, and to serve us also Heb.1-7,v14, Job 38-4/7. We are called to be a Royal Priesthood in this Kingdom. Ex.19-6 1 Pet.2-9 GOD'S eternal purpose was to have a family in His own image and likeness, (spirit, soul & body) Gen.1-26/28 & v31. Unfortunately sin interrupted this wonderful plan, but GOD would not let us go, and at the highest cost, paid the full price for our uttermost salvation by giving His Only Begotten Son to become one of us and to die on the Cross in our stead. Nothing can stop GOD'S will.

There are many references to the Kingdom of God in Scripture. King David speaks of it in Psalm 45: 11–13). In the New Testament, Jesus and John the Baptist speak of it again, this time with urgency “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3: 2; Mark 1: 15).

It is not an earthly Kingdom. When Jesus was on trial before Pilate (John 18: 33 – 38) He said He was born to be a King, but not now – yet that kingdom is in process in us, His people, being set up in our hearts and lives.

It is for the humble. “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt.5: 3).

It is invincible. “Therefore, since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (Hebrews 12: 28).

It is for us. Colossians 1: 13, 14 says – “For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the Kingdom of the Son He loves, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” James 2: 5 – “Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the Kingdom He promised to those who love Him?” Not only are believers citizens of this Kingdom, but we are part of God's family. “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8: 15 – 17).

It is eternal. Psalm 45: 6/9 - “Your Throne, O God, is for ever and ever.” Ps.145-13 It is Everlasting.

It is internal. Luke 17: 21 - “The Kingdom of God is within you.” (not with outward show).

In our Lord's Prayer. Matt. 6: 9, 10 – “Hallowed be Your Name, Your Kingdom come”. Now, in us!

It is a Good Kingdom. Rom. 14: 17 “The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” We are told to seek **1st** the Kingdom of GOD and His righteousness and all these (necessary) things shall be added unto us. Matt. 6-33.

2 Thes.1-5 That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of GOD, for which ye also suffer!

We are given authority to execute the power of the Kingdom. Luke 19-19, Acts 1-8.

It is hard to understand, but the Spirit of God is everywhere and can hear every prayer, in every language at every moment of the day. God is the Life Force that keeps in existence every thing that lives- angels, people, animals, trees, fish, birds, flowers; nothing lives apart from God. Likewise, the Universe and everything in it is kept in perpetual existence by the power of GOD. He binds atoms together by electromagnetism and the vastness of the universe, by gravity.

Scientists tell us about these forces, but they are unable to explain them. They refuse to see God's handiwork in this. They blindly grope for light with all sorts of imaginary theories that they cannot prove, always looking for the “missing link” to prove their theories, such as “Higgs boson”; there is a force that pervades all the universe, which they do not understand, so they call it “dark matter”, likewise the force that keeps the Universe expanding they call “dark energy”. It is this Universe that GOD is preparing us to rule over as His sons and daughters thru' all the ages to come.

How marvellous is Our Own GOD, and His Wonderful plans for us; how can we praise Him enough!

God provides all we need for life on earth. Again, scientists tell us that the Sun burns 600 million tons of hydrogen every second, always has and will for billions of years to come. It *supplies the warmth and light needed for living organisms to survive and we are at exactly the right distance from it to stop us freezing or baking. The human body is made up of 75 trillion cells, all of which arise from one cell at conception, (with a flash of light) which in 9 months multiplies to more than 6,000 billion cells, everyone directed to its rightful function by the marvellous DNA code, which is unique to every person in the Universe. Only a Divine Creator could design and create such a marvellous and unique creature.

Such is the wonderful knowledge and power of our God. He is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent - all powerful, all knowing and ever present.

There are many other Scriptures on the Kingdom of God and I hope you will look up some of them for yourselves. All this is just to introduce my sermon; as Rod said last week, “Don’t forget your Cutting Edge.” So let’s look at the message from Luke.

This morning’s New Testament reading (Luke 19: 28 – 44) is called “The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem”, but was it? A few days later, Jesus was crucified, dead and buried. Was it, therefore, a triumphal entry? Undeniably YES! Jesus rose victorious over sin, Satan, death and Hell, having accomplished eternal redemption for us.

Jesus came into Jerusalem as a King, but not on a magnificent horse, with armies in attendance, but in meekness and humility, riding on a donkey. He sent the disciples ahead to fetch the donkey saying, “Go into the village ahead of you ... You will find a colt there ... Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord has need of it.’” This they did (Luke 19: 28 – 35).

You may wonder, “Where do I fit into this picture?” The colt was untamed and happy in its situation, but Jesus said, “The Lord has need of him”. We may be only an ass (as I have been), but “the Lord has need of us”, no matter what our capability or situation.

Every one of us is the special, unique creation of God. Not another person in the entire Universe exactly like you or me. God has a special place in His Kingdom specially designed for you that no one else can fill. We are called to be “a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God” (1 Peter 2: 9). We are not there yet; this is our schooling ground, we are imperfect saints, yet chosen to be the vessels of the Holy Spirit. From eternity, God has planned to have us for His family, to be His sons and daughters. God has need of you.

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of an ass and the whole city was moved because of Him. Are we prepared to be the vehicle on which God will move, to be an ass if necessary, to be fools for Christ’s sake? Is this is the time of your visitation? Are you fulfilling your destiny?

When Jesus comes the second time, it will be in triumph, riding on a white horse, with all power and authority, accompanied by the armies of saints on white horses and by billions of angels (Revelation 19: 11). The whole Universe will be moved in that great day! Before then, a day is coming when the Door of Heaven will be opened, and a voice will say, “Come up hither” and the living saints will be caught up into Glory. It will be like that chorus, “The angels beckon me from Heaven’s open door, and I can’t feel at home in this world any more”.

As Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, He looked down over the city, perhaps from the Mount of Olives. There was a wonderful view of the Temple from this point, but as Jesus looked out at the city, He was moved to tears saying, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace" (Luke 19: 41, 42) and He prophesied of the judgement that would come because they "did not recognise the time of God's coming" to them (vs 44). He also wept on an earlier occasion saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate" (Matthew 23: 37, 38). Jerusalem was sacked in 70 AD. The temple was destroyed and over one million Jews were slain. Others were scattered to wander the earth. If Jesus were to look down from the Mount of Olives today, He would see the gold dome of the Mosque of Omar and the nearby Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount. God will remove them one day.

We need to be aware that we also are living in days of judgment. The storm clouds are gathering over America and Britain, as they are already over the Middle East. These once-great Christian countries that sent missionaries all over the world, are now fast descending into immorality, rebellion against the laws of God, greed and idolatry.

We must indeed be very close to the great time of trouble coming on all the Earth which will culminate in the Battle of Armageddon and the return of our Lord. How important it is to be watching and looking for His coming even to our hearts now, that we not miss out on the time of our visitation!

If Queen Elizabeth were to invite me to Buckingham Palace, how great an offence it would be to refuse her request! If King Nebuchadnezzar had made a similar request in his day, refusal would mean certain death. How much greater should we honour the call of the Eternal Immortal God? And what a great honour it is to be called of Him!

Let us this morning reaffirm our faith, or declare it for the first time, if necessary, in our proclamation of that great affirmation of faith, the Apostle's Creed.

Note of s sermon preached by Alfred Curtis.

WHY WE SHOULD BE READY FOR ACTION.!

The Bible is GOD speaking to us. We listen and receive it's message, and by belief, faith, repentance and loving obedience, inherit an everlasting life of love, joy, peace and glory in the presence of a Loving, All Wise, Almighty, Eternal GOD, or we neglect so great Salvation, and risk eternal separation from a Loving Father, or far worse we deliberately choose the way of disobedience, an evil life following Satan's wicked ways, and spend eternity with him and all his wicked spirits in the lake of fire.

This is putting it bluntly; what an awful choice everyone that hears the gospel of Christ has to make! But dare we say otherwise? As we approach the certain end of this age, what manner of persons ought we to be In all godliness and sanctified living, and how ready should we be to share our faith with our neighbour, all with whom we come in to contact; and how we should pray for and help all missionaries who take the gospel to the unsaved.

This year 2020 is a year nearer the Lord' coming, and we should be expecting GOD to do great things, as He foretold for the "last days" (of this age). But whom will He do them through? Are we not His Body here on Earth? Are we not His voice? Are we not His hands and feet?

As we see Satan stirred up knowing his days are short, and inciting more and more murder, violence, immorality and downright iniquity, we are GOD'S Lights in this increasingly evil world, and the time has come for us to show our light, to speak up bravely in the face of those who choose wickedness, to respond in faith to the call of GOD TO WORK MIRACLES, RAISE THE DEAD, OPEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND, THE EARS OF THE DEAF, THE LIPS OF THE DUMB, TO MAKE THE CRIPPLES TO JUMP FOR JOY, TO BE THE OVERCOMERS THAT GOD WANTS US TO BE !!!

AS JESUS said in Mark 16-17 "These shall follow them that believe. In My Name they shall cast out demons, they shall speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall by no means Hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." `

Acts 1-8 "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem (in your local town), and in all Judea and Samaria (in our own country) and to the ends of the Earth".

Let us pray to be bold, faithful witnesses for Him, filled with His Spirit, and prepared for GOD to work through us!

Alfred Curtis 1/2/20