**Coming of the Kingdom of God**

Luke 17:20-37

Key Verse 30

"It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

**Introduction**

Lately many people are wondering whether or not Mr. Donald Trump would be the next president. According to his slogan he promises to make America great again. Even young Americans like him, for he is somewhat different from stereotypical politicians. So right now, news covering presidential candidates are the headlines most American media venues. Energy, weather, terror, and the economy are still considered important news. But how about Jesus’ 2nd coming and the imminent coming of the kingdom of God? The news of the coming of Jesus is largely swept under the rug. The subject of Jesus’ second coming is treated as something we shouldn’t mention. But Jesus’ second coming is actually something we should talk about every day of our life. Jesus talked about His second coming so that his disciples would be fully aware of it. We should understand it now, for it will be a very serious day when he comes again. Those who ignore the message of Jesus’ second coming will be in greater trouble than they can possibly imagine. Knowing the truth of the kingdom of God is more important than knowledge concerning anything else.

1. Read verses 20-21. What did the Pharisees ask Jesus? What was Jesus’ answer? What does Jesus mean when he says, “the kingdom of God is in your midst?”

1-1, Read verses 20-21.

Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, **21** nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”

1-2, What did the Pharisees ask Jesus?

***Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come,***

* The Pharisees asked about the kingdom of God. To some extent we can understand them. They longed to be freed from Roman oppression.
* They longed for a king like David to lead them to victory over Rome so that their nation's glory could be restored.
* With this hope, the Pharisees carefully observed current events and Scripture, seeking the kingdom’s approaching. They were spectators of history, longing for a miracle.
* Jesus’ disciples were no exception in this regard. They wondered when their nation would be restored even at the time of Jesus’ ascension.

Acts 1:6 reads,

“Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

1-3, What was Jesus’ answer?

***Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, 21 nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”***

* Jesus did not answer their question about when. Jesus first corrected them. Jesus corrected their concept about how God’s kingdom comes, and where it is.
* Jesus said that the kingdom of God does not come with careful observation.
* Many Christians have longed for the restoration of America, a time of peace and prosperity in which our nation seemed to embrace a Christian identity.
* Such people are not interested in sacrificing to send missionaries to the world; but they treasure the benefits of living in a Christian nation.
* So they observe current events, hoping for some signs that wicked influences will subside and Christianity advance, but do not evangelize the lost.
* Others engage in theological speculation, about times and dates, yet do nothing to preach the gospel.
* This kind of careful observation does not bring in the kingdom of God.
* Jesus said in Mark 1:15, “The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”
* When a person repents of his sins and accepts the gospel, the kingdom of God comes into his or her heart.
* The Pharisees’ problem was that they did not repent. When they did not repent, they had no spiritual insight to recognize Jesus as Savior.

Luke 7:29-30 reads,

“All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized by John. **30** But the Pharisees and the experts in the law rejected God’s purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.”

* Although Jesus drove out demons, healed the sick, raised the dead, and taught the truth with authority, they refused to acknowledge God’s work through Jesus.
* Without accepting Jesus, they could not enter the kingdom of God. To the Pharisees, it was most urgent to repent and believe in Jesus.
* They needed to stop speculating and believe the good news humbly and repent.

1-4, What does Jesus mean when he says, “the kingdom of God is in your midst?”

* Man who lost paradise has a primeval longing for its restoration. So people have tried in many ways to reinvent paradise on earth.
* But Jesus clearly tells us not to look for the kingdom of God in a place or a system by saying, “Here it is.”

Jesus said, ***“the kingdom of God is in your midst.”***

* “In our midst” means “among us.”
* God’s reign begins in our midst when we repent and accept Christ as our Lord and Savior.
* According to it’s footnote or old NIV version, “the kingdom of God is within you.”
* God’s reign begins in one’s heart, when he or she repents and accepts Christ as Lord and Savior.
* The kingdom of God began within him and spread through him. Jesus’ point is clear.
* The kingdom of God begins in the hearts of those who accepts him as Savior and Lord. It is real and powerful. But it is invisible and very personal.
* Those who receive Jesus are changed on the inside. Hatred is replaced with God’s love. Arrogance subsides, and a humble spirit governs.
* Rebellion turns to obedience. Bitterness becomes thanksgiving. Sorrow turns to joy. Fear turns to courage.
* Selfishness is replaced with a sacrificial spirit. Weakness is turned to strength. They become new creations in Christ Jesus despite their situation remaining the same.
* The kingdom of God starts within those who believe in Jesus. Though the kingdom of God is within us, we are not immune to the troubles of the world.
* According to the footnote of old NIV, “the kingdom of God is among you.”
* Though it is also invisible, it is as real as the kingdom within. Christian brothers and sisters love one another dearly.
* We can also experience the kingdom of God as we share the gospel with the lost. When one sinner repents, God's joy overflows within us.
* It is a joy that the world does not know. The love, peace, and joy of Christian community testifies to the world that Christ is living and his kingdom is real.
* When we honor Christ in our relationships, we experience the kingdom of God among us.
* So let’s love one another, forgive one another, bear one another, and help one another. Let’s share with those in need and comfort those who are suffering.
* The kingdom of God among us reveals Christ’s love to the world. It invites the world to come to God before Christ’s return.

2. Read verses 22-25. What did Jesus say to his disciples? (22) What did Jesus mean when he said “you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man but you will not see it’”? Why shouldn’t we follow those who say “here he is” or “there he is”? (23) What will the day of the Son of man be like? (24) What must happen first, before that day? (25)

2-1, Read verses 22-25.

Then he said to his disciples, “The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. **23** People will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them. **24** For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. **25** But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

2-2, What did Jesus say to his disciples? (22)

***Then he said to his disciples, “The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it.***

* Though Jesus had been speaking in response to the Pharisees, he was always thinking of his disciples.
* Jesus would leave them and go back to the Father. They would have to stand by their own faith in the midst of persecution and hardships.
* Though they had the kingdom of God within them, they would suffer much in the world.
* They would be vulnerable with the false hope in recovering the Israelites like the Pharisees. They might abandon their mission.
* Satan’s mission is to deceive those who have repented and confess Jesus as Lord.
* Satan uses deceitful workmen to deceive those who have the kingdom of God within them.

2Corinthians 11:13 reads,

“For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. **14** And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. **15** It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”

2-3, What did Jesus mean when he said “you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man but you will not see it’”?

* Jesus told them that when He left this earth, the days would come when Jesus disciples would long for His return based on His words of promise.

2-4, Why shouldn’t we follow those who say “here he is” or “there he is”? (23)

***People will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them.***

* Again using false prophets and their teachings, Satan knows how to take advantage of those who are longing for God’s kingdom.
* Many claiming to be the Messiah would come before Jesus actually returned.
* It is imperative to teach people this truth so that these false Messiahs would not deceive them.
* According to Jesus’ own words in this passage none of us needs anyone one to inform us of Jesus’ second return.

2-5, What will the day of the Son of man be like? (24)

***For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.***

* When lightning strikes, it is obvious to everyone what it is. Lightning strikes suddenly and unexpectedly. It comes from above and is obvious to everyone.
* We all experienced it for ourselves. When Jesus comes again we will not hear about it from others, we will see it for ourselves. We will all see it at once.
* It will be a universal event.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 says,

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

* On that day when Jesus Christ returns to earth all people on earth will plainly witness his great and awesome coming.

2-6, What must happen first, before that day? (25)

***But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.***

* Jesus would suffer and die on a shameful cross. He would hang naked, charged as a terrible criminal, while passersby hurled insults at him.
* His hands and feet would be pierced and his blood would flow freely. Jesus endured this kind of suffering and death in our place, for our sins.
* Jesus paid the ransom price to set us free. Jesus bore the wrath of God to the full measure in our places.
* So we can be accepted by God as his precious sons and daughters. At the same time, Jesus’ death on the cross was a judgment against all unbelievers.

Revelation 1:7 says,

“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.”

3. Read verses 26-32. How were the people of Noah’s time similar to the people who lived in the time of Lot? (26-29) What does Jesus mean when he says it will be just like this when the day of the Lord comes? (30) What should be our attitude when Jesus comes? (31) What happened to Lot's wife? (32, Gen 19:17, 26) What warning can we take from this event?

3-1, Read verses 26-32.

“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. **27** People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

**28** “It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. **29** But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

**30** “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. **31** On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. **32** Remember Lot’s wife!

3-2, How were the people of Noah’s time similar to the people who lived in the time of Lot? (26-29)

***“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 “It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. 29 But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.***

* The things people were doing were not bad; they were normal human activities. Noah's family members were doing the same things.
* However, Noah heeded God's warning of a coming flood/judgment and built an ark in obedience to God’s word. He did this through faith to save himself and his family.
* He tried to warn the people of his time, but they paid no attention. They were consumed by the desires of the flesh and had no spiritual life at all.
* Their intentional spiritual ignorance did not delay the flood. The flood came suddenly and swiftly just as God had said and destroyed them all.
* It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

3-3, What does Jesus mean when he says it will be just like this when the day of the Lord comes? (30)

***“It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.***

* By showing the similarity to Noah’s day, Jesus described a world continuing in the normal routines of life. People ate, drank, married and they were given in marriage.
* All things continued as normal, that is, until Noah and his family entered the ark. At that time, the flood came and destroyed all people who didn’t believe.
* Likewise, in the day Lot, the destruction that came upon Sodom and Gomorrah came in the morning.
* So will it be the same in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. Even as the world seemed to continue in the normal routines of life, Jesus will come again and it will be obvious to everyone.

3-4, What should be our attitude when Jesus comes? (31)

***On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything.***

* Jesus warns us not to be too attached to material possessions. When the time comes to leave them, we should flee without hesitation.
* Some people would say being blessed is to marry the man or woman of our dreams.
* Others would say being blessed is being able to prepare a retirement plan wisely by having a high paying job.
* But being rescued from the wrath of God is the greatest blessing of all.
* Noah and Lot were truly blessed because they were not destroyed with everyone else when the wrath of God came upon the people of their day.

3-5, What happened to Lot's wife? (32, Gen 19:17, 26)

3-6, What warning can we take from this event?

***Remember Lot’s wife!***

Gen 19:17, 26 reads,

As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”

But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

* These words have become a strong reminder showing us what we should not do on the day Jesus Christ is revealed.
* In Genesis 19, Lot’s wife literally did not listen to or obey the words of the angel. She looked back.
* Maybe she had just bought something she felt she could not live without.
* Whatever the reason, Lot’s wife looked back and instantly turned from a walking, breathing human being into a pillar of salt.
* Jesus points out that when He comes again, His judgment will be real, not figurative.
* **Anna Nicole Smith** (November 28, 1967 – February 8, 2007) was an American model, actress and television personality.
* Smith dropped out of high school and was married three years later in 1985.
* Smith first gained popularity in [Playboy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playboy), winning the 1993 [Playmate of the Year](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playboy_Playmate).
* She modeled for fashion companies and beauty products, including names such as [Guess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guess_(clothing)), [H&M](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%26M), [Heatherette](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heatherette), [Lane Bryant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lane_Bryant), and [Conair](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conair_Corporation).
* Her highly publicized second marriage in 1994 to [J. Howard Marshall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Howard_Marshall) who was 89 years old resulted in speculation that she married the octogenarian when she was 26 years old, mainly for his money, which she denied.
* Following Marshall's death, Smith inherited 474 million dollars but began a lengthy legal battle over a share of his estate. Her beloved son, Daniel died in 2006.
* Smith died on February 8, 2007 in a [Hollywood, Florida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood,_Florida), hotel room as a result of an overdose of prescription drugs.
* Who knows? What if she would have called on Jesus to turn herself from her way of life through studying this short Bible verse, “Remember Lot’s wife!”

4. Read verses 33-37. How can we keep our lives when the day of the Lord comes? (33) What scenario does Jesus describe in verses 34 and 35? What does it mean to be taken and what does it mean to remain? What did Jesus’ disciples ask? (37a) What can we learn from Jesus’ answer? (37b)

4-1, Read verses 33-37.

Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it. **34** I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. **35** Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.” **[36] 37** “Where, Lord?” they asked. He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.”

4-2, How can we keep our lives when the day of the Lord comes? (33)

***Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.***

* Whoever loses their life will preserve it.

4-3, What scenario does Jesus describe in verses 34 and 35?

***34 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. 35 Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.”***

* Because this will happen during the normal course of life (while one sleeps in bed, while another is grinding grain, and while another works in the field), the emphasis is on readiness.
* Jesus will come suddenly and at an unexpected moment.
* This relates with the times of both Noah and Lot. Noah and Lot were taken and, therefore, saved from judgment while the rest were left for destruction.
* Two in one bed. Two will be grinding together.
* These words of Jesus may indicate that it will be day in one part of the world (CA), while it is night on another; at the same time some sleep (the Philippines).
* Verse 36 is not in the best Greek manuscript and is an addition to the biblical text. It was probably added by a scribe because of [Matthew 24:40](http://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Matthew+24:40&t1=en_nas).

“Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.”

* The point here is that Jesus will come for His people all over the earth at one moment.

4-4, What does it mean to be taken and what does it mean to remain?

* "Taken” implies to take someone to be with you, and Jesus wants to take His brothers and sisters to be with him in person.
* “Left” or “remain” implies that those who are unready to be with Jesus will be left behind.
* Here we do not want to delve into the details about other subjects such as rapture, tribulation, or judgement. (Maybe later we would with the more related passage.)

4-5, What did Jesus’ disciples ask? (37a)

***“Where, Lord?” they asked.***

* The disciples might have picked up further desire, wanting to know more about this revelation of Jesus.
* As they came nearer to Jerusalem, perhaps they wondered if these events would take place soon.

4-6, What can we learn from Jesus’ answer? (37b)

***He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.”***



* Wherever there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather together: This is a difficult statement.
* It was probably a figure of speech with the idea that, when judgment is ripe, it will surely come.
* Where the conditions for judgment is ripe, there the judgment will also take place.

**Conclusion**

When Jesus comes again, those who live selfishly and live only for their flesh will go to eternal punishment. In contrast those who lived a sacrificial life for Jesus and his kingdom will be abundantly and eternally blessed. Today we have learned that we can enjoy the kingdom of God within and among us when we repent and accept Christ into our hearts. We also have a glorious hope of the visible kingdom at his return. Therefore, we can live sacrificially for Him.

**One word: The kingdom of God is in your midst!**