

Introduction: This is our third week of examining the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray. First, we pray to God The Perfect Father. Then, we ask Him to help us to always be aware of His holiness. *** Now, let's get right to the heart of today's part of the prayer: What did Jesus mean when He instructed His followers to petition Father God that His Kingdom must come? *** First of all, God IS King! We heard many of His kingly qualities in our *Call to Worship*. He is great and being praised exceedingly. The praise of His works and the declaration of His mighty acts will be passed on from generation to generation. His people will speak of His glory, honor and majesty, and of His wonderful works. He is strong and great, righteous, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and of great life-giving and life-changing LOVE. He is good to all and His motherly mercy is over all His works (Psalm 145:1-9). *** God's Kingdom is over all He created. However, the 'father of lies' and 'accuser of humanity', along with a multitude of demons, are in rebellion against God and His Kingdom. Moreover, there are still multitudes of people who have not surrendered to God in Jesus in order to become citizens in His Kingdom. They are still in the dominion of darkness; but, God desires to reconcile many through His Son, The Messiah-King. Those who surrender to Him through His Son will be reconciled; and, they will be forgiven, redeemed and brought into His Kingdom (Colossians 1:9-14). *** Yahweh spoke to David through the prophet Nathan to say that a descendant of David would be the eternal King of God's Kingdom, which is greater than just the nation of Israel (2 Samuel 7:5-16). This will be an eternal Kingdom. When Jesus came to earth the first time as The Son of Man, He initiated this Kingdom. *** Right now, in the 'Church Age', the conflict between The Kingdom of God and the 'dominion of darkness' is escalating. Jesus is driving demons out of people by the power of The Spirit of God (Matthew 12:22-28). And the apostle Paul was called by Jesus to go to the nations to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and the power of the 'accuser' to God to receive forgiveness of sin and a place among those sanctified by faith (Acts 26:14-18). *** The Kingdom of God will be consummated when The King of kings returns to rule forever; and, the kingdom of the world becomes His eternal Kingdom when He judges and then rewards His saints who reverently fear His Name (Revelation 11:15-18).

The Kingdom of God is near: look for it

With this background, let's look at Jesus' Kingdom of God parable in Luke's Gospel.

I. Jesus tells a parable comparing the blossoming of trees signifying summer to signs signifying the nearness of the Kingdom of God. (Luke 21:29-33)

- A. When the fig tree and all trees sprout, know summer is near; also, when you all see 'these things', know The Kingdom is near. (Verses 29-31)

Intro. And He spoke a parable to them. (Verse 29a)

Parable: A parable is a story from everyday life that teaches a truth about God and people. The truth is not obvious, even to those who know God. It is understood by prayer and through The Holy Spirit.

1. 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees. (Verse 29b)

Fig tree: Yahweh showed the prophet Jeremiah two baskets of figs to teach about both faithful and idolatrous people in Israel (Jeremiah 24). So the fig tree represents Israel.

All trees: Yahweh spoke to the prophet Ezekiel and compared Assyria to a great cedar tree, above all the other trees and nations (Ezekiel 31). So Jesus is talking about Israel and all the nations on earth.

2. When they may sprout leaves now, you all are seeing for yourselves and knowing that now the summer near is being. (Verse 30)

Sprout leaves: Every year leaves come out on trees in the spring. And summer follows after spring, just as Yahweh spoke to Noah after he offered burnt offerings after the flood (Genesis 9:20-22).

3. So also you all, when you all may have seen these things happening, you all know that near is being The Kingdom of God'. (Verse 31)

These things: 'These things' are what Jesus spoke before this: There will be wars and rebellions, nation will rise against nation, earthquakes, famines and plagues, terrors and great signs from heaven; but, before all these, they will lay hands on you, they will persecute, delivering into imprisonment, being brought before kings for the sake of My Name; and it shall turn to you all for a witness ... and I will give you all wisdom which your opponents will not be able to resist, and you all will be handed over by those close to you all and they will kill from you all, being hated by all for the sake of My Name ... and when you may see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you all must know that the desolation of it has come near ... and they will fall by the edge of the sword and led away captive and Jerusalem will be trodden by the nations until their times are fulfilled; and there will be signs in the heavens, and on earth distress of nations in perplexity; the sea and waves roaring; men fainting with fear and foreboding of what is coming in the inhabited world because the powers of heaven will be shaken; then they shall see The Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory – and when these things begin to happen, you all must look up because your redemption is drawing near (verses 9-28).

Kingdom of God: The generous King of The Kingdom gives all who work in His Kingdom the same salvation, regardless of when they entered the Kingdom. And all citizens will suffer as He suffered and may even die as He died, but first they will humbly serve and witness to The King of The Kingdom in words and deeds (Matthew 20:1-21:11).

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- B. In truth, this generation surely will not pass away until all things happen; heaven and earth will pass away, but not My words. (Verses 32-33)

Intro. 'Truth I am telling to you all. (Verse 32a)

1. In no way whatsoever may this generation pass away until all of these things may have happened. (Verse 32b)

This generation: The word means birth, so although it may refer to all people born at a specific time, it can also refer to all the people in a genealogy. People were God's last and greatest creation, so Jesus is saying people will continue on this earth as they have always been until He returns. God knew that as men knew more about biology they would be tempted to make themselves more than they were created to be.

He says in the strongest possible way that these efforts will fail.

2. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will in no way whatsoever pass away'. (*Verse 33*)

Heaven and earth: In the last book of the Bible, John saw the new heaven and earth because the first heaven and earth had gone away and there was no sea (Revelation 21:1)

My words: All that Jesus has said about the Kingdom of God until this last week before He died for the sins of people will be forever true. All people need to always seek first His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33).

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II. Do not let your hearts be weighed down so you are unprepared, but always watch and pray to escape and to stand.

(*Luke 21:34-36*)

- A. Be careful your hearts are not weighed down by life, resulting in that day coming unexpectedly on you. (*Verses 34-35*)

1. 'But you all must keep being careful lest you all may be weighed down in your hearts in dissipation and drunkenness and the cares of this life. (*Verse 34a*)

Weighed down: Jesus gives a command of warning that His followers must pay attention and take heed not to suffer the harmful effects of excess drinking: foolishness and hangovers; and, not to let the responsibilities of living in a world that rejects Him cause them to have anxiety.

2. It may come upon you all unexpectedly: That Day. (*Verse 34b*)

That Day: This is the day of the final judgment when Jesus comes the second time to judge everyone. All people who are not doing the works He has graciously given them to do by faith will be cast into the 'Lake of Fire' (Ephesians 2:8-10; Revelation 20:15; 21:7-8).

May we all pray that we will escape the trap of being taken unawares by That Day.

3. For it will come upon all inhabiting the face of all the earth'. (*Verse 35*)

Come on all: That Day will come on everyone who ever lived. All people will have to give an account before Jesus (Romans 14:7-14). The only way we will escape His judgment is to live every moment of our lives in humble dependent obedient faith IN Jesus, The Savior.

- B. Always watch and implore in each season to escape and to stand before the Son of Man. (*Verse 36*)

1. 'But you all must always be watching in each season, imploring that you all may be considered worthy to escape all being about to happen. (*Verse 36a*)

Watching always: The best way to be prepared for Jesus' Second Coming is to be about the final task He gave His followers: Witnessing to all people in order to make disciples of all who will surrender to Him in humble obedient faith (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:1-8). Philip did this as he made disciples in Samaria and explained the messianic prophecy in Isaiah to an Ethiopian official (Acts 8:4-40).

Imploring escape: We can be the answer to our supplications for ourselves to escape the coming judgment by following Philip's lead to be used by The Holy Spirit as he was in Samaria and with the Ethiopian official.

Let us always watch and pray.

Always watch and pray to escape in that day

2. And to stand before The Son of Man. (*Verse 36b*)

Stand: In other words, to enter into the fulfillment of The Kingdom of God. Jeong Koo Jeon concludes his book *Biblical Theology: Covenants and The Kingdom of God in Redemptive History* with 'When The Day of The Lord comes, glorified believers ... bodily [resurrected] will be surprised by joy, beauty, gladness, glory, happiness and holiness due to the realization of the fullness of The Kingdom of God. ... The beauty and glory of the glorified believers' communion with the triune God ... will be consummated as the beauty and glory of the triune God will be fully manifested. ...

at the same time, the 'kingdom of satan' through God's final redemptive judgment will be perfected with eternal torment and punishment, completely separated from the beauty and glory of the [fulfilled] Kingdom of God'.

May we all be prepared and able to stand before The Son of Man on That Day.

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Conclusion: All who follow Jesus must pray for His Kingdom to fully come on this earth. So, to that end, Jesus gave a parable about signs of the nearing of His Kingdom so the hearts of His people do not get weighed down so they are unprepared; but, that they will watch for Him and pray to stand faithfully before Him.

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