

“Kingdom Conundrum!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. Dr. Horatius Bonar (the prince of Scottish hymn writers, served the Lord for 60 yrs in the 1800's), when he'd draw the curtains at **night**, would say, *“Perhaps Tonight Lord!”* Also, in the **morning** he'd draw open the shades & see the new day & say, *“Perhaps Today Lord!”*
- 1.2. **Q: The Kingdom of God is it present or future?**
 - 1.2.1. Lk.17:20,21 seems like its saying **present**;
Lk.19:11,12 seems like its saying **future**!
 - 1.2.2. **So which is it?** – Both! (maybe why the confusion; maybe why its called *the mystery of the kingdom*; maybe why I entitled my message *“Kingdom Conundrum”*)

2. **KINGDOM CONUNDRUM! (20,21)** [Conundrum = *puzzling, confusing, or mysterious*]

- 2.1. **PHARISEES ASK WHEN?**¹ (20)
- 2.2. They of course were looking for a materialistic earthly kingdom now! – See 19:11.
 - 2.2.1. And they knew Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem(17:11).
- 2.3. It doesn't come with **observation** – (only time in NT) means *“to lie in wait, to spy.”*
 - 2.3.1. Jesus cautions us not to devote our time to **spying on the future** and trying to **second-guess** God.
- 2.4. Often can we be looking for something **way out there**...when it's **right under our noses!**
 - 2.4.1. They misunderstood the **nature** of the kingdom, & thus missed its **present reality**.
- 2.5. **JESUS ANSWERS WHERE!** (21)
- 2.6. Jesus said, “Don't look at **when** but **where**.”
- 2.7. Bad translation *“is within you”*(it wasn't IN these rejecting Pharisees) – better, “is in your midst”, “within your reach”.
 - 2.7.1. Jesus was saying, “if you're looking for a kingdom, then you must desire to be with the King. I'm the king, thus my kingdom is right here”
- 2.8. The term **kingdom** used by Jesus means **reign**, not *realm*.
 - 2.8.1. **Reign = where he rules.**
 - 2.8.1.1. Thus he seeks to rule where?...*within you, or “in your heart!”*
 - 2.8.2. If He doesn't **reign** in your heart now, you won't live in His **realm** later!

¹ Much of the Outline taken from Outline Bible.

- 2.9. God has always been **Sovereign**, but many haven't acknowledged Him as **Lord**.
- 2.9.1. **Illustration:** In Cuba, where **Fidel Castro** rules as Sovereign in his country; not everyone who lives there believes in his regime, nor his communist party. [Saw in news yesterday there are occasional street signs that read "**Cambio**" = Change!]
- 2.9.2. The Sovereignty of God was declared in a **new & powerful** way in the **life & ministry** of Jesus.

3. **2ND COMING QUANDARY! (22-37)**

- 3.1. **RUMORS ABOUT THE 2ND COMING!** (22-24)
- 3.2. **FICTION!** (22,23)
- 3.2.1. False reports will say he had returned to this place or another place.
- 3.2.2. The days are coming when I won't be here among you.
- 3.2.2.1. When I'm away don't be seduced.
- 3.3. **FACTS!** (24)
- 3.3.1. His return won't be **secretive**, but will be as **evident as flashing lightning** across the skies!
- 3.4. **PREREQUISITE BEFORE THE 2ND COMING!** (25)
- 3.5. He will 1st be rejected and crucified.
- 3.6. The cross is the **heart** of God's purpose, & the **key** to His kingdom.
- 3.7. **CONDITIONS EXISTING AT THE 2ND COMING!** (26-30)
- 3.8. When He returns he **won't** find everybody ready & waiting for Him.
- 3.8.1. Nope, things will be going on just as they were before two O.T. judgments were about to take place.
- 3.9. **Ps:** I do not believe He is speaking about the **Rapture** here, but about **judgment** before entering **the kingdom** (2nd Coming).²
- 3.9.1. Both men lived just before great judgments.
- 3.10. **SIMILAR TO CONDITIONS IN DAYS OF NOAH!** (26-27)
- 3.10.1. In **Noah's day** they were not prepared for the flood & therefore they were completely **destroyed** (Gen.6).
- 3.10.2. The same problem will exist when Jesus ushers in **His Kingdom**.
- 3.10.2.1. People will ignore the warnings and will party up to the time of destruction.
- 3.11. **SIMILAR TO CONDITIONS IN DAYS OF LOT!** (28-30)
- 3.11.1. In the same way with the materialistic, indifferent people of Sodom (eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, & building) were not prepared for God's judgment (Gen.19).

² Walvoord; The Bible Knowledge Comm.; pg.249

- 3.11.2. They were living in sin, oblivious to God.
- 3.11.3. **Q:** What will the world be like just before the final judgment and the coming of the Lord? It will be “*business as usual*”. ☹
- 3.12. “They lost the **Best** by living for the **Good!**”
- 3.12.1. It’s a dangerous thing to get so absorbed in the pursuits of life that we forget **Jesus is Coming!**
- 3.12.2. “Woe unto those who’s eating & drinking does not include **the Bread & the Water of Life**; & who marry or are given in marriage, but not to **the Heavenly Bridegroom!**”
- 3.13. Jesus consistently taught the **certainty** of the fact of **His Coming**, but the **uncertainty** of **the time!!!**³
- 3.14. **WARNING CONCERNING THE 2ND COMING!** (31-33)
- 3.15. **RUN FOR YOUR LIFE...for Salvation!**
- 3.15.1. Don’t wait, don’t hesitate; make the decision now before it’s too late.
- 3.15.2. Any delay could be fatal.
- 3.15.3. Whoever tries to **keep** his life, *by going back for his goods*, will **lose** it!⁴
- 3.16. (32) **Remember Lot’s wife!** - 1 of the shortest verses in the Bible.
- 3.16.1. Jesus is commanding us to remember someone whose **name** we **never knew!** - Nor anything she ever **said** or **did** is recorded in Scripture, **and yet** the Lord wants us to remember her.
- 3.16.2. The only thing to remember about her is that she was the one who “**looked back!**”
- 3.16.3. “**Looking back**” – i.e. grieving over the imminent loss of her material comforts and high social position among her ungodly neighbors.
- 3.16.4. 2 Cor.5:15 “& he died for all, **that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.**”
- 3.17. **To look around** at the increase in sin will discourage you;
To look back (as did Lot’s wife) may destroy you;
So look up & eagerly expect the Lord’s return today!
- 3.18. (33) The hope of the future coming affects **present actions & values**.
- 3.19. **Illustration: Car inspection stickers** used to have printed on the back “*Drive carefully - the life you save may be your own.*” [That’s the wisdom of man in a nutshell]
What God says, on the other hand, is “*The life you save is the life you lose!*”
- 3.19.1. In other words, the life you “*clutch, hoard, guard, and play safe with*” is in the end **a life worth little to anybody**, including yourself; **and** only a life **given away** for love's sake is a life worth living.

³ Shepherd’s Notes; pg.64

⁴ Walvoord; The Bible Knowledge Comm.; pg.249

- 3.20. If we genuinely embrace **His** sacrifice, you will joyfully embrace **a sacrificial life**.
(Erwin McManus)
- 3.20.1. **God's will for us is less about our comfort than it is about our contribution.**
- 3.20.2. God would never choose for us **safety** at the cost of **significance**.
- 3.20.3. **God created you so that your life would count, not so that you could count the days of your life.** (Erwin McManus)
- 3.21. **JUDGMENT FOLLOWING THE 2ND COMING!** (34-37)
- 3.22. **THE SEPARATION!** (34-36)
- 3.22.1. **2 in a bed**(no not 2 guys!) - 1 taken, the other left (34)
- 3.22.2. **2 grinding grain** - 1 taken, the other left (35)
- 3.22.3. **2 working in a field** - 1 taken, the other left (36)
- 3.23. **Some will be taken into judgment!**
- 3.23.1. In some parts of the world it will be **nighttime** (they'll be **in bed**).
- 3.23.2. In other parts of the world it will be **daytime** (they'll be doing **daily tasks**).
- 3.23.3. **The taken away** means taken away to **Judgment**, not taken up in the **Rapture**.
- 3.23.3.1. The ones **left** are those who will enter into the kingdom. 😊
- 3.23.3.2. The **sheep** were told "**Come** you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
- 3.23.3.3. The **goats** were told "**depart** from Me you cursed..."
- 3.24. **THE SLAUGHTER!** (37)
- 3.24.1. The disciples questioned where these people would be taken?
- 3.24.2. **Jesus' cryptic answer seems to reaffirm they are taken to judgment.**
- 3.24.2.1. **See Rev.19:17,18.**
- 3.25. **Speak to those who need to make a life commitment to Christ, before it's too late!**
- 3.26. **Speak to those who need to make a lifestyle commitment to Christ!**

Poem:

There's a man in yonder glory I have loved for many years,
He has cleared my guilty conscience and has banished all my fears.
He is coming in a moment in the twinkling of an eye,
And no time will be allotted for you to utter one good-bye.
No time to kiss the husband or embrace the loving wife,
If they are but united in the bonds of holy life.
Are you ready, Christian, ready, for shout and trump and voice?
Will His coming make you tremble or cause you to rejoice?
Are you walking, talking with Him daily, taking Him your care,
Do you live so close to heaven that a breath would waft(float/sail) you there?

Quoted in Fairest of All, Herbert Lockyer, Eerdmans, 1936, p. 71