

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

Chapter 17- Luke 17:11-21

281- The Kingdom of God- Part 1

June 14, 2015

Luke 17:11-21

11 While He was on the way to Jerusalem, He was passing between Samaria and Galilee.

12 As He entered a village, ten leprous men who stood at a distance met Him;

13 and they raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

14 When He saw them, He said to them, "**Go and show yourselves to the priests.**" And as they were going, they were cleansed.

15 Now one of them, when he saw that he had been healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice,

16 and he fell on his face at His feet, giving thanks to Him. And he was a Samaritan.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, "**Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine — where are they?**

18 "**Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?**"

19 And He said to him, "**Stand up and go; your faith has made you well.**"

20 Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;**

21 **nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.**"

To the Glory of God

So what is the Kingdom of God? Jesus talked about the Kingdom a lot. And He used different words and terms to describe it. And after

performing a spectacular miracle right in front of both the believing disciples and the unbelieving Pharisees- Jesus equates what He did here in this passage with the Kingdom of God. And so from this – we see that the Kingdom that will come upon the earth at some point in the future will be where all diseases and all pain and all suffering and all war and all hunger and all injustice and even death itself will be forever banished. And all these things will be banished in the Kingdom because all sin and all evil and all wickedness and all transgression will be banished.

And so we see that in the Kingdom of God- sin and everything that sin *caused* or that sin *brought forth* or that sin *allowed for* or that sin *facilitated* will be gone. And it will be gone forever. And in the Kingdom- the *results* of sin- all the sighing and all the sorrow and all the misery and all the anguish of this earthly existence will be gone, too. And so in the Kingdom of God- Joy and Peace and Love will reign supreme because Jesus will reign supreme. And there will be no more sin and no more rebellion and no more stubbornness and no more pride and no more self-righteousness and no more human arrogance that would rise up to challenge what God has said or to shake its fist in God's Face or that would live contrary to what God has revealed.

In his final Revelation of the glorified Christ- the Apostle John said this about the Kingdom of God in **The Revelation 11:15-19:**

15 Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

17 saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.

18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

Because, you see, it is the arrogance and the pride and the self-righteousness of unredeemed Man that seeks to rebel against God, that seeks to disobey God, that seeks to live contrary to God that destroys Joy and Peace and Love, and it is that rebellion that brings forth all the evil that is in the world today.

You see, "evil" is not a tangible commodity like a mountain or a car or a tree. No, evil on the earth is the *result* of the rebellion of billions of people throughout 6,000 years of history to what God has said and what God has done and Who God is. So evil is the *summation* of all the thoughts and all the acts and all the desires of all the people who do not love God and who do not serve Him with gladness. Evil is the result of people *loving* darkness rather than light; of *enjoying* their rebellion against God; of *seeking* to do what is right in their own eyes.

And so based on that- we see that evil is not simply the mass-murderers or the child molesters or ISIS. No, Evil is defined as all the thoughts and all the actions and all the words and all the desires of all the people who were made in the Image of God- who live on the earth that God graciously made, and who breathe the air that God graciously gives, and who eat the food that God graciously provides, and who enjoy life that God graciously sets forth, and who have the unmitigated gall and the audacity to try to be happy and to try to be content and to try to be productive *without* submitting to God's Ways and *without* loving Jesus Christ and *without* obeying His Word.

And the Kingdom of God will have none of that wickedness and so anyone who is to be in the Kingdom of God must first have his sins forgiven, and he must first have his life purified, and he must first have his mind renewed, and he must first have his ways altered, and his heart washed and his eyes opened and his ears unstopped and his nature transformed by what God has already done for us in Jesus Christ in His sinless Life and in His vicarious Death and in His bodily Resurrection.

And that is called Salvation. And so Salvation is when God- acting out of great harm to Himself- has so radically changed your nature- that the Commandments of God are no longer grievous to you, and you no longer see the straight and Narrow Path as simply a way for God to crimp your style or hinder you from having fun but you see the path of Righteousness as a pathway to the fullness of your own Joy. And Salvation has happened when you long to be close to Jesus, and

when you want the Word of God in the same way that a baby wants to suck milk, and when you hunger and thirst after Righteousness, and when you crave to be in the Presence of God, and when the things of this world grow strangely dim in the Light of His Glory and Grace.

So it is right for us to think that the Kingdom of God will be glorious and beautiful and spectacular and breathtaking and beyond our ability to even comprehend.

And that would be the end of the discussion except Jesus said something very odd at the end of verse 20 and verse 21 when He said:

**20 ...The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;
21 nor will they say, 'Look, here *it is!*' or, 'There *it is!*' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."**

So wait a minute. Everything that we have been talking about so far has to do with a Kingdom that is coming at some point in the future- where sin and evil will be *removed* forever, and where Righteousness and Love and Peace and Joy will *reign* unhindered- forever.

And yet right here Jesus talks as if the Kingdom has *already* come and, in fact- was in their very midst right then- 2,000 years ago! So what should we say about that? Is the Kingdom of God a *future* Reality to be hoped for, or is it a *present* Reality to experience and celebrate now? That's today's question.

And the answer is, "Yes". The Kingdom of God is *partly* present and *partly* future. It is here now *in one sense* and it is yet to come *in another sense*. Many of the blessings of the Kingdom are here right now to be celebrated and enjoyed- while others of them are not yet here. *Some* of the Power of the Kingdom is available right now- but not all of it. And *some* of the Curse and Misery of this Age has been overcome now by the Presence of the Kingdom- while some of it *cannot* be.

We must know that the decisive Battle against sin and satan and death has already been fought and already won by King Jesus through His sinless Life, His vicarious Death, and through His Bodily Resurrection. And yet the War that began with Adam's rebellion is ongoing. So we rejoice and we celebrate so great a Salvation while at the same time- sin must still be fought, satan must still be resisted, and death must still be endured until the Second Coming of the King and the final *consummation* of the Kingdom.

And I want you to see this clearly from the New Testament because it is extremely important for your faith. And it will inspire you with hope that there is a great and glorious future yet in store for all genuine believers. And that knowledge will *deepen* your confidence that the glory of your *future* in the Kingdom was secured by a precious *past* "down payment" of that very same Kingdom- or as **Romans 8:32** says:

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

The knowledge that your future place in God's Kingdom was secured by what Jesus has already done for you by manifesting the Power of that same Kingdom while He was here on earth- will give you a handle on why so much amazing Kingdom Power is being unleashed in the world today in transforming so many lives and yet why so much of sin and satan and suffering remains.

So if we can get a handle on the both the *present* and the *future* aspects of the Kingdom of God- we will find ourselves on a pathway of true genuine spiritual power- which will include an undying hatred of sin and an equally undying love for the brethren, and that will also definitely *include* the remarkable Power to suffer the cross of grief and pain and unfair treatment patiently- and well- to the Glory of God. Or as the Apostle Paul said in **Colossians 1:9-12**:

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

So let's look at the Passages of Scripture that show the Kingdom of God to be both present and future.

1. The Kingdom of God Is Present

Our Passage, **Luke 17:11-21**, is a clear Statement that Christ's Own Coming in His Incarnation *is* the same thing as the Coming of the Kingdom of God.

Now remember that all around Jesus right here are three groups of people:

1. The unbelieving Pharisees
2. The believing Apostles
3. The "disciples" some of whom were believing- some not

So everything Jesus says and does in these verses is designed on purpose to accomplish three things:

- ✓ Condemn the False Teaching of the Pharisees
- ✓ Edify the already Saved Apostles
- ✓ Convict and Save the Elect Disciples

So Jesus picks the single most insulting and ridiculous example to use to demonstrate Kingdom Power. He heals a group of ten lepers- at least one of whom is a Samaritan. Now they could have *all* been Samaritans- but we can't tell that from the information that Dr. Luke provides for us here. But we know that the village where these lepers lived was in between Galilee and Samaria- so they might have all been Samaritans.

So there were two things at work here:

- A. The stigma of the disease
- B. The stigma of Samaria

Now as we have seen previously in our journey through Luke- leprosy was a real bad problem back then. And lepers were considered to be cursed by God, and they were ostracized by society and forced to live in "leper colonies" on the outskirts of the city. And all during this time in Israel- and other countries as well- lepers were treated worse than dogs, and the disease consumed them and eventually killed them.

Now as I said- the Pharisees looked at these lepers as being cursed by God in the first place, and so their view of these people is that the leprosy was Divine Punishment against them for living evil lives, and so they had no care or compassion toward them at all.

And it is certain that many of the disciples and maybe even some of the Apostles felt the same way about the lepers as did the Pharisees- since they had been taught by the Pharisees their entire lives until they met Jesus.

But the greatest emotion that the Apostles had toward the lepers was fear- fear that if they got too close- they might get leprosy too. So they were scared as Jesus went right into this village that was filled with lepers.

But there was a second problem at work here. Not only were these people sick with leprosy- they were also Samaritans. And as you will remember- the Samaritans were the half-breeds of Israel during that day. They were Jews who had intermarried with Gentile pagans. And over time- the Samaritans had developed their own hybrid religion that had bits and pieces of Old Testament Truth mixed in with pagan beliefs.

So the Samaritans were despised by the Jews. And the Samaritans hated the Jews as well. So no Jew worth his salt would ever even speak to a Samaritan. And most Jews would inconvenience themselves by walking clear around Samaria rather than walk through it.

So here was a double whammy- here were ten sick lepers who were all living in Samaritan leper colony- where at least one of them was a sure-nuff Samaritan.

And Jesus heals ten of these people. Now it is almost certain that there were more than ten lepers in that village or that colony- but ten of them called out to Jesus from a distance- because they knew they were unclean. And notice that Jesus didn't touch them or even pray for them. He just sovereignly healed them- without saying a word- which is quite different from all these so-called faith healers that are on the Hay, Wood, and Stubble Television Network.

And so it was after Jesus performs this miracle of healing on a sick Samaritan Leper- right in front of the unbelieving Pharisees- without doing or saying anything- which clearly demonstrated that He is God in human flesh and that He has brought the Kingdom of God

with Him- that the Pharisees ask in verse 20 *when* the Kingdom of God was coming. And that's when Jesus said,

**20 ...The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed;
21 nor will they say, 'Look, here *it is!*' or, 'There *it is!*' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."**

So notice that the first thing that Jesus does is to correct a very strong and powerful misunderstanding of the Kingdom- namely, that the Kingdom would come with such observable signs that it would be unmistakable. And this was embedded in the Jews thinking in that day- that the Kingdom of God would include things like:

- ✓ The visible and complete overthrow of the pagan barbaric Romans who ruled Israel with an iron fist
- ✓ The Jew would be vindicated throughout the world as being God's chosen people after having been so shamefully humiliated by various conquering nations for almost 500 years
- ✓ The Messiah would rule the world from Jerusalem and return Israel to its former glory that they enjoyed under King David

And so here is Jesus purposefully insulting the false and man-made eschatology of the Pharisees by saying, *"No! The Kingdom of God is not coming in a way that can be observed like that. There is a mystery about the coming of the Kingdom. It is right here in your midst- without those kinds of observable signs. And it is here because I am here. I am the arrival of the Kingdom- even though I will not overturn the Romans or vindicate the Jew or set up an earthly kingdom (yet!)."*

So their view of what the Messiah was going to do when He got there and how God was going to finalize history was wrong. They had a false or a wrong or an incorrect understanding of how things were going to end and work out. But instead of confessing that they had gotten it wrong and repenting- these self-righteous hypocrites simply condemned Jesus.

Now another clear statement about the Present sense of the Kingdom is found in **Matthew 12:25**- turn there with me.

25 And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand.

26 "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?

27 "If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? For this reason they will be your judges.

28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

29 "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong *man*? And then he will plunder his house.

So in verse 24- the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. But Jesus has a very different interpretation of what's happening. He says in verse 28,

if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

So when Jesus does battle with Satan by the Spirit of God, and begins to violently plunder the strong man's house and steals souls away from satan- *freeing* them from his captivity by saving their souls- the Powers of the Kingdom of God are at work, and so, in *that sense*- the Kingdom of God is already present.

So we see that the Kingdom of God arrived, in one sense, with the Coming of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate God. But we also know that, in another sense- the Kingdom of God *will* arrive in all its glorious fullness- at the Second Coming of the Lord. So the "Mystery of the Kingdom" is the surprising fact that the Kingdom of God comes in *two* stages- not just one.

And the *first* stage of the Coming of God's Kingdom is like a mustard seed rather than a military coup (**Matthew 13:31; Luke 17:20**). It is quiet- not loud; unimposing rather than overt. And if you're not careful- you would miss it. So the King of this first installment of the Kingdom of God comes humbly- lowly- meekly- riding on a donkey- bringing with Him a branch of Peace and Amnesty from God for all

sinner who is in line to be crushed under God's Wrath- who are blessed by God to be able to repent and trust in Him.

But at some point in the future- the King of the Second installment of the Kingdom of God will come back- this time on a great white horse- with a sword of Judgment- bringing with Him eyes that burn like flames of fire to exact God's Justice upon the earth. And the Apostle John describes *this* Coming like this from **The Revelation 19:11-16**

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

12 His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and on His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself.

13 *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses.

15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

So we see that many Kingdom blessings have already been fulfilled- but the final consummation is still in the future.

So the New Testament describes all of history in two ages:

1. This present Age- with its Sin and Misery and Satanic Power
2. The Age to come- with its Righteousness and Wholeness and Freedom and Joy

And so the *mystery* of the Kingdom is that these two Ages have *intersected* with the Coming of Jesus. They now overlap. The Age to come has in a sense- already begun. Yet this fallen present Age endures for a time. So we don't live *between* the two Ages- but we live *inside* both of them- *simultaneously*. For example:

- ✓ We have already tasted the "**powers of the age to come**" (**Hebrews 6:5**)
- ✓ Yet we look for a City Whose Architect and Builder is God (**Hebrews 11:10**)
- ✓ We know that Christ already purchased our ultimate healing (**1Peter 2:24; Matthew 8:17**)
- ✓ Yet we still groan with sickness (**Romans 8:23; 2Corinthians 4:16**)
- ✓ We have already passed from death to life (**1John 3:14**)
- ✓ Yet we still die (**1Corinthians 15:26**)
- ✓ We already have the sanctifying Spirit as a down payment of our inheritance (**Ephesians 1:14**)
- ✓ Yet the war between flesh and Spirit goes on every day (**Galatians 5:16–18**)
- ✓ We have already been acquitted of all sin in Christ (**Romans 5:1**)
- ✓ Yet we must go on every day praying, "**forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us**" (**Matthew 6:12**)
- ✓ We already have our citizenship in the Kingdom of God (**Philippians 3:20**)
- ✓ Yet for now must still submit in measure to the rulers of this world (**Romans 13:1**).
- ✓ And while it is true that every blessing of the Age to come is already ours in Christ (**Ephesians 1:3**)
- ✓ It is also true that God wills for us to come into our inheritance patiently. (**The Acts 14:22**)

...and these Truths are *not* contradictions- they make up the "mystery of the Kingdom of God". So if the Kingdom has already come in Jesus- just what is the Power of the Kingdom doing right now? And in discussing this- I need to dispel some false understandings about this- that are common.

You see, some teach today that the Power of the Kingdom is for us to go out and do exactly what Jesus did in healing and performing miracles and in casting out demons. But is that true?

I would suggest to you that we have to be very careful even how we ask the question. It is one thing to ask: "*How was the Kingdom present in the Life and Ministry of Jesus?*", but it is quite another to ask, "*How is the Kingdom present with us today?*" You see, Jesus was the very *embodiment* of the Kingdom. He was the King. And so Jesus' demonstration of the Kingdom was *unique* to Him.

So there is a great *uniqueness* about the way Jesus demonstrated the Kingdom. And we should not assume that *our* demonstration of the Kingdom and Jesus' demonstration of the Kingdom will be the same. For example, many today in the Health, wealth and Prosperity cult read what Jesus said in **John 14:12-14**:

12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

13 "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

.. where they define the word "greater" in verse 12 as "better" or "more important". So these people teach that we will do *more important* things or *better things* than Jesus did. And whereas that might make these people feel better about themselves- that is just flat out wrong. Jesus was *not* saying that at all. When Luke wrote this verse down originally- he used the Greek word which means: *scope or extent*. So what Jesus was saying here is that the scope or the extent of our preaching will be more *far reaching* than Jesus' in that Jesus came the first time to be rejected and to die and to train 12 men to carry on after He left the earth- whereas Christianity now goes out to the four corners of the earth.

Secondly, the context of this Passage is to be seen very *narrowly* as given specifically to the Apostles at that time and then to refer in general to the entirety of the Christian Church- not to individually saved people who want to think that they have a "hot hand".

But even more importantly than that- we have to see Jesus' Ministry as being utterly unique and different and special from the ministry of everybody else. And we have to see the Ministry of the Apostles as also being non-repeatable- for several reasons:

- ✓ The goal of the miracles and healings in the Ministry of both Jesus and the Apostles was to bring Divine Credibility to the radical Revelation that they received and taught- not to banish sickness.
- ✓ The goal of the Ministry of Jesus was to prove His Deity; to fulfill almost 400 OT Prophecies; and to establish the New Covenant
- ✓ The goal of the Ministry of the Apostles was to receive and articulate the final, full, and completed Revelation of God to Mankind; to give Divine Credibility to that radical Gospel through signs, wonders, miracles, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit; to correctly interpret the Old Testament; and to establish Christianity on the earth.

So when Jesus turned the water into wine, John says,

John 2:11

This beginning of *His* signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

And John said that that Glory is,

John 1:14b

... we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

... meaning that this Glory was *unique* to Jesus. Our ministry will have a glory to it- a glory that has a portion of Grace and Truth. But Jesus' Glory was full of Grace and Truth. And that is unique to Him. So, therefore, it is wrong to say that the signs and wonders wrought by Jesus are simply the Work of a "Spirit-filled man" as some of the most popular preachers teach today. And then they add insult to injury by going further with their false doctrine to say that "Any Spirit-filled man" can *duplicate* those same signs and wonders- in the same or even greater measure than Jesus and for the same reason.

And at best that is terrible logic, and at worst- it is blasphemy. John said that when Jesus demonstrated Kingdom Power- He did it in a way that manifested His Own Personal Glory- the Glory that Jesus had with the Father “**before the world was**” (John 17:5). That is the Glory reserved solely for God, and no human being- no matter how spiritual he may think he is- is ever going to be Deity. And to say that- is blasphemy. So there was an inseparable connection between the signs that Jesus did and the glorious Sonship of Jesus.

Another example comes from **John 5:36**. There Jesus says,

But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of John*; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish — the very works that I do — testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

So there was something about the Works of Jesus or the way He did them- that pointed- not merely to Him being filled with the Spirit- but Him being the very Son of God sent from the Father.

Another example is the resurrection of Lazarus. Jesus' explanation to Martha of what was about to happen was not, “*I am full of the Spirit and can do the Works of God that other Spirit-filled people can do.*” No, His explanation was,

John 11:25b&26

25 ... I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.

Therefore, Lazarus' resurrection was *not* merely a sign of a human being who was “in tune” with the Power of God. No, it was a very *unique* Sign that Jesus was the one and only Son of God- the only One with death-overcoming Power. So just before Jesus calls Lazarus from the grave, Jesus did *not* pray out loud to His Father and say,

“I prayed this so that they may believe that I am full of the Spirit, or that my words are true, or that the Kingdom has come”

No, He said,

John 11:42b

... I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.

So, I say again, we should not assume that any demonstration of the Kingdom today by any human being who is a sinner saved by Grace and Jesus' demonstration of the Kingdom in His Ministry as God Almighty in human flesh will be the same. It isn't and it won't be. In fact, we should actually glory in our *inability* to heal the way Jesus healed in order to exalt His absolute uniqueness as THE Son- Who shared the very same Glory of the Father- while we admit our imperfections as forgiven and adopted sons on the way to the Father. So we must see the Kingdom of God as both present and yet something that is to come.

So what is the Kingdom of God? It's a simple question, and yet if I were to ask that same question to a hundred theologians I would likely get a hundred different answers. The Kingdom of God is *not* some sort of ancient or obsolete doctrine that no one has ever heard of. Rather, it is something we hear about all the time as a fundamental component of Jesus' teaching and a primary theme throughout sacred Scripture.

And yet when most people in the modern Church think about the Kingdom of God- their minds are strained to conceive of anything beyond some notion of mustard seeds, lost coins, different soils, and undefined future bliss.

And still others would say that the Kingdom of God has become nothing more than blowing people down or buying jet airplanes. But the Kingdom of God should be more simple to define than just about any other theological term. It's quite plain really: "God reigns". Or, to say it another way: The Kingdom of God is the Omnipotent Rule and sovereign Reign of Almighty God over all things- the inauguration of which came with the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ Jesus, and the *fullness* of which is yet to come.

So just what does it look like when the Kingdom of God is manifested in our day? The answer cannot simply be reduced to a word study of the term *kingdom*. That would be a helpful exercise, but we should realize that the Bible *describes* the Kingdom even when the word is never used. So let me try.

During the last week of April of his year (2015), there was an interview with the brother of two of the men who were beheaded-

among the 21 in Libya. They were Egyptian Christians who were working in Libya and who had been captured by ISIS. And what is amazing is that this interview was carried by "Sat-7", the largest Arabic Christian Television Network that regularly broadcasts the Gospel to well over a billion people who live under the domination of Islam each week.

And here is an excerpt of that interview

"I am proud of them. They make me walk- raising my head up, in pride. ISIS helped us. They strengthened our faith. I thank ISIS that they didn't cut the audio as they cut the heads off these men- so we could hear them. They didn't deny Jesus. Believe me when I tell you that people here (Egypt and Libya) are happy. And congratulating one another. We want to remain faithful as well."

Now the Egyptian Bible Society printed a tract entitled "[Two Rows by the Sea](#)". And just thirty- six hours after this interview was over- they had distributed 1.7 million of these tracts all over Pakistan, Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. This is the largest Bible tract effort ever in the Arab world. And this effort flowed out from the spilled blood of the Egyptian martyrs who would rather die than deny Jesus. *That* is Kingdom Power. That is what it means to be completely *undaunted* by the darkness.

Kingdom Power is rarely, if ever, seen on the stages of the world, it rarely makes the headlines, and it commends no praise from the pagan world. It is quiet and silent and hidden as it were-as hidden as a Man walking up a lonely dark hill in a small tiny little country of desert and sadness- who screamed in agony as He endured the Wrath of God for our sins.

But even though that Event didn't make the headlines in Rome or Beijing or in any of the advanced capitals of the world's empires of that day- that Event transformed the world. And it is *still* transforming the world in our day- right now- as multiplied thousands of 18, 19, and 20 year old broken, humble and trembling young people with their whole lives in front of them- with all the promises of glitter and gold calling out to them- are forsaking it all- and are surrendering to the Call of Jesus to preach the very same old, old Story to the unreached peoples of the world. *That* is Kingdom Power.

The Power of the Kingdom today is not manifested in those who boast about gifts and power. But it can be seen today in the lives of a million broken, humble, and trembling men- who have cried out to God bitterly for forgiveness and who are utterly forsaking the scourge of pornography and are now loving their wives as Christ loved the Church. It is seen in the homes where a million trembling and broken housewives- who will never be seen or known by the great masses of people- but they have become consumed by King Jesus and His Kingdom, and so they have walked away from the lie of feminism and the lie of equality and they have embraced by God's Mercy- the life of a quiet, loving, supportive wife- who loves her husband and who loves her children and who carries the Glory of Jesus Christ many times all alone- but does so with joy- for she knows in Whom she has believed.

The Power of the Kingdom is found in the small businesses all around where the owner have seen the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ and who now seeks to run his business according to Biblical Principles and to God's Glory; it is found in children who have been confronted with Absolute Beauty and Absolute Truth, and they have forsaken the lure of technology and ungodly romances and friends, and they seek to be grateful and obedient to their parents; it is found in old men who are esteemed highly for their godly character and in old women who train the young. And it is found in employees who give eight hours of work for eight hours of pay.

And Kingdom Power is found in families who seek, by God's Grace, to live simply and escape the mad rush to obtain more of this world's goods, and it is found in Pastors- who have removed themselves from the trap of spiritual competition and who seek only to feed the sheep and to make Jesus appear glorious and irresistible.

The Kingdom of God is here now in simplicity and silent transformation, or as Paul said in **2Corinthians 4:6**

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

And one day- the consummation of this powerful and glorious Kingdom will come- when King Jesus returns, and He will bring with Him the perfect fulfillment of what He began 2,000 years ago.

So God's Kingdom consists of God's Rule in God's Place over God's people with God's Law. And God has established His King, Jesus, and by His Spirit He gives life to His people through His Word. And God's people are now sojourners and exiles- struggling their way through the wilderness to God's Place- the Land of Promise- the City with foundations- the New Jerusalem- the new heaven and the new earth.

So the way to understand this is that the Kingdom of God- in both its present and future realities- now belongs to the Lord. And both now and then- God will rule in His Kingdom- over His Own people, in His Own place, according to His Own Word.

Amen. Let's pray

© 2008- 2015 by The Covenant of Peace Church. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America

The Covenant of Peace Church 13600 John Clark Road Gulfport, Mississippi 39503 228.832.7729 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1996 by The Lockmann Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse by verse study of **The Gospel According to Luke**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.