

The Nature of the Kingdom

Matt 21:5-9

5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. 8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' Hosanna in the highest!" NKJV

The subject of the kingdom is one of the most diverse and complicated in the Scriptures. There are so many aspects of the kingdom that it is difficult for everyone to agree on many aspects of it.

The Jews of Jesus day were looking for a literal, physical kingdom with Jesus being the King. Their plan for Him was that He would assemble an army, do some miracles and throw the Roman legions out of the country. Then He would restore the ancient kingdom of David, that gave them supremacy over the gentile nations around them.

The Old Testament is filled with passages predicting that very thing. So it is not difficult to think that is what Jesus has in mind. But Jesus has different plans. As He told Pilate in Jn 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Time will not allow us to discuss every aspect of the kingdom. But instead I want to discuss the kingdom as it is available to us today.

From the reference in John 18:36-37 we can understand that the kingdom is of a spiritual nature and not a physical nature.

Lk 17:20 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

So then let us look at the kingdom that all Christians are a part of today and let us look at what it is like. How can we describe it?

I. You can tell about a kingdom by looking at its subjects.

A. Matt 5:3-10

1. 3 "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

a. His subjects are not proud and arrogant.

- b. They do not spend their time putting others down.
 - c. Their sense of worth is found in their relationship with Jesus.
- 2. 4 God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
 - a. They mourn for the things that God mourns over.
 - (1) The people trapped in darkness and sin.
 - (2) The oppression of the people by cruel people.
 - (3) For those blinded by false religion.
- 3. 5 God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.
 - a. Matt 18:3 “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
 - b. They look most like Jesus when they are humble.
 - c. When they do not demand their so called rights.
- 4. 6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.
 - a. In His kingdom, justice rules supreme.
 - b. The sense of right and wrong pervades everything they do.
 - c. His subjects want justice for everyone.
- 5. 7 God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
 - a. His subjects are full of mercy.
 - b. They are the most generous people in the world.
 - c. Like the people of Macedonia
 - (1) 2 Cor 8:1-5 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. 3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.NKJV
- 6. 8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.
 - a. They are not pure in practice only.

- b. But their hearts are pure, having been cleansed by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.
 - 7. 9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.
 - a. God's people are not quarrelers.
 - b. They are not looking for a fight and will do most anything to avoid one.
 - 8. 10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
 - a. And instead of persecuting others, they themselves suffer persecution.
 - B. They operate on entirely different principles than the world does.
 - 1. They put others before themselves.
 - a. 1 Cor 10:24 Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.
 - 2. They love to do the King's bidding rather than trying to get out of it.
- II. You can tell about a kingdom by looking at its laws.
 - A. In the Kingdom the greatest law is LOVE.
 - 1. Mark 12:30-31 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." NKJV
 - B. A kingdom where there are no taxes.
 - 1. It is supported by the love gifts of its subjects.
 - 2. 2 Cor 9:6-8 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. NKJV
 - C. For the weapons are not material, but spiritual.
 - 1. 2Co 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

- III. You can tell about a kingdom by looking at its king.
- A. This king was willing to die for His subjects.
 - B. All His subjects are glad to have Him alone as their King.
 - C. He is a King that listens to all our prayers and even prays for us.
 - D. But His Kingdom will come on earth as it is in heaven.
 - 1. Phil 2:5-11 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. NKJV

He did not come to conquer Rome but to conquer your heart.

He did not come to take away the oppression of Rome but the oppression of sin.