

# Expository Thoughts On Luke - Luke 17:20-25

by J.C. Ryle

---

## Transcript

### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

We are taught, firstly, in this passage that the kingdom of God is utterly unlike the kingdoms of this world. The Lord Jesus tells the Pharisees that "it comes not with observation." He meant by this that its approach and presence were not to be marked by outward signs of dignity. Those who expected to observe anything of this kind would be disappointed. They would wait and watch for such a kingdom in vain, while the real kingdom would be in the midst of them without their knowing it. "Behold," He says, "the kingdom of God is within you."

The expression which our Lord here uses describes exactly the beginning of His spiritual kingdom. It began in a manger at Bethlehem, without the knowledge of the great, the rich, and the wise. It appeared suddenly in the temple at Jerusalem, and no one but Simeon and Anna recognized its King. It was received thirty years after by none but a few fishermen and publicans in Galilee. The rulers and Pharisees had no eyes to see it. The King came to His own, and His own received Him not. All this time the Jews professed to be waiting for the kingdom. But they were looking in the wrong direction. They were waiting for signs which they had no warrant for expecting. The kingdom of God was actually in the midst of them! Yet they could not see it!

The literal kingdom which Christ shall set up one day will begin in some respects very like His spiritual one. It will not be accompanied by the signs, and marks, and outward manifestations which many are expecting to see. It will not be ushered in by a period of universal peace and holiness. It will not be announced to the Church by such unmistakable warnings, that everybody will be ready for it, and prepared for its appearing. It shall come suddenly, unexpectedly, and without note of warning to the immense majority of mankind. The Simeons and Annas will be as few in the last day as they were at the beginning of the Gospel. The most shall awake one day, like men out of sleep, and find, to their surprise and dismay, that the kingdom of God is actually come.

We shall do well to lay these things to heart, and ponder them well. The vast majority of men are utterly deceived in their expectations with respect to the kingdom of God. They are waiting for signs which will never appear. They are looking for indications which they will never discover. They are dreaming of universal conversion. They are fancying that missionaries, and ministers, and schools, will change the face of the world before the end comes. Let us beware of such mistakes. Let us not sleep as do others. The kingdom of God will be upon men much sooner than many expect. "It comes not with observation."

We are taught, secondly, in this passage, that the second coming of Jesus Christ will be a very SUDDEN event. Our Lord describes this by a striking figure. He says, "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."

The second personal advent of Christ is the real fulfillment of these words. Of the precise day and hour of that advent we know nothing. But whenever it may take place, one thing at least is clear--it will come on the Church and the world suddenly, instantaneously, and without previous notice. The whole tenor of Scripture points this way. It shall be "in such an hour as you do not think." It shall come "as a thief in the night." (Matt. 24:44; 1 Thess. 5:2.)

This suddenness of Christ\

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jc-ryle/expository-thoughts-on-luke-luke-1720-25/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**