

The King and the Kingdom

by Stephen Kaung

The kingdom of God is a spiritual and heavenly kingdom, established by Jesus Christ through His sacrifice and redemption.

Duration: 1:02:12

Scripture: Numbers 23:19, Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 16:18, Matthew 24:14, Luke 2:7, Luke 3:3, Romans 9:23

Topics: "Kingdom Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the nature of the kingdom of God by knowing the character of the king. The character of the king is demonstrated through the beatitudes, showing his humility, meekness, thirst for righteousness, mercy, purity, and peacemaking. The speaker also highlights the significance of the cross as a demonstration of the character of the kingdom. The sermon references Matthew 24:14, where it is stated that the gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world before the end comes.

Transcript

May we look to the Lord in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we do praise and thank Thee that Thou hast opened the new and living way through the veil, that we may enter into Thy very presence and behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled face. O, we do praise and thank Thee that the blood has taken away all distance and all hindrances.

We do praise and thank Thee for the ready access that we have to Thy very throne of grace. Lord, we just desire that Thou should give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation, that we may know Him in a real way. We acknowledge that in ourselves there is no ability to do that.

Unless Thou dost reveal Thyself, we will not be able to enter into the reality of Christ. So, Lord, we just look to Thee. We praise and thank Thee because we know it is Thy good pleasure to reveal Thy Son in us.

So we ask Thee, O Lord, that Thou would do this at this hour through Thy Holy Spirit. We just commit ourselves to Thee and ask Thee to anoint us all with Thy Holy Spirit and quicken us to Thyself. In the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen. We thank God for gathering us together this time in His presence. The burden that our Lord has given to our brother, Manpreet Halla, is found in Matthew, chapter 16, verse 18.

He says, I will build my church. And the burden that our Lord has given to our brother, Lance Lambert, is found in Romans 9, verse 23. Vessels of mercy aforeprepared for glory.

And the burden that the Lord has given to me for this time is also in Matthew. Matthew, chapter 24. Matthew, chapter 24, verse 14.

And these glad tidings of the kingdom, the gospel of the kingdom, shall be preached in the whole habitable earth for a witness to all the nations. And then shall come the end. I'll repeat it.

And these glad tidings of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole habitable earth for a witness or a testimony to all the nations. And then shall come the end. We mentioned during the first evening at the opening remark that there is only one gospel.

It is the gospel of God, the gospel of God's Son, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, the gospel of the glory of Christ. It is the gospel of grace. It is also the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of your salvation, and as Paul said, my gospel.

Now with all these different descriptions, we know that there is only one gospel. Not many gospels. If anyone should come and preach another gospel, another of a different kind, then he has deviated from the truth.

But the gospel of God is so full that it has many aspects. And this time we would like to emphasize one of these many aspects. The reason why we would like to do that, as we said before, it is because this is an aspect that has been greatly overlooked.

It is the aspect of the gospel of the kingdom. Now do remember that this is not in any sense in contradiction to the gospel of grace. Because the gospel of the kingdom is the gospel of grace.

The gospel of grace is the gospel of the kingdom. It is just the two aspects of the same gospel. The gospel of the kingdom must be preached in the whole habitable earth for a witness and a testimony to all the nations.

And then the end will come. I believe, brothers and sisters, we are living at the end of the end. We know that the end is coming soon.

But before the end comes, this gospel of the kingdom must be preached that the nations may know there is a king and his kingdom is coming soon. What is a kingdom? The word kingdom as an abstract noun means sovereignty, royal power, dominion, rule. But in a concrete sense, a kingdom means a territory or a people over which a king reigns and rules.

Now of course the kingdom of God is where God rules. It is the sphere of his reign. Now if you read Psalm 145, Psalm 145, verse 1 and verse 13, Psalm 145, verse 1, I will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bless thy name forever and ever.

Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all ages, and thy dominion is throughout all generations. If you turn to Psalm 45, Psalm 45, verse 6, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of thy kingdom.

Or you may turn to Psalm 22, verse 28, For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he ruleth among the nations. So the kingdom of God is from eternity to eternity. The kingdom of God extends through all the ages.

And the kingdom of God rules over the earth, all the nations. That is the kingdom of God. Wherever God reigns and rules, there is his kingdom.

But we know, that something happened in this universe. Once upon a time there was a rebellion of the angels. And because of the rebellion of the archangel, this earth entered into ruin and emptiness.

And even after God had restored it to be a habitable place for man. And yet we also know that how man sinned against God. And because of such rebellion and the fall of man, the kingdom of God in a strict sense is now where his rule his authority is acknowledged and recognized.

In a broad sense, the kingdom of God covers the whole universe. The kingdom of God extends through all the ages. There is nothing that is not under his rule.

But in the strict sense, the kingdom of God is where he is recognized. His rule and reign is acknowledged. Now that doesn't mean that God has ever given up his ownership or his sovereignty.

On the contrary, we find even after the rebellion that had happened upon this earth, God is working to restore and to recover that which he has ordained from the very beginning. After the rebellion of man, God began to work. You remember our Lord Jesus said, My father worketh until now, and I work.

After man's fall, God had no rest. He began to do the work of recovering or restoring his kingdom. First of all we find how he redeemed a people out of Egypt.

He brought them to himself and he told them that if they keep his commandment and obey his commandments, they will be his people and he will be their God. God brought this people to himself to make them a nation of priests. Over this nation of Israel, a people whom he redeemed out of Egypt, he was to be their king.

He was to have his kingdom on earth among them. Now if you read Exodus chapter 15, after God had brought them over the Red Sea, and you find the song of Moses was being sung, and in this beautiful song you find it begins with God is our salvation. And it ends up in verse 18, the Lord shall reign forever and ever.

In other words, God redeemed this people, God saved this people, that he might reign over them forever. God was their king. They were his kingdom on earth.

Moses led the people through the wilderness and towards the end of the 40th year, they were on the plain of Moab. They were ready to enter into the promised land. And you remember the story in Numbers chapter 23, how Balak, the king of Moab, was so frightened when he saw this multitude of people coming near his border, and how he engaged a prophet by the name of Balaam, who tried to sell his gift with money, with reward, and how this Balaam tried to curse the children of Israel.

And then you find in Numbers chapter 23, verse 19, Balaam said, God is not a man that he shall lie, neither a son of man that he shall repent. Shall he say and not do, and shall he speak and not make it good? Behold, I have received commission to bless, and he has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither has he seen wrong in Israel.

Jehovah his God is with him, and the shout of the king is in his midst. In other words, you find God brought these people to himself, to be king over them. Under Joshua, these people were entering to the promised

land, but these people being an earthly people, they will need someone on earth that can be seen to represent God as king.

Now, even though they try to get their own king, like the kings of the nations, and yet we find Saul was not the king. Even though they choose their own king, and yet we find Saul failed to represent God as king. In other words, he was a misrepresentation.

So in God's time, God raised up David, a man after his own heart. And when David sat on the throne, he was a true representation of God as king over his people. But unfortunately, his seed did not continue on with the same spirit as David.

On the contrary, you'll find how they led the people away from God. And because of this, God allowed the nation of Israel, and then the nation of Judah to be taken into captivity. In outward appearance, it seemed as if that at that period, there was no kingdom of God on earth.

God was called the God of heaven. But during that period, God was never addressed as the God of heaven and of earth. Because He had no kingdom represented on earth.

Even after a remnant of the children of Israel came back to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple, and yet you'll find there was no representative on earth to represent God as king over His people. When we come to the New Testament, you'll find the royal seed of David, Joseph. He was not sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Instead he was a humble carpenter in the hilly country of Nazareth. And who sat on the throne of Judah? An Idonium Herod. But God was working.

And suddenly you'll find a voice in the wilderness. And the voice said, Repent! For the kingdom of God has drawn nigh. The kingdom of God was drawing nigh.

That was the message of John the Baptist. He prepared the way of the Lord. He even identified the king.

And as we find prophesied in Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6 For unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given. And a government shall be upon His shoulder. And His name is called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even forever, the zeal of Jehovah the Host will perform this. Unto us a child is born.

Now this child was born in a manger. And yet unto us a son is given. The child who was born in the manger is the son given to us.

He is the son of God who came into this world. And the government shall be upon His shoulder. He is the son of David and yet He is greater than David for He is the Lord of David.

He shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. And His government shall know no end. And the zeal of the Lord will perform this.

When our Lord Jesus was born, He was born a King. Though He was born in a manger and yet He was born a King. And that's the reason why you find the wise men from the East as they were led by the star,

they came to worship the King.

But this King was very different from all the Kings of this world. Why? Because His Kingdom is not of this world. So the way the King came into this world was different.

The way the King grew up was different. The way the King was trained was very different. There in the hilly country of Nazareth He grew up.

He was unknown to man but known to God. And for 30 years He was hidden. He was hidden from the sight of this world.

During those 30 years He was being trained to be the King of the Kingdom of God. You know to be a King has to be trained. And the training of the King is the most strictest, most difficult.

Because He was to sit on the throne and rule over a people. And here was the way that the King was trained. Our Lord Jesus was trained in a way that was very difficult, very different from all the trainings that the world gave.

He never went to a rabbinical school and learned. And yet He was in the school of God. He learned all the lessons of the Kingdom.

So when He came out to preach, He was the very embodiment of the laws and the principles and the nature and the character of the Kingdom. When He was 12 years old He went to Jerusalem. He was made the Son of the Law.

He was conscious that He must be occupied with the Father's business. He stayed behind in the temple. But when His parents, His mother found Him He said Do you not know that I must be occupied with My Father's business? And yet even so He went back with His parents.

He submitted Himself to His earthly parents. He learned a lesson of submission, of obedience. When He was 30 years old He came forth and the way He showed Himself to His people was by receiving the baptism of John.

Now dear brothers and sisters we know the baptism of John is the baptism of repentance. Repent for the Kingdom of God has drawn near. Now there is nothing in Him to repent.

Our Lord Jesus He was perfect. There was nothing He needed to repent. And yet we find how He went into the water.

He received the baptism of John. He said Do it for Me. According to righteousness there you'll find He humbled Himself.

He identified Himself with us. And He even took that baptism. And after the baptism He was driven by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to face the arch enemy.

For 40 days, 40 nights He fasted in constant conflict. And thank God how we find He overcame His enemy. And He came back in the power of the Holy Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus came back from the wilderness He began to preach. And what did He preach? Repent for the Kingdom of God has drawn near. He preached the gospel of the Kingdom.

Why did He preach the gospel of the Kingdom? It was not just a teaching. It was a reality. Why? Because the gospel of the Kingdom that He preached is embodied in Him.

He is the Kingdom. He is the gospel of the Kingdom. Why is it? He said the Kingdom of God has drawn near.

Is He not the King? He is. Is not the Kingdom embodied in Him? Yes. But in another sense He said the Kingdom of God has drawn nigh.

Even though the King is already in the midst and yet He has not a people. Yet. Without a people in a sense a King without a people does not have a Kingdom.

So that is the reason why you find our Lord Jesus in the beginning of His ministry He said the Kingdom of God has drawn nigh. The King is in your midst but He is to get a people unto Himself that He may have His Kingdom. A people began to gather to Him.

And we gathered to Him. You remember your Luke chapter 17 when people ask Him when will the Kingdom of God come? And the Lord Jesus answered the Kingdom of God does not come by observation. Do not say it is here or it is there.

He said the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you. Why? Because He is in their midst. The King is in the midst and where the King is there is His Kingdom.

And He told His disciples from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of God is to be seized by violence and the violence seized upon it. He began to call people to follow Him. And those who responded to the call they left everything and followed Him.

And when He had His disciples around Him He had His Kingdom. But His Kingdom is so different from the Kingdom of this world. He told His disciples, the kings and the rulers of this world how they rule over the people, overlord them, give command and order.

But He said, this is not so in your midst. If you want to be great, you have to be servant. If you want to be first, you have to be a bond slave.

The Lord said, I come not to be minister to but to minister and to give my life a ransom for many. Dear brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus was on earth. He presented a Kingdom to the children of Israel.

But it is a different Kingdom. The children of Israel were expecting the Kingdom to come. Why? Because at that time they were under the Roman rule.

And in a sense, the Jews never accepted Roman rule. They were looking forward for the Messiah to come. They believed that when the Messiah should come, then the Messiah would deliver them out of the Roman rule.

They would become the first of the nations, the head of the nations instead of the tail of the nations. They were looking forward from the restoration of Israel as an earthly nation. The Lord presented them with a Kingdom.

The Lord presented Himself to them as their King. But the Kingdom He presented to them was of a different nature. They couldn't understand it.

In the very beginning they listened to Him. In the very beginning they flocked to Him. They were hoping that He was their Messiah.

But as they listened, as they watched, they became more and more disappointed in Him. They saw that He was not the King that they expected. They realized that He didn't come, bringing them the Kingdom that they desired for.

So finally you'll find they got away. Got Him away. Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucified Him.

They would have nothing to do with Him. Why? Because they did not understand the Kingdom that He offered. Not only those Jewish people did not understand, but as you read the full Gospels, you'll find even His disciples did not understand.

In one sense they did leave all and follow Him. They did put themselves under His rule. And yet in another sense they never understood Him.

Again and again our Lord Jesus tried to tell them of the nature of His Kingdom. Of the character of His Kingdom. Of the Kingdom that He was to establish among them.

And yet you'll find through the three years that they were with Him, how our Lord Jesus was straightened. Because His disciples just did not understand. And even after His resurrection, He talked to them of the Kingdom of God for forty days.

But when He led them to Mount Olive, before He was ascended, they still asked Him, is this the time that You will restore the nation of Israel? In other words, you'll find nobody seemed to understand the Kingdom. Nobody seemed to be able to grasp the Gospel of the Kingdom. Therefore, nobody seemed to be able to know the King in a real way.

Now dear brothers and sisters, this was not only true two thousand years ago with the Jews at that time. Or even with the disciples of our Lord Jesus at His time. But how true it is even with us today.

There was a teaching called postponement theory. Some people think that our Lord Jesus when He came and presented Himself to the Jews, He was actually presented to them an earthly kingdom. But because they did not receive Him, therefore, that kingdom was postponed.

Dear brothers and sisters, not so. Because when our Lord Jesus came into the midst of the children of Israel, He did present them with a kingdom. But it is not the kingdom of this world.

It is not an earthly kingdom. It is a spiritual and heavenly kingdom. But they rejected Him because they did not understand.

And yet dear brothers and sisters, when they crucified Him on Calvary's cross, they thought that would be the end of His claim as the King of the Jews. They thought this would be the end of His kingdom. But this is the beginning.

What is the symbol of the kingdom of God? The symbol of the kingdom of God is the cross. To men, the cross is shame. It is curse.

It is death. It is the end of life. It is the end of everything.

But dear brothers and sisters, when our Lord Jesus was crucified on the cross, that is the very symbol of His kingdom. If we want to understand what is His kingdom, if we want to know the nature of His kingdom, brothers and sisters, you have to know the cross. There on the cross He overcomes sins.

There on the cross He overcomes the old creation. There on the cross He overcomes the world. There on the cross He overcomes Satan and all the power of darkness.

And of course we know in resurrection He overcomes death. In other words, the cross is the very symbol of the kingdom of God. If you want to know what the kingdom of God is, you have to accept the cross.

You have to enter into all the meanings that the cross is. The cross is the very demonstration of the character of the kingdom that the king has brought in. Brothers and sisters, I think we need, first of all, to know what is the nature of the kingdom of God.

If you want to know the nature of the kingdom of God, you have to know what is the character of the king. As you see him, all that he is, how he is poor in spirit, how he is meek and lowly, how he is thirsty after righteousness, how he is merciful, how he is pure in heart. End of side one.

Please turn your cassette. How he is pure in heart, how he is a peacemaker, how he suffers for righteousness' sake. In other words, the Beatitudes is just an expression of what the king is.

This is what he is. And even when he enters into Jerusalem as the king, you find he sits upon an ass. Even the coat of an ass.

Meek and lowly. The nature of the kingdom of God is revealed to us in the life of Christ. The nature of the kingdom of God is fully demonstrated by the cross.

It is by knowing Christ and knowing the cross. Dear brothers and sisters, we live in the reality of the kingdom. Or to put it in another way, we become the kingdom of God.

Now in Romans chapter 14 verse 17. Romans chapter 14 verse 17. For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking. It is not physical, materialistic. Now when you think of the kingdom of this world.

What is the nature of the kingdom of this world? The nature of the kingdom of this world is eating and drinking. In other words, the very nature of the kingdom of this world is pleasure, enjoyment, satisfaction, happiness, prosperity, what to eat, what to drink, what to be close with, how to enjoy ourselves. This is the nature of the kingdom of this world.

And if a kingdom can offer you with much eating and drinking, then it is a prosperous kingdom. A first class kingdom. If a kingdom cannot offer you much in food, in enjoyment, in luxury, then it is a poor country, underdeveloped.

The kingdom of this world is in eating and drinking. And if we seek the kingdom of this world, these are the things that we seek for. Therefore the Lord Jesus said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

In other words, the Lord said, do not worry about what to eat and what to drink, and what to be close with. This is the thing that the nation seek after, because these belong to the nation, to the kingdom of this world. But with you it is different.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. What is the nature of the kingdom of God? In righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Where do you see righteousness? You see righteousness on the cross of our Lord Jesus.

He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God. The righteousness of God is revealed, is demonstrated, comes to us through the cross of our Lord Jesus. Before the cross we had no righteousness.

Our own righteousnesses were as filthy rags. But thank God, through the cross of our Lord Jesus, the righteousness of God has come upon us. We are today close with Christ, our righteousness.

And because we are close with Christ, our righteousness, we can stand before God in boldness. And not only we are justified, but God too is justified. Because before the cross, how our God was misunderstood when He did not punish sins right away, how He was misunderstood? Because sin was not punished right away, people will say, now where is God? If God is righteous, why did He not punish? Why He forbears? And during the time of His forbearance of the sins of this world, God was misunderstood.

But by the cross, He demonstrates to the world that He is just in justifying sins. God is justified. And dear brothers and sisters, this righteousness is not only just a position that we receive in Christ Jesus.

This righteousness is a life. Why? Because Christ is our life. The life within us is a righteous life.

Therefore He who practices righteousness is a child of God. We have this very life in us, a righteous life, as righteous as Christ is. And if we live by this life, then we will live righteousness, righteously, before God and before man.

This is the kingdom of God. If you do not know what righteousness is, you do not know the kingdom. You are not under the rule of the king.

If you are under the rule of the king, dear brothers and sisters, it is inevitable that you not only receive the position of being right before God, that is justified. But you must also live in a state of holiness that is sanctified. Why? Because the very life in you is a righteous life.

And this is the kingdom of God. Unless we live in righteousness, we do not know what the kingdom of God is. And peace.

Do we know peace before we meet the cross of our Lord Jesus? There was no peace. No peace to the wicked. Peace, peace.

And there is no peace. There is no peace in our heart. There is no peace with one another.

There is no peace between us and God. There is no peace in this world. But dear brothers and sisters, if you read Ephesians and Colossians, you find how Christ is our peace.

How He has brought the nations, the Gentiles and the Jews together. How by the cross He takes away the war of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles. He has brought them into one body.

He has become peace to us. And now He has made peace for us that we may have peace with God. We may have peace in our conscience.

We may have peace with one another. And if we receive Him as the Prince of Peace, one day there will be peace upon this earth. Dear brothers and sisters, where do we see peace? On the cross.

The cross is a very sign of the Kingdom. Again, it is not only a matter of position, it is also a matter of condition. The Lord Jesus said, All ye who labour and are heavy laden, come to Me, and I will give you rest.

That's peace. But He also said, Take up your cross and follow Me. Take My yoke upon you.

And learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest, peace in your soul. Dear brothers and sisters, we know peace by coming to the Lord, accepting Him as our peace. We know peace when we really take up His yoke upon us, bearing the cross, and learn of Him.

Then, the peace of God will rule in our heart. There will be rest in our soul. This is the Kingdom of God.

And also the joy in the Holy Spirit. What is the joy in the Holy Spirit? You remember in Hebrews chapter 12, it is said of our Lord Jesus, in verse 2, In view of the joy lying before Him endured the cross, having despised the shame, and He sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. In other words, our Lord Jesus, how He endured the cross, despised the shame, why? Because He has the joy before Him.

Now, what is the joy that is before our Lord Jesus? It is the joy of knowing that He is doing the Father's will. It is the joy of knowing that the Father's heart is satisfied. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the joy in the Holy Spirit.

And all in this world we seek for pleasure. We seek for happiness. We say, this is one of our alienable rights.

This is our right. We are born to have happiness. But what is happiness? Lots of people profess they are happy, and yet they are not.

The joy in the Holy Spirit, that is real happiness. And what is the joy in the Holy Spirit? When we are able to say, not by will, but Your will be done. When we realize that Christ became of our life.

When we know that He is satisfied. That's all that is needed. I remember a story.

Of course it didn't happen in this country because you don't do it now. Maybe in the old days you did. In the days of the beginning of the railroad, you know.

And usually you got your ticket. And got on the train. But when you got off, before you left the gate, you have to give that ticket to the conductor at the gate of the railway station.

Now that we did in China. And it happened in the north country. Very cold.

It was bitterly cold. And everybody was wrapped up. With their gloves, heavy gloves and everything.

So when the train arrived at the station, and people got off the train, and they were trying to get out of the gate, there was the conductor standing there, asking for the ticket. And people had to take off their gloves and search their pockets. And everybody gave him a bad look.

And people said, of course we had the ticket. But he was too cold. No, give me the ticket.

And everybody looked at him and was angry with him. But this conductor was standing there smiling and keep on asking for the ticket. And somebody had some sympathy over him and said to him, how can you bear all these shame and reproach and ridicule? How can you bear all these things and smile? He pointed a finger at the window.

There was the station master. He said, as long as he is satisfied, I am happy. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the joy in the Holy Spirit.

You know, as we walk on this earth, as we follow the Lord, there will be oppositions, misunderstandings, persecutions, afflictions of many kinds. We may think that these things deprive us of our joy. But no, brothers and sisters, if you see Him, if you look up unto Jesus, and if you know He is satisfied, you have joy in the Holy Spirit.

This is the kingdom of God. The King has already come. He has demonstrated to us what His kingdom is.

He gave Himself on the cross for us. Because this is the very character of His kingdom. And now He is calling us to follow Him.

If we follow Him, then we will be His kingdom. And we will demonstrate to this world that the King has come. And the kingdom is already on this earth.

May the Lord help us. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, we do praise and thank Thee, because Thou dost send Thy Son into this world to demonstrate to us what Thy kingdom is. The kind of a kingdom that He is to establish upon this earth and among men.

O Lord, we just ask Thee that by Thy Holy Spirit our eyes may be open to see the King, and in Him see Thy kingdom. That we are willing to forsake everything, take up our cross and follow Him. That He may be known, His kingdom may be known to the nations as a testimony.

Our prayer is, Thy kingdom come. In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

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