

Christian Blessings (2)

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Scripture of Sermon: Luke 6:20-23 [NKJV]

20 Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

22 Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake.

23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

4. Promised Blessings

In the above sermon Lord Jesus promised the following three blessings to His disciples.

- 1) Kingdom of God [v. 20]
- 2) Sufficiency and joy [v. 21]
- 3) Great reward in heaven as given to the prophets [v. 22-23]

Bible promises many other blessings to the Christians, but we will focus on these three in this study.

1) Christians will own the Kingdom of God

A kingdom is a nation which is governed by a king with absolute power and dominion. Therefore, Kingdom of God indicates a dominion of God in absolute power. The phrase 'Kingdom of God' is not found in the Old Testament. The land of Canaan was given to the people of Israel by God for them to establish a kingdom of God in it. After their leader, Joshua, died, the land of Israel was governed sporadically by the judges, who were leaders of the people, for about 300 years. Then the people asked the prophet Samuel to appoint a king to rule over them. Saul was chosen as the first king, followed by David and Solomon. They had the calling to govern the kingdom in accordance with God's principles and truth. But they failed often and the kings from Solomon and thereafter led the nation to wrong ways away from God's truth in both worship and ethics. Thus, the kingdom of God was never fulfilled through Israel and Juda.

In the New Testament we find 'kingdom of God' 77 times, of which 55 occurrences appear in the four gospels. Kingdom of God was a new concept to the people of Israel in the first century. They were under oppressive Roman Empire's colonial rule as well as the Rome's local surrogate of king Herod and his children who were just as exploitative and oppressive to the people. To make matters worse the religious leaders imposed their laws, which restricted the people further. Therefore, when Jesus came proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, the people welcomed this message with anticipation and hope. To them this kingdom ruled by God would bring freedom from the bondage of colonial and religious rulers. Herod and his cronies, however, must have felt threatened by this message of kingdom of God, because they knew that somehow, they would not be the rulers in this unknown kingdom of God, which was in Jesus' message.

The poor and oppressed Israelites welcomed the message of 'Kingdom of God,' although they could not imagine how they could become its inheritors as powerless as they were. This message brought a wonderful hope to these people. And they thought that this poor preacher from Galilee would somehow achieve a political upheaval using the divine power that He was demonstrating in the numerous miracles he performed,

and liberate them from oppression and poverty. So, when Jesus rose from death, His disciples were extremely joyful and thought that perhaps now was the time for their Master's political upheaval, and they anxiously asked Him this question.

[Acts 1:6] Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

However, the kingdom of God that Jesus preached was not an earthly political entity that could be achieved through a military coup or political upheaval. It is to be a spiritual kingdom established here on the earth through the life and work of His people so that God's principles and truth are upheld and form the basis of its government. Just as God desired the people of Israel to establish a solid kingdom of God in the Promised Land during the OT days, so does God expect His people to establish and help prosper His kingdom here on earth in the NT era. Such anticipation and calling are on all Christians, especially in the predominantly Christian countries such as the U.S. We learn from the Lord's model prayer that such anticipation and calling were given to His disciples and to the Christians of the present era.

[Luke 11:2] So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray *"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."* By 'Your kingdom' He did not exclusively mean the Millennial Kingdom He would form on the earth when He comes again. He means that it is their calling to help establish, through the help of the Holy Spirit, the kingdom of God here on earth so that God's will is fulfilled just as it is in heaven. In the kingdom of heaven where God and His heavenly host reside, God's will and plan are fulfilled completely with utmost respect and faithfulness. However, Jesus experienced while He was on earth that the will and authority of God is more despised and neglected than honored and fulfilled faithfully.

Therefore, the prayer of every Christian should focus on establishing the kingdom of God in each person's life, in each believing Christian family, in each community where Christians live and work, and in each nation where there is a sizable Christian population. It is their calling and mission to do so. And so, the prayer's central focus is not seeking the daily necessities but the kingdom to be firmly established and to prosper here on earth, where we live and breathe. Bible teaches us that the kingdom of God should be established and prosper in each of the following seven dominions:

- Kingdom of God should first be well established in each Christian's life.
- Kingdom of God should be firmly established in each believing family.
- Kingdom of God should be visibly established in each Christian church.
- Kingdom of God should be strongly established in each community where Christians reside.
- Kingdom of God should be strongly established in each Christian nation.
- Kingdom of God will be established on earth when Lord Jesus returns the second time as the King of kings and last for a thousand years.
- Kingdom of God has been in heaven and the kingdom of heaven from the beginning of time and will last into eternity.

The NT scripture teaches us on how to establish a kingdom of God in our personal lives, families and churches. There is a plenty of teachings, lessons and admonitions on this subject. Holy Spirit descended on the disciples after the Lord's ascension and began to help the believers establish and expand the kingdom of God for the first few centuries. As a result, the Christendom expanded rapidly to all parts of the Roman Empire. This historic spreading of Christianity achieved through inner workings of the Spirit of God in the hearts and lives of Christians had been prophesied by OT prophets including Ezekiel and Joel.

[Ezekiel 36: 27] I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

When questioned about the nature and timing of the kingdom of God, Lord Jesus explained that this kingdom was a very unique one that lives in individuals, families, churches and communities but it could not be pinpointed because it is not a physical kingdom. And the Book of Acts records how the Holy Spirit helps the Christians carry on the divine mission that they received from Lord Jesus.

[Luke 17: 20-21] 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; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Some pastors think that it is not biblical to extend the concept of the kingdom of God to community and national levels. They say that churches and Christians should avoid taking part in issues related to their communities and nations. And they constrain their congregations to keep silent on such issues and instruct them to remain as bystanders. However, the teachings of the Bible clearly point them wrong. In other words, it is NOT biblical to avoid involvement in community and national areas including political issues. Bible teaches us just the opposite.

Abraham was actively involved in God's decision to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, which had become morally decadent, by raining fire and brimstone on these cities [Genesis 19:12-29]. God sent Jonah to preach the gospel of repentance to Nineveh, which still exists in the present-day Iraq, so that the entire population including the king came to repentance and obedience to God. God sent messages of severe criticisms and curses through His prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah to Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, Samaria, Ammon, Tyre, Egypt, Mt. Seir, and Babylon. Lord Jesus spoke words of criticism and the coming disaster to Chorazin, Bethsaida and Jerusalem [Luke 10:13-14, Matthew 23:37]. These acts of God and His people indicate God's expectation that the cities and nations of the world come to repentance and obedience to God. In other words, He desires that the kingdom of God be established in them. Therefore, God expects all Christians and their leaders to faithfully carry out such expectation and calling from God so that His principles and authority are honored and form the basis of the kingdom of God as manifest in our cities and nations.

America was established by the residents of 13 colonies of the British Empire who had immigrated to the new continent seeking religious freedom from the oppressive U.K. Their representatives declared independence of the union of the colonies in direct opposition to the oppressive and exploitative policies of the U.K. Those who signed the declaration of independence in 1776 were all Christians, most of them pastors and theologians. This newly-born Christian nation had to engage in a protracted 7-year armed struggle with the British forces with the help of the French forces, and achieved final victory in 1782. In a true sense a kingdom of God was established on this land in the form of a free, democratic republic. In less than a century from its founding the republic underwent a civil war between the north and the south with the central issue of slavery. The union led by President Lincoln achieved victory so that the nation remained undivided although with severe scars. The United States of America kept growing with God's blessing and proved itself to be a shining beacon of free democracy to all peoples of the world who are seeking freedom from the bondage of dictatorships and wrong ideologies.

During the past several decades, however, the political world of America has fallen into the hands of the so-called 'Deep State,' which refers to a group of interest parties that include the Democratic Party leaders, the leftist ideologues, the Wall Street, and the main stream media as well as the Big Tech companies that support this group. They have been swaying the politics of this great nation very far away from the principles of God and driven the nation's policies to globalism that has resulted in outsourcing American jobs and economic opportunities to the Chinese Communist Party, nonsensical environmentalism that has caused irrational cost push in American industries, open society that accepts even extremist Moslem terrorists and uncontrolled

inflow of illegal immigrants, and fake peace-making that has allowed Iran and North Korea to grow in their abilities of bringing instability and threats to the free world.

But God has raised a non-politician, born-again Christian billionaire Donald Trump as the 45th president of the U.S. in 2016. His defeat of Hillary Clinton was a surprise to the Deep State politicians and influencers, but it was an outcome planned in heaven and fulfilled through the prayers of tens of millions of Christians in the land. The 2020 election was far above the competition between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. It is a battle between the force of God, who wants uphold and further the kingdom of God in this land, against the forces of the evil, which are controlled by the leftist billionaires such as George Soros, Bill Gates, Andrew Cuomo; the corrupt main stream media which have been bought off by the left; the Big Tech companies which are bent on suppressing the people's right of free expression; and the Chinese Communist Party and their cronies which are deeply entrenched in this country thanks to facilitations by the previous Clinton and Obama administrations. The CCP colluded with the Democratic Party and spreaded the China Virus [COVID-19] to the world with the evil intend to throw America into turmoil so that President Trump would lose the election. Moreover, investigations have shown that the forces of the evil have planted the election system called 'Dominion' into 33 states where the ballot counting process was rigged on the election day. Simultaneously the forces of evil conducted numerous illicit voting defraud activities to throw the election balance from President Trump to Joe Biden. Such are the forces of spiritual evil which are active in this land and in many other nations of the world.

[Ephesians 6:11-13] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

The on-going judicial processes, state level hearings on election frauds, and state legislatures' moves to negate governors' election certifications by moving to elect their own electors for the national electoral college voting, will ensure the re-election of the Trump-Pence team. God has not ordained Donald Trump as a single-term U.S. president. The American people have risen up in support of the righteous president who has been fighting for their interests and been faithful in draining the 'swamp.' Upon Trump's re-election as the 46th president the new administration will lead the nation as the mighty powerful champion of the free democracy to the whole world. As the wall of communism fell during the Reagan presidency, the evil axes of CCP, North Korea, and Iran will collapse during another Republican presidency. These results will certainly please God of heaven and earth. All Christians in the land should earnestly pray for these outcomes to occur so that the kingdom of God stands more solid than ever in the history of mankind.

When the last days come, the debacle between the forces of good and the forces of evil will become highly evident. Satan's alliance will deceive peoples and governments to oppress and harm the Christians and Israel. Details of their future acts are foretold in the Book of Revelation. In the final stage of the Seven Years, which has been prophesied by prophet Daniel, Lord Jesus will come to earth with His angels and destroy the forces of evil in the Battle of Armageddon. After this great and sudden victory Jesus Christ will establish His Millennial Kingdom on earth where all powers of this world will submit to His authority. It is our prayer that both the U.S. and South Korea will be welcoming the Lord's triumphant return as the King of kings. Any nation or force that opposes the Lord on this day will fall into God's awful wrath as prophesied in these verses:

[Revelation 19: 14-18] And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains,

the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.”

Friends, when Lord Jesus came to this world the first time, He died a sinner’s death on a cross on Calvary. But when He comes again the second time, He will come as the King of kings and Lord of lords to fulfill God’s wrath toward the unbelieving and rebelling world. No nation on earth that confronts this mighty King of heaven and earth in defiance will avoid His terrible punishment. Therefore, it is the calling of all Christians to strive to establish and to prosper the kingdom of God wherever they are living. Those communities and nations where the principles and truth of God are alive will receive His praise, “Well done, you faithful servants,” from the Lord.

Let us again review the Lord’s model prayer, which instructs all who follow Jesus Christ to lift high the name of God, His kingdom and His plan and will here on earth as they are so honored in heaven. What happens in heaven is fully under God’s control. However, where we live here on earth, it is our calling from God to strive to honor and lift high God’s principles and truth so that His kingdom is alive and prospering and His will and plan are fulfilled. And we need to seek His wisdom and guidance each day on how to live out this divine calling.

[Luke 11:2] So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

[Continue to Part 3]