

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: 'THY KINGDOM COME'****'THY KINGDOM COME' - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/12 17:38**

'THY KINGDOM COME'

Alexander Maclaren

'Thy kingdom come.'—MATT. vi. 10.

'The Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad'; 'The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble,' was the burden of Jewish psalmist and prophet from the first to the last. They have no doubt of His present dominion. Neither man's forgetfulness and man's rebellion, nor all the dark crosses and woes of the world, can disturb their conviction that He is then and for ever the sole Lord.

The kingdom is come, then. Yet John the Baptist broke the slumbers of that degenerate people with the trumpet-call, 'Repent, for the kingdom is at hand.' It is not come, then—but coming. And the Master said, 'If I by the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.' It is come, then, in Him. This prayer throws it forward again into the future, and far down on the stream of prophecy; we hear borne up to us through the darkness the shouts that shall hail a future day when here on earth the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. It is a kingdom, then, that has ever been, and yet has stages of progress, a kingdom that was established in Jesus; a kingdom that has a past, a present, and a future on earth. It is after this world that the words are said, 'Come, ye blessed, enter into the kingdom.' It is a kingdom, then, manifested on earth, and yet a kingdom into which death, who keeps the keys of all secrets, admits us.

Once more—the kingdom of God is within you. 'The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy.' But there is beyond earth to be a manifestation of the kingdom in a more perfect form. It is 'the kingdom of heaven,' not only because the King is 'Our Father which art in heaven,' but because we cannot completely come into it, or it into us, till we pass out of earth by death, and enter through that gate into the city. He has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

It is a dominion, then, over heart and soul, having its realm within, standing not so much in outward institutions as in inner experiences; and yet a kingdom which, though like leaven hid, shall like leaven be seen in its effects; though like a seed buried deep, shall like a seed blossom into a mighty tree; though it cometh not with observation, yet is like to the lightning that flashes with a kind of omnipresence in its rapid course from end to end, everywhere at once; which though it be within, yet clearly is meant to rule over all outward acts, and one day to have all kings bowing down before it.

These are the varieties with which the one thought of the kingdom of God, or of heaven, is presented in Scripture. It is eternal yet revealed in time, ever here but ever coming, ever coming but never come on earth, but entered when we go yonder, ruling us man by man, inward, spiritual, unseen, and yet moulding nations and institutions, outward and visible, compelling sight and filling all the earth.

But these varieties are not contradictions, still less are they the effects of a vague and imperfect notion which means anything or everything according to the fancy of the writer. The conception is clear and well defined. The kingdom of God is an organised community which is subject to the will of the personal God. The elements of subordination and society are both there. On the one hand there is the Ruler, on the other there is the mass of subjects. The whole of the varieties in the use of the term can be all reconciled in the one simple central notion, but we cannot afford to lose sight of any of them if we would understand what is meant by this prayer.

Let us take these thoughts which I have suggested, as expressing the Scriptural meaning of this phrase, and by their help try to ascertain what this prayer suggests.

I. God reigns, yet we pray for the coming of His kingdom.

That is to acknowledge that the world has departed from Him. It is at once to separate ourselves from those who see in it

t no signs of departure and rebellion. It is to confess that, Lord as He is whether men believe it or no, whether men will it or no, yet that the relation of common subordination as to a supreme Lord which we hold with all creatures is not all that we are fit for, not all that we should be. That dominion which the psalmist saw making the sea and the fulness thereof rejoice, which is at once the control and the upholding, the sustaining and the commanding, of all orders of being, is not the whole of the dominion which can be exercised over man. The rule, which we share with the trees of the field and the tribes of life, is not all; and the unwilling control which the thought of an overruling Providence demands that we shall believe that God exercises over all the workings of men—that is not enough. And the terrible bending of men into unconscious instruments, by which He that sitteth in the heavens laughs at princes' and rulers' counsel, speaking to the tyrant as the rod of His anger, using men as the axe with which He hews, and the staff in His hand, and then casting away the tool into the fire—that is not the kingdom that men are made to be. Something more, even the loving, willing submission of heart and life to Him is possible, is needed, unless, indeed, it is true that a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast. Enough for them that He feedeth them when they cry; enough for them that led they know not how, and fed by they know not whom, they live they know not why, do they know not what, and die they know not when. But 'be ye not as the horse or the mule which have no understanding'; it is our prerogative to be led by His eye speaking to the heart, not by His bridle appealing to the sense; to do Him loyal service, to understand His purposes, to sympathise with them, and sympathising to execute. This our prayer gives us the clear distinction, then, between mere blind obedience and the true goal of man. The kingdom is other and better than the creature-wide dominion.

And then, this prayer reposes on the confession that that higher, better form of obedience is not yet attained. In a word, it can only be prayed aright by a man who feels that the world has gone away from God and His commandments. We separate ourselves by it from all who think that this present state is the natural condition of men, the order into which they were born, the kind of world which God intended; and we assert, in sight of all the evils and sore sorrows that fill the world, that this is not God's intention. People tell us that the doctrine of a fall, an earth which has departed from God, a race which has rebelled, is a gloomy and dark one, covering the face of life with sackcloth. But it seems to me that instead of being so, it is the only conviction that can make a man bear to see the world as it is. Brethren, which of these two is the gloomy—the creed that says, Look at all these men dying—in dumb ignorance, living in brutal sin; look at blood, rapine, lies, battlefields, broken hearts, hopes that never set to fruit but died in the bud, the stream of sad groans, and sadder curses, and wild mirth, saddest of all. Look at it all, coming to pass on this fair earth amid the pomp of sunsets and the calm beauty of autumn, and beneath the cold stars, in a world where the noblest creature is the saddest, and accept for explanation that it is the necessary road for the perfecting of the creature; that it is all for the best, that it is exactly what God meant the world to be;—or the creed which sees the same things and says: 'This is not what God intended: an enemy hath done this'? Sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin.

The Christian doctrine does not make the facts, but only the Christian doctrine can explain them. It seems to me that if I believed that life as I see it in the world, and as I feel it in myself, is life as God meant it to be, I should either go mad or be a wise man, not a fool, if I were to look up at the un pitying stars that could sing for joy over such a creation, and say, There is no God. It is a refuge from such possible horrors, not an aggravation of them, which this prayer teaches us when it teaches us to pray for a kingdom yet to come, from which men have departed, and in departing have worked for themselves all this woe and ruin.

Continued:

Re: 'THY KINGDOM COME' - posted by HeartSong, on: 2008/6/12 18:12

Quote:
..... this prayer teaches us when it teaches us to pray for a kingdom yet to come, from which men have departed, and in departing have worked for themselves all this woe and ruin.
.....

"Everybody had to be particularly touched by thought of the finest young people from this region being caught up in a tornado which struck them like a bowling ball and against which they had no chance," U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said in a news conference in Blencoe, Iowa, near the scout camp.
http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080612/us_nm/usa_tornado_midwest_dc

Sounded like a jet
Taylor Willoughby, 13, said several scouts were getting ready to watch a movie when someone screamed that there was

a tornado. Everyone hunkered down, he said, and windows shattered.

"It sounded like a jet that was flying by really close," Taylor told TODAY. "I was hoping that we all made it out OK. I was afraid for my life." Ethan Hession, also 13, said he crawled under a table with his friend. "I just remember looking over at my friend, and all of a sudden he just says to me, 'Dear God, save us,'" he told TODAY. "Then I just closed my eyes and all of a sudden it's (the tornado) gone." - <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25107608/>

Would be to God that one boy's prayer changed the direction of the tornado.

(I edited what I originally posted)

Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/13 16:30

Quote:

HeartSong wrote:

Quote:
..... this prayer teaches us when it teaches us to pray for a kingdom yet to come, from which men have departed, and in departing have worked for themselves all this woe and ruin.
.....

"Everybody had to be particularly touched by thought of the finest young people from this region being caught up in a tornado which struck them like a bowling ball and against which they had no chance," U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said in a news conference in Blencoe, Iowa, near the scout camp.
http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080612/us_nm/usa_tornado_midwest_dc

Sounded like a jet

Taylor Willoughby, 13, said several scouts were getting ready to watch a movie when someone screamed that there was a tornado. Everyone hunkered down, he said, and windows shattered.

"It sounded like a jet that was flying by really close," Taylor told TODAY. "I was hoping that we all made it out OK. I was afraid for my life." Ethan Hession, also 13, said he crawled under a table with his friend. "I just remember looking over at my friend, and all of a sudden he just says to me, 'Dear God, save us,'" he told TODAY. "Then I just closed my eyes and all of a sudden it's (the tornado) gone." - <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25107608/>

Would be to God that one boy's prayer changed the direction of the tornado.

(I edited what I originally posted)

Hi HeartSong,

Jesus said:

John 10:10

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

We are told by Paul to:

1 Thes. 5:17

Pray without ceasing.

Jesus told the disciples to:

Matthew 26:41

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

We need to believe the Lord, The Flesh Is Weak, what part of this will we not understand.

Ephes. 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Here Paul tells us to put on the whole armour of God and then he says PRAY.

Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, by giving and being an example of prayer. It would only make sense for all of us to be obedient to The Word and Pray.

We have not because we ask not, praise God the young scout prayed and saw the results immediately. We would all do well to follow this young boy's example and that of our Lord Jesus Christ; to stop complaining about the state of things and believe God to empower us as a witness, to be salt and light to this dying world.

Pray, when will we obey Him and pray.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Thank you for posting HeartSong, we all need to ask this young scout if prayer works, if God answers prayer. What do you all think his answer would be?

In His Love
Pastorfrin

Re: 'THY KINGDOM COME' - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/13 16:40

'THY KINGDOM COME'

Alexander Maclaren

'Thy kingdom come.'—MATT. vi. 10.

II. The kingdom for the coming of which we pray is established already.

Christ has established it. His name is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is Prince of all the kings of the earth. He is crowned with glory and honour. By Him, that is to say, it becomes possible for men to serve God with the energies of their will, and by Him it becomes possible for men to take the pardon which God gives in Him. He founds the kingdom, and He exercises the dominion. On an eternal relation and on an historical fact that dominion of His is grounded,—on an eternal relation inasmuch as He, the everlasting Word of God, has from the beginning been the Lord and King of the world; on an historical fact inasmuch as that eternal Word has been manifested on earth, and tasted death for every man. Christ founds the kingdom, for He by His Incarnation and Sacrifice sets forth the weightiest motives for service; He opens the path to return; He brings God's forgiveness to men, and so shall rule over them for ever—a King and Priest upon His throne: the Prince of all the kings of the earth, both because He has from everlasting been the anointed King, and because in time He has been, and will for ever be, the faithful and true witness, and the first begotten from the dead. The foundation is thus laid, the dominion established, the kingdom is come; but we are to pray for its perfecting as the one hope of the world.

Then let us remember that we are thus guarded from the error that is always rife, of looking for some new thing as the o

ne deliverance for earth. It is sad to mark how undying that tendency is. Age after age, men have had the heartache of seeing hopes blasted, and fair schemes for the regeneration of the world knocked to pieces about the ears of their projectors, and yet they hope on. Every period, as every man, has its times of credulity, its firm conviction that it has found the one thing needful, and the shout of Eureka goes ever up. Alas, alas! time after time the old experience is repeated, and the gratulations die down into gloomy silence. Yet men hope on. What a strange testimony at once of the futility of all the past attempts, and of the indestructible conviction that men have of the certainty that the world will be better and brighter some day, that undying expectation is! It is sorrowful and yet ennobling to think of the persistency of the expectation, and the disappointment of it.

God forbid that I should say a word to seem to disparage it! Not so. I say the expectations are of God, and if men give them false shapes, and scarcely understand them when they utter them, that does not in any degree make the expectation less noble or less true. But what I wish to urge is this, that the Christian attitude towards all such hopes should not be unsympathising. Rather we are bound to say 'yes, it is so, and we know how.' We are bound to proclaim that it is not any new thing that we expect, but only the working out of the old. God be thanked that it is not! The evils are not new, they have been from the beginning; and God has surely not been so cruel to the world as to leave it till now in the dark. Our hopes are not set on any new, untried remedy. This bridge across the Infinite for us is not a frail plank on which no one has yet walked, and which may crack and break when the timid foot of the first passenger is on the centre, but it is a tried structure upon which ages have walked.

Then if I have any hearers who are fancying that the gospel is worn out, any who are glowing with the anticipation of great new things, who scarcely know how, but believe that somehow, the ills that have in all ages cursed humanity are to be exorcised by some new methods of social organisation or the like—I pray them to ponder this prayer and to receive its lesson. Do not say, you are but adding one more to the Babel of opinions which confound us. Not so. We are not arguing for an opinion, we are proclaiming a fact. We are not ventilating a nostrum, we are preaching a divine revelation, a divine revealer. We are not setting forth our notion of the evil, and our idea of what may be a remedy. We are telling men God's word about both. We are preaching an old, old truth: not man's opinion, but God's act; not man's device, but Christ's power. We proclaim that the kingdom of God is nigh you, and while a Babel, as you say, of private opinions, of passionate complaints, of despairing cries afflicts the silence, one serene voice rises, 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden,' and after that sole voice rings out the twofold choral anthem—of praise, 'Rejoice, O earth, for thy King is come'; and of prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.'

Continued:

Re: 'THY KINGDOM COME' - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/14 18:29

'THY KINGDOM COME'

Alexander Maclaren

'Thy kingdom come.'—MATT. vi. 10.

III. We pray for the coming of a kingdom which is inward and spiritual.

I do not mean to weary you with any proofs that this is so. The whole language of Christ, the whole tenor of Scripture, the common sense of the case, the testimony of our own souls as to what we want most, confirm this. But it is enough to note the admitted fact; to enforce the thought that thus the kingdom assumes a purely individual character, and that thus its power over individuals is the pledge of its power over masses, and is its way of exercising universal sway. 'We have all of us one human heart, and therefore what the kingdom can do and has done for me or for any other man, it can do for all.

Let me remind you of two or three consequences that flow from this thought.

1. Lessons for politicians, for all men, as to the true way to cure the evils of the world: Not by external arrangements; not by better laws; not by education; not by progress in arts; not by trade, etc.

You must go deeper than these 'pills to cure an earthquake'—it is the soul, the individual will that is diseased; and the one cure for the world's evil is that it should be right with God; and that loyal, hearty obedience by Christ should be

n it.

2. Lessons for Christian men as to hasty externalising of the kingdom:

Theocracies, State Churches, and the like.

3. We pray for a kingdom that will be external. If spirit, then body; if individuals, then communities.

It is to be all-comprehensive governing:—institutions, arts, sciences. All spheres of human life are capable of sanctification and will receive it. A prophet had a vision of a day when the very bells of the horses should bear the same inscription of 'holiness to the Lord' as was engraved on the High Priest's mitre, and when every pot and pan in the kitchens of Jerusalem should be sacred as the vessels of the Temple.

The fault of Christians in losing sight of this—how all the aspects are reconciled—and how this must be the completion—the point to which all tends; how clearly maimed the gospel would be if such were not the goal.

So much, then, the prayer assumes:—the certainty that the world is wrong; the certainty that the kingdom is the only thing to set it right; the certainty that it can set it all right; the certainty that it will.

4. We pray for a kingdom to come which cannot be fully realised on this side the grave. Large as are the capabilities of this scene, they are not large enough for the full display of all the blessedness that lies in that kingdom. And so it is not all a mistake when men say, 'Ah, this world can never do for us'; it is not all an unhealthy dream that says, 'I am weary of this; let me die.'

Think of the chorus of voices that present this prayer—the unconscious cries that have gone up; the voices of sorrow and want. The cry hath entered into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth; the creature groaneth and travaileth; all men unconsciously pray this prayer when they weep and when they hope. Christian men pray it when they mourn their rebellious wilfulness and when they feel the weight of all this anarchic world, or when their work in bringing it back to its King seems almost vain, the souls underneath the altar pray it when they cry, 'How long, O Lord, how long?'

And ah, dear friends—there should come a sadder, humbler cry from us, each feeling his own sinful heart. To me the glory of that coming, and the life from the dead which it shall be to the world, will be as nothing unless I know the King and trust Him. Let us each re-echo the cry of that dying thief, which He cannot refuse to answer, 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom.'

Alexander Maclaren