

QUESTION: When would the Kingdom of God come (arrive)?

ANSWER: It's already here because the King is here. – REDIRECTION: Live in the Kingdom, under the rule of the King NOW, and do not live for this world, which will be judged and destroyed – **“He who desires to save his life will lose it...”**

1. The Kingdom of God is Not Observable
  - a. watch closely, observe (*παρατηρεω*)
    - i. it is not distant (here it is, there it is), with origins from the corrupted world (John 18:36)
  - b. **Yet it must be “entered”**
    - i. Acts 14:22; Matt 5:20
  - c. **God’s powerful rule was entering “historical life in a new way, for here was the King himself coming ‘to announce the decisive redeeming act of God, and to perform it.’”** (Stephen Un)
    - i. The entrance to this kingdom is through spiritual transformation of repentant faith, one must be born again by the Spirit of God to recognize the King, submit to His rule and redemption (John 3), and to entrust oneself to Him for all things (Matt 18:3-4; Luke 18:18-27; Acts 14:22; 1 Cor 6:11)
    - ii. This **“unobservable” aspect of the Kingdom** was unexpected
  - d. They are being required to trust in the word of Jesus and not to trust their expectations, their own wisdom/perceptions, or even their own understanding of power
    - i. **This is Jesus’ primary point here: “He who seeks to preserve his own life will lose it, but whomever loses his life will keep it.”**
    - ii. Jesus is rewriting their rules in every way in his claim that the King has come and the Kingdom is present in power.
  
2. **The Kingdom of God is the Fulfillment of God’s Presence, People, and Power**
  - a. Fulfillment of God's Presence
    - i. Tabernacle and Temple imagery fulfilled in Jesus
      1. Impossible for Moses to see the radiant glory of God (Ex 33:20), has become possible for those who entrust themselves to King Jesus, for whomever has seen Him has seen the Father (John 14:9) and has seen the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature (Heb 1:3)
      2. Jesus ushers in the fulfillment of the Tabernacle/Temple motif in his own body, where the ultimate sacrifice would be made (John 2:19-22) and the reconciliation between God and man accomplished (1 Pet 2:24; Rom 5:10-11; Col 1:20-22)
        - a. This is why the Temple curtain was torn into two at the death of Jesus (Matt 27:51)
        - b. What once separate God and Man was destroyed by Jesus, thus reconciling sinful man to the holy God
    - ii. The Kingdom of God cannot be separated from the presence of Jesus (Heb 12:22-24)
      1. God has revealed Himself in the living presence of Christ Jesus and, in between his advents, in the pouring out of His Holy Spirit
      2. Jesus is the divine King, fulfilling the promises of the OT
        - a. Not only that, but his kingship is a priestly prophetic kingship
        - b. As priest, he represents Man to God, performs sacrifices to reconcile and reveal **God’s mercy, and represents God to Man**
        - c. As prophet, he proclaims the Word of God and thus reveals, not only in His words but by his very nature, who God really is
  - b. Fulfillment of God's People
    - i. His kingdom spreading throughout the whole earth
      1. Daniel 2:35-44
      2. **An “eternal kingdom” that “shall never end”**
    - ii. All the peoples of the earth shall know and worship the LORD
      1. 1 Kings 8 – the Davidic Kingdom promised for all the peoples of the earth (v43)

2. Psa 47:7; Isa 45:22 – the LORD is King over all the earth
3. Zech 14:9 – the day promised when the LORD will reign in victory over all the earth by removing obstacles to his presence (mountains low, valleys lifted)
- iii. While Israel was the people who, for 2,000 years, enjoyed the revelation of the LORD, in Jesus Christ the revelation, salvation, and redemption from God was going global!
  1. **Daniel’s prophesied “eternal kingdom” that would “cover the whole earth” expands** through the Spirit of Christ Jesus for the 2,000 years after His coming
  2. This came through Jesus (see the Samaritan leper) and exploded through His Spirit on Pentecost (see book of Acts, which closes in Italy)
- c. Fulfillment of God's Ruling Power
  - i. God has always ruled over the earth as King
    1. He created the world and thus reigns over it (Ps 24:1; 93:1; Dan 4:25-26)
    2. He commissioned Man to steward His creation (Gen 1:28) by covenant
    3. He acts within history with mighty deeds of salvation (Ex 15; Deut 6:20-24; Psalm 78)
    4. He promised deliverance from sin and the newness of transformed hearts and creation (Ezek 36; 47; Isa 35; 55; 65; Zech 14)
  - ii. Jesus is the unique and particular divine activity of **God’s rule**
    1. Jesus has the divine authority of God to dispense life
      - a. Isa 44:3/John 4:13-14
        - i. **“whomever drinks the water I give him will never thirst”**
        - ii. **“the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (v14)**
      - b. Rev 7:17/21:6 – Jesus is the Alpha and Omega who gives the water of life
      - c. John 17:2 – Jesus has authority from the Father to give eternal life, the knowledge of God, and this is his glory
    2. **Jesus dispenses the right to become God’s children**
      - a. John 1:12 – **“to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God”**
      - b. John 5:21 – **“for just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it”**
    3. **Jesus has the divine role of creative agent in God’s act of Creation**
      - a. Gen 1:1-2, Neh 9:6; Isa 42:5
      - b. John 1:1-14; Col 1:15-16; Heb 1:2
      - c. As Creator, He has authority over all Creation and it must submit to Him
        - i. This is true of the storms, the waves, and the human body (healings)
        - ii. This is also true of spiritual entities, demons, powers, the like, for they submit to his word, his simple command they must obey, for He is the King and He is in His realm
  - iii. The Kingdom is "within you"
    1. Two options:
      - a. Inside each of you (to the Pharisees)
      - b. Inside your community (to the Pharisees)
    2. The Kingdom of God comes within the world, not outside of it
      - a. Yet it is not made up of observable typical kingdom things (armies, currencies, etc) that are like the world
      - b. It is unique and unexpected, the power of the King overthrowing demonic oppression, illness and sicknesses, forgiving sins, redeeming sinners, and drawing outsiders near
        - i. It thus springs up like flowers in a field of weeds, subverting the field, altering it from within
        - ii. You can change a field organically (plant a forest), or with dynamite, but only one brings life, beauty, and flourishing
      - c. **It is the present corrupted world being remade by the power of Jesus’ word and works, taking place in the hearts of men altered by the Holy Spirit of God through repentant faith in Jesus Christ**

- i. Wherever a man submits and entrusts himself to Jesus as King, there the Kingdom of God has come in power!
        - ii. 1 Corinthians 4:20 – the power of transformed holy lives consistent with the character of God in holiness is how the Kingdom comes
      - 3. The Kingdom is present and pulling everyone towards its consummation
        - a. Luke 9:27 – **“some of standing here will not die until they see the Kingdom of God”**
        - b. Luke 11:20 – **“if by the finger of God I cast out demons, then the KofG has come upon you”**
        - c. Matt 13:24-47 – Wheat, Weeds, and Water
          - i. Note that both wheat (sons of the kingdom) and tares (evil ones) grow **in the same soil, the world (v38) which is also called “my kingdom” (v41)**
          - ii. **Thus, the wheat shall then be in the kingdom of their Father” (v42)**
          - iii. See 1 Corinthians 15:24 – **“then he shall hand the kingdom over to God the Father, after destroying every rule, every authority, every power.”**
        - d. Whether or not one submits to the King, He is the King, but when one does believe the *evangelion*, it changes everything.
3. The Kingdom is **“Already” Because the King Has Arrived** – Inaugurated Kingdom
  - a. **Jesus reigns as the King now (Col 1:13), has thrown down this world’s ruler (John 12:31) and is in the process of calling many to salvation and with great patience enduring the evils of those who reject him**
    - i. He will ultimately return, destroy the presence of sin, purify His people to present us holy and blameless to his Father
    - ii. Thus, when His enemies are destroyed (1 Cor 15:24) and His people are purified (Eph 5:27; Col 1:22), he will present us to Himself and to the Father and hand the kingdom over to His Father, that God might be all in all through submission and authority!
  - b. The Kingdom is **already present, “comes”** (present, middle)
    - i. The Kingdom of God arrived with the King and continues because He has still has all rights and authority to His rule
    - ii. The works and words are signs of the eternal Kingdom’s presence, which overlaps this present age in the ministry of Jesus and His Church by the power of the Holy Spirit, the great eschatological gift
      - 1. This present age and the one to come are not temporal or chronological ages, primarily, but rather qualitative categories
        - a. Thus, they can both exist at the same time
      - 2. John juxtaposes these ages using the words “first” and “new” rather than first/second or old/new in the Revelation (21) when He speaks of the Kingdom of God and the reign of Jesus
        - a. **“new” is a different kind of things: shadow to substance, temporal to eternal, death to life**
        - b. **The “newness” which lasts forever stands in stark contrast to “the first things” that pass away**
    - iii. All of this to say that if the eternal Kingdom of God has come upon you, then a different *kind of quality of life* has broken into history, particularly in and through the lives of those who are born again by the Spirit of the King!
      - 1. This gives the Christian great hope for transformation in life, joy, peace, and righteousness!
      - 2. We are being transformed into the life of Christ Jesus by degree (2 Cor 3:18) as the Spirit of the King changes us!
4. The Kingdom is **“Not Yet” Because the King Has Yet to Return** – Inaugurated, but Not Consummated
  - a. **God’s plan of redemption** involves the King leaving and returning.

- i. Jesus immediately tells his disciples that though the kingdom of God is already present, the Son of Man would go away and not be found.
  - 1. His first advent was to suffer, die, raise from the dead, ascend to Heaven, and pour out His Spirit
  - 2. His second advent will be to judge the living and the dead, gather His people to Himself, create restored heavens and earth, and to rule in fullness of glory
- ii. However, he will return unexpectedly and suddenly, when people were still living in the midst of this world
- b. There are two ages, overlapping at the first advent of Jesus: this present age and the age to come.
  - i. Thus, the Kingdom of God has begun because the King has arrived and won a decisive victory, revealed the Father, and poured out His Spirit
  - ii. Yet, the Kingdom of God has not been consummated, for the King left and is yet to return with **the final defeat of God's enemies** and His ultimate glory (1 Cor 15:50-58; Rev 11:5)
- c. This **"not yet"** means that although we are being transformed, the presence of our fallen nature is still present within us and we are not glorified, yet.
  - i. **Thus, we shouldn't be surprised that we still struggle with sinful desires and the presence of evil within us**
  - ii. The Holy Spirit wages war against our Flesh until the King returns in glory, at which time we will see Him and be made like Him in an instant (1 John 3:2-3)
  - iii. Until that Day, however, we live in a battlefield of affections, our sinful desires pulling us to live according to the passing kingdom of this world and the desires of the Holy Spirit pulling towards the new heavens and earth of our glory.

Conclusion:

The primary point that Jesus is making to these Pharisees is that the Kingdom of God is already present because the King is already here. You cannot see and observe the Kingdom, but it transforms the hearts of people who entrust themselves to Him. With His rule comes Kingdom righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17), which are the observable results of the invisible transformation of Christ-**centered hearts**...the Kingdom of God because the King, though we await His physical presence and the glory that comes with it, is also present in the power of His Spirit to bring us life today.

We should expect to be transformed to a life of holiness, peace, joy, and righteousness as we see, submit, and entrust ourselves to the King. We should also expect to suffer (Acts 14:22), to wrestle against our evil desires, and to be dissatisfied with our present condition because the final consummation of this inaugurated kingdom is yet to be.