

Luke 17:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Analysis

Jesus teaches: 'Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you' (οὐδὲ ἐροῦσιν, Ἴδοὺ ὧδε, ἢ, Ἴδοὺ ἐκεῖ· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστίν). The phrase 'entos hymōn' (ἐντὸς ὑμῶν) means either 'within you' (internal, spiritual) or 'among you' (in your midst, referring to Jesus' presence). Both interpretations have merit: the kingdom is present in Jesus' person and ministry (Luke 11:20) and also enters believers' hearts through the Spirit (Romans 14:17). Jesus counters Pharisaic expectations of dramatic, observable messianic kingdom arrival, teaching that God's rule begins invisibly in transformed hearts.

Historical Context

The Pharisees asked 'when the kingdom of God should come' (v.20), expecting visible, political restoration of Davidic monarchy. Jewish apocalyptic literature described dramatic signs preceding Messiah's kingdom. Jesus' answer reframes kingdom theology—it comes not with 'observation' (παρατηρήσεως, outward signs) but through spiritual transformation. This inaugurated eschatology (kingdom both now and not yet) became foundational to Christian theology. The kingdom has come in Christ's first advent but awaits consummation at His return.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding the kingdom as primarily spiritual rather than political transform Christian engagement with culture and politics?
2. In what ways is God's kingdom rule evident in your own heart and life right now?

Interlinear Text

οὐδὲ	ἐροῦσιν	Ἰδοὺ,	ᾧδε	ἡ	Ἰδοὺ,	Ἐκεῖ	Ἰδοὺ,	γὰρ
Neither	shall they say	Lo	here	! or	Lo	there	Lo	! for
G3761	G2046	G2400	G5602	G2228	G2400	G1563	G2400	G1063
ἡ	βασιλεία	τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἐντὸς	ὑμῶν	ἐστιν		
G3588	the kingdom	G3588	of God	within	you	is		
	G932		G2316	G1787	G5216	G2076		

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 12:28 (Kingdom): But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

Romans 14:17 (Kingdom): For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Mark 13:21 (Parallel theme): And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:

Colossians 1:27 (References God): To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Luke 21:8 (Parallel theme): And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Luke 17:23 (Parallel theme): And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org