

26-0614a Transcript

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Bible Readers: John Nousek and John Kessler

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A Tale of Two Kingdoms, Part 1

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 1:12): John Nousek

Luke 18:15-17: (0:04) Good morning. Praise God in all circumstances. In this circumstance, I have the pleasure of (0:12) reading God's Word right now. And that comes to us in the Gospel of Luke. It's chapter 18 (0:23) and it's verses 15 through 17. That's Luke 18, 15 through 17, which reads, (0:34) And they were bringing even their babies to him, so that he would touch them. (0:43) But when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking him. But Jesus called to them, saying, (0:51) Permit the children to come to me, and do not hinder them. For the kingdom of God belongs to (0:59) such as these. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God, like a child, (1:09) will not enter it at all. Amen. (1:12)

2nd Reading (1:18 - 1:46): John Kessler

John 18:36: (1:18) Good morning. The second scripture reading today is from the Gospel of John, chapter 18, verse 36. (1:27) John 18, 36. Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, (1:35) then my servants would be fighting, so that it would not be handed over to the Jews. (1:40) But as it is, my kingdom is not of this realm. Amen. (1:46)

Transcript (0:04 - 19:12), Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(1:51) Good morning. It's my honor to be up here, part of the rotation. We have a handful of men who (1:59) speak the word of God on behalf of God for the congregation, and today it's my day (2:09) in the rotation. And today I'm going to be bringing you a lesson titled, A Tale of Two Kingdoms.

(2:18) First, I want us to reflect on the very land we live in, America. Where we've been, where we're (2:27) heading. When we started out, we were under the British monarchy, and it was a very oppressive (2:39) monarchy, where citizens had very few rights, even God-given rights.

They weren't able to exercise. (2:51) But that American spirit caused men to start thinking about, hey, let's design our own (3:00) government. Let's build something here.

And being made up of mostly God-fearing Christian men, (3:11) they came up with a wonderful plan to have a government run by the people (3:20) based on godly principles. And so the tale of two kingdoms is, in this world today, (3:30) there are two kingdoms that are active, and they're really the only two kingdoms that matter. (3:38) And the system of government we formed is part of the one kingdom, in a sense, fashioned after (3:50) the belief in God and that kingdom.

So this morning I'm going to talk briefly about our (4:00) republic, and then briefly about monarchies. And our unique government, being built on Christian (4:10) principles, was described

by George Washington as the last great experiment for promoting human (4:20) happiness. The founding fathers had a sense of uncertainty in the form of government that they (4:28) were creating because it had never been tried before.

The idea of people being self-governed (4:37) was a radical concept at the time. It is almost the complete opposite of the monarchy, (4:46) which once ruled over our land. Our sovereignty rests with the will of the people, (4:53) and we exercise our power by vote.

We elect our representatives for fixed terms rather than (5:02) through an inbred hierarchy, hereditary monarchy, and the key characteristics of our (5:12) constitutional republic are we have God-given rights that cannot be revoked by anyone, (5:20) especially by the government. We have a representative government, (5:26) leaders who are elected by the citizens, and they are accountable to them. This is the difference (5:34) between a democracy where citizens vote on every issue.

We have a republic. We have checks and (5:49) balances built into our three branches of government, which consists of the legislative, (5:55) the executive, and the judicial branches. Bear with me here.

I'll get through this. (6:02) We have rule of law that applies to everyone. The citizens and the elected officials are all (6:09) subject to the rule of law, and this keeps order in our society.

(6:17) There's no rules for thee, but not for me, or at least there used to be (6:26) when you look at government today, and everybody is encouraged to actively maintain a healthy, (6:33) functioning government by participating in the election process. It is our civic duty. (6:41) We must know who the candidates are and what they stand for, what their character is, (6:50) where they stand on issues, and what their policies will be.

(6:56) The great American experiment was best summed up by Daniel Webster, distant cousin of Noah Webster, (7:04) who gives us a really great dictionary. Anyhow, in a speech he gave to the Senate in 1830, (7:12) he described our constitutional republic as the people's government made for the people, (7:19) by the people, and answerable to the people. As time went by, tensions in America (7:28) started to grow between the northern and southern states, and a man named Theodore Parker, (7:37) who was an abolitionist and minister in a Unitarian church, tweaked Webster's words (7:45) to emphasize that God gives rights to everybody regardless of their skin color.

(7:52) This was the topic of the day. Slavery. Did we have it or should we get rid of it? (8:00) And of course the abolitionists wanted to get rid of it.

So he defined our democratic republic as (8:09) a government of all the people, by all the people, and for all the people. And Abraham Lincoln, (8:16) who was a great reader, and even a great reader of ministers' works, read Parker's sermon and (8:25) was so impressed by it, he lifted that line and made it the closing line in his address at (8:33) Gettysburg back in 1863. He wrote, the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

(8:43) I personally like Daniel Webster's definition because there was more force in the phrase, (8:51) and answerable to the people. Now government seems to be conveniently forgetting that aspect of it. (9:01) Talking about a monarchy now, a true monarchy is very different from the system of government that (9:07) we're accustomed to in America.

The monarch who is in power, whether a king, queen, prince, (9:14) or princess, has absolute power

in their realm. Monarchs rule, monarchs have kingdoms, (9:23) and a monarch's word is fiat. And fiat is a Latin word which means let it be done.

(9:32) And for all of us old geezers, you remember the movie that Yul Brynner starred in as the (9:40) king of Siam called The King and I? He would walk around strutting like a peacock, (9:46) shouting something off and saying, so let it be written, so let it be done. That's fiat. A lot (9:57) of people in our government seem to think their word is fiat, but it's not.

Well, (10:03) enough of my 10 cent civics lesson. I just wanted to kind of lay a foundation of understanding of (10:09) where we are and what basically a monarchy is, because there are two active kingdoms today. (10:20) And again, one is God's kingdom, the kingdom of light, and one is the dominion of darkness, (10:29) Satan's kingdom.

So we're going to be talking about those. And this morning, (10:35) we're going to be talking about God's kingdom. It's the oldest of all kingdoms.

(10:42) Holy Spirit through Jeremiah calls God the Father, Eternal King, meaning there's no beginning or end (10:51) to His kingdom. And we read in Jeremiah 10:10, but the Lord is the true God. He is the living God (11:01) and eternal King.

So God the Father has always been the King. So we actually live in a monarchy. (11:12) Our Holy Father in heaven is our King.

Likewise, in the New Testament, Paul reveals in 1 Timothy (11:22) 1:17, now unto the eternal King, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory (11:32) forever and ever. Amen. So the Spirit through Paul confirms what the Spirit through Jeremiah (11:40) said, that God the Father is our eternal King.

No man has ever seen this King. The Apostle John (11:51) explains that to us in his gospel, and he mentions it at least three times in his letter. The first (11:58) time is in John 1:18, where he says, no one has ever seen God, but the only begotten Son, who (12:05) Himself is God, and is at the Father's side.

He has made Him known to us. So God the Father is (12:15) somewhat of a mystery to us, and it took Jesus, His Son, to enlighten us about Him. The triune (12:24) nature of our God has been a mystery also.

Moses declared in Deuteronomy 6:4, Hear, O Israel, (12:34) our God Yahweh, Yahweh is one. And we see that oneness in Jesus' words in the Great Commission, (12:46) where He said in Matthew 28:19, where He was charging the Apostles with their mission, (12:54) He said, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. (12:59) Well, there's the Trinity, the triune Godhead.

But what does He say? Notice Jesus used the singular (13:07) word, name, and not in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That's oneness. The triune (13:18) nature of God is one.

And likewise, Isaiah, when he prophesied about the Messiah to be born, (13:28) and Isaiah 9:6 said, For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government (13:36) will be on his shoulders, and he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting (13:46) Father, Prince of Peace. His name, singular, will be called, is another way of saying, (13:55) this is who He is. He will be.

And He will be is the very meaning of Yahweh. He is, I am, that I (14:09) am. He will be is the third person, and that is the name, Yahweh.

Interesting enough. So anyhow, (14:19) He will be all of these beings in one. The first name is Wonderful.

And where do we find that name (14:29) in Scripture? That name comes from the book of Judges, when the angel of the Lord is telling (14:38) Manoah and his wife that they are going to have a son, and who will be Samson, and that he will free (14:47) Israel from the oppression of the Philistines. And Manoah asked the angel of the Lord, (14:56) What is your name? And the angel of the Lord said, Why do you ask my name? It is Wonderful. (15:05) So the name, Counselor, is a name given for Holy Spirit used by Jesus in the upper room (15:14) on the night He was betrayed, where He was telling the apostles that He would send the Comforter, (15:21) and He would be the Counselor.

So that's Holy Spirit that this Messiah would have in Him. (15:31) And El Shaddai, Mighty God, that will also be this Messiah who will be coming. That's one of His (15:41) names.

And who knew God as El Shaddai? All the patriarchs. That's what they knew God as. (15:51) God Almighty.

Also, He's called Everlasting Father. This Messiah in Him will be Everlasting (16:02) Father. Isn't that the Eternal King? So inside this Holy Being to be born is going to have (16:14) Eternal Father in Him.

And lastly, Prince of Peace. And that is a title given to the Messiah. (16:27) And so this child is going to be born in the royal family of this kingdom.

(16:35) And in the Tree of Life version, Steve likes to use different versions because it's nice to see (16:41) different interpretations of Scripture. They're all very much the same, but some of them are unique (16:48) in how they handle interpretation. Well, in the Tree of Life, they use the actual names (16:55) of individuals and beings.

And He calls the Father a King here. In 1 Timothy 6.13-16 it says, (17:08) I charge you before God who gives life to all things, and Messiah Yeshua who testified the (17:17) good confession before Pontius Pilate to keep this command without spot or blame until the (17:23) appearing of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah. This He will reveal in His own time, the blessed and (17:31) only ruler, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in (17:39) unapproachable life, whom no man has seen or is able to see.

To Him be honor and eternal dominion. (17:47) Amen. Our God, the Father, is our King of Kings and our Savior, the Messiah, has God in Him.

(18:01) Uniqueness of the Trinity. So what about Jesus? Or as the Israelites referred to Him there, (18:08) Yeshua. If we were on the streets of Jerusalem and we saw Jesus walking by, they'd be going, (18:15) Yeshua, Yeshua.

And we'd be scratching our head, I thought He was Jesus. One and the same. (18:26) Anyhow, where does He stand in the royal hierarchy? Keep in mind the uniqueness (18:33) or the oneness of the Father and Jesus.

Jesus, when asked by one of His apostles, Philip, (18:41) he wanted to see the Father, Jesus replied to him, don't you know me, Philip? After all this long (18:50) time that I've been with you, anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. And what does the Hebrew (18:58) writers say? Jesus is the exact representation of God the Father. The exact representation (19:10) of His glory.

The unique oneness of the Trinity. And in the very next verse, Jesus said in John 14, (19:27) don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words that I tell (19:33) you I speak not for myself, but the Father who lives in me does His works. And so far, (19:42) the unique oneness between Father and Jesus.

The Father is in Jesus, and Jesus is in the Father. (19:49) We also have Isaiah's words showing that inside of the promised Messiah are all the names of the (19:58) Godhead. Paul said in Colossians 2.9, and this is going to confirm that, for in Him all the fullness (20:06) of the deity dwells bodily.

So Jesus, being the second figure of the Godhead, has the Father in (20:17) Him and Holy Spirit. So when they saw Jesus, they saw the Godhead in bodily form. Plus Isaiah said (20:29) that He would be known as Immanuel, God with us.

We know that the Father is the King, so the (20:38) question is, what about Jesus, the Son of the King? Is Jesus the King or the Prince? Well, (20:47) Scripture calls Him both. And let's see what has been revealed to us in the Word. Shortly after (20:56) the birth of Jesus, wise men visited Him.

And in Matthew 2.1-4, it says, Now when Jesus was born (21:03) in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, (21:11) saying, Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east, and have come to (21:20) worship him. When King Herod heard it, he was troubled. And all Jerusalem with him, gathering (21:28) together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he asked them where the Christ would be (21:35) born.

So these Magi, who probably practiced astrology, came from the east, perhaps from (21:48) Babylon, since they were Magi, that's what the Babylonians called their wise men. That's also (21:56) where Daniel had been, the chief wise man in the king's court during the 70-year exile. And they (22:06) may have heard of Daniel's reputation, and aware that Gabriel the angel gave Daniel specific (22:16) prophecies, such as Daniel 9.25-27, which talks about the royalty of the prince Messiah to be (22:28) born in Israel.

Whatever the source, they divine that a king was born near Jerusalem, since the (22:36) star was to the west of them over Jerusalem. And Herod, who was jealous and frightened for his (22:44) throne, calls in the religious leaders to figure out the details of where the Christ would be born, (22:52) so that he could secretly have him murdered. Well, the angel Gabriel, well, Herod failed at that (23:00) mission, but the angel Gabriel later announced to Mary that her child would sit on his father's (23:09) throne, David his father, forever making him an earthly king and heavenly prince slash king.

(23:20) So in Luke 1, 30-33, it says, the angel said to her, don't be afraid, Mary, for you have found (23:27) favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and he will be called (23:35) Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

The Lord God will give him the (23:43) throne of his father, David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. There will be no end (23:51) to his kingdom. So yes, Jesus has been a king from

birth.

Jesus is both prince of east and king. (24:06) But let's read when Christ was on trial before Pilate. Pilate, therefore, entered again into the (24:13) Jesus and said to him, are you king of the Jews? Jesus answered him, did you say this by yourself (24:23) or did others tell you about me? Pilate answered, I'm not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and chief (24:32) priests delivered you to me.

What have you done? Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world. (24:39) If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would fight that I wouldn't be delivered to the (24:45) Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here.

Pilate, therefore, said to him, are you a king then? (24:54) Jesus answered, you say that I am a king for this reason I have been born and for this reason I have (25:01) come into the world that I should testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my (25:09) voice. So Jesus said he's a king, but not an earthly king.

Lastly, for this morning's lesson, (25:17) let's go to the gospel of Luke. We'll look at 17, 20 through 21. There it says, once having been (25:34) asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, the kingdom of God does (25:42) not come visibly nor will people say here it is or there it is because the kingdom of God is within (25:50) you.

The kingdom of Jesus is in the hearts of his believers who submit to his authority and make it (26:01) make him their ruler of their lives. So it is a spiritual kingdom that Jesus rules, not a brick (26:10) and mortar palace with a territory with borders and fences like earthly kingdoms. Though he does (26:17) not have an earthly kingdom, he still has full authority in heaven and on earth.

He is the (26:29) sovereign. He is the supreme leader. Jesus said all authority has been given to me.

By who? By (26:39) the eternal father king. So how do we gain citizenship to this kingdom? Well, you need to (26:48) believe and confess that Jesus is the son of God and believe in your heart that God raised him from (26:56) the dead and the power of the resurrection and you need to repent of your sinful way of life and (27:04) put Christ on in baptism. That's how you get in Christ.

That's how you become a citizen in the (27:14) eternal kingdom of God. The church is that kingdom. When you are baptized into Christ, you are added (27:27) to his church.

You are added to the eternal kingdom of God. We're no longer citizens of (27:36) earth. We're strangers here, Peter tells us, because our citizenship is in heaven.

(27:45) So part two will be tonight. We'll talk about that kingdom. (27:52) Right now the hairs on my arm are standing up.

I don't like talking about that kingdom, (27:57) but we're all familiar with that kingdom because we've all been citizens of that kingdom at one (28:04) point in our life and praise be to God for his son, Jesus Christ, for busting us out of that kingdom, (28:14) bringing us into the kingdom of life. If you have any need this morning, if you would like to put (28:19) Christ on in baptism and be part of that kingdom, (28:23) we now offer you this time to come forward as we sing and we'll take care of you. (28:29)