

The Kingdom Message

Introduction:

The bible's main message is the "Kingdom Message". John the Baptist, Jesus' disciples and Jesus Himself, all preached the message of the Kingdom.

Matthew 3:1,2 *"In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matthew 4:17 *"From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matthew 10:7 *"And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*

It is thus important to know how we can preach and serve the message of the Kingdom effectively. Let's look at some principles in different biblical references.

Principles:

1. The Kingdom Message should be heard and seen!

Matthew 16:28 *"Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom"* (the next paragraph in this chapter explains that this can be achieved through transfiguration).

Mark 9:1 *"And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power"* Note that the next paragraph in this chapter as well, also speaks about 'transfiguration').

Luke 9:27 *"But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God"* (again the following paragraph speaks about transfiguration)

Luke 9:28-36 *"Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe [became] white [and] glistening. And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. . But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, [that] Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" -- not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and*

overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud .And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him"

The above biblical references show that "seeing the Kingdom" can only be achieved through the transfiguration of Jesus. This can help us understand why Jesus said "Repent because the Kingdom is at hand". As He is the King, He wanted to say: I, the King, am here with you, so the Kingdom is at hand!

The Transfiguration was revealed, at that time, through the Body of Jesus Himself. Nowadays Jesus still wants to be transfigured through His body. After the Ascension, His Body is the church; the believers. Jesus wants to be transfigured through our lives so that the message of the Kingdom is seen as much as it is heard!

Jesus wants to come and literally dwell inside us. (**John14:21-23**). For that same purpose Paul was labouring in prayer on behalf of the believers to have Jesus dwell in them (**Eph3:17**).

We need to prepare a place in our souls (which is the special home of Christ) For Him to come and dwell. This means taking the matter of sanctification more seriously in our spiritual walk. It means a life of daily repentance and a life of obeying the Word of God circumspectly (**Eph5:15**).

2. The Kingdom Message must have "Life Bearing fruits"

To understand this principle we need to understand 2 biblical pictures:

- A) The grain of wheat
- B) Aaron's Rod

A) The grain of wheat: John12:24

This is an important principle for the Kingdom work and message.

The disciples came to Jesus telling Him that there are some Greeks who want to see Him. Then Jesus answered them by this verse. What did He mean at that time? He meant to tell them: I am now confined to my body which I took from Israel so I'm more or less restricted in my impact, **Luke12:50**. When I die, the message will be released to all human beings (**John12:32**).

The same principle applies to our callings. Sometimes we like to move from one place to the other and from one ministry to another. This will not bear fruit except of that type related to the tree of knowledge. It depends on the carnal wisdom and power of intellect. Anyone can say: I checked this ministry and now I'm getting bored. I want to change, and so on. (I checked this church (meetings) ... and I am getting bored.

But if we accept the cost and understand this biblical truth of "dying" as a grain of wheat, then a real process of death will go through our lives and ministries, which also means that life will flow in us and our ministries. Paul said in **2Cor4:10-12**:

"always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body .For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.So then death is working in us, but life in you".

This is the mystery of the fruit of the tree of life.

If we look at some of the autobiographies of the well known missionaries (like William Carry or Hudson Taylor ...) we will see that they all went first through the process of death, then life came richly and their ministry was blessed and they impacted powerfully on their people.

B) Aaron's Rod: Numbers17:8

Here there is some reference to the intercessory ministry which Aaron was called to accomplish on behalf of his people.

Aaron, was literally called to stand in the way of death facing the wave of destruction. **Numbers16: 42-48** *"Now it happened, when the congregation had gathered against Moses and Aaron, that they turned toward the tabernacle of meeting; and suddenly the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared -.Then Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of meeting And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying",Get away from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment" And they fell on their face So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a censer and put fire in it from the altar, put incense [on it,] and take it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them; for wrath has gone out from the LORD. The plague has begun. Then Aaron took [it] as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the assembly; and already the plague had begun among the people. So he put in the incense and made atonement for the people .And he stood between the dead and the living; so the plague was stopped."*

This step of faith and obedience could have destroyed his life and put him to death. So why was he saved? Because of his calling and anointing that brought life into his inner being. When death came, it was unable to overcome the life inside Aaron. But, how did he get such life? By being put to death himself.

Remember what the story in **Lev10:6** says *"And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, "Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath comes upon all the people. But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel; bewail the burning which the LORD has kindled."*

He was not even allowed to express his sorrows for the death of his son. He was a father and all of a sudden he saw one of his sons struck by death. This surely grieved the father to the point of internal death. He experienced the suffering of death. Before that, he was also humiliated by Moses when Moses rebuked him after the sin of the golden calf. But all these sufferings were tools to prepare him for his calling as a high priest who needed to minister life to his people. The "Rod" reflected his own inner life. We need to acquire this principle in our own lives too.

3. Kingdom message needs a Calling and an Anointing:

Jesus has given His disciples a "calling". This is clear from the scriptures.

Matthew 10:1 *"And when He had called His twelve disciples to [Him,] He gave them power [over] unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease"*

Mark 3:13-14 *"And He went up on the mountain and called to [Him] those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach"*

Luke 9:1-2 *"Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases -He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick".*

Real callings have many principles and here we are going to discuss 4 of them:

A. Blessings of God:

God the Father loves very much to bless, because He is Good, Merciful and Loving. There are some who learned to draw near Him and His blessing settled on them. God called Abraham and His blessings came on Abraham richly. **Is 51:2** *"Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah [who] bore you; For I called him alone, And blessed him and increased him".*

The bible also calls Abraham "Friend of God". These blessings make the person distinguishable wherever he goes and can also carry with him the same blessings to others.

Also in Gen 12:2 "... *you shall be a blessing*" and in Gen 23:6 "... *you are a mighty prince among us*". This is the blessing of God when it comes and settles on a person.

We need to learn how to obey the Lord in a way that pleases Him, in the same way His Son obeyed and pleased the Father; as it is written "*You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*" **Mark1:11**. Bear in mind, though, that His obedience, as written in Phil 2:8, was to the point of death "...*become obedient unto death*".

B. To be "set apart" (separate) for God and His Kingdom:

Acts13:1, 2 says:

"Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul - .As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them"

Notice that all these people who gathered in Antioch Church that season were really a "set apart" group. They were already prophets and teachers. The Lord still spoke to them to separate Barnabas and Saul for a special task. As if He is calling them to a deeper level of separation for a new and very important work; the work of bringing the Good News to the Gentile World!

The bible in Acts 9:15 spoke of Paul as 'a chosen vessel' "... *the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel"*.

It is a great calling but it has its great cost as well. It means more sufferings "*For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake*".

If we followed the calling of Paul, we will see that as he was growing more into his calling with more extension of the kingdom into different countries, he also faced more tribulations and sufferings. If he was not deeply separated and fully dedicated to his calling, he would have failed! This is probably the reason behind many failures in the work of the kingdom nowadays.

C. Circumcision:

Ex4:24-26 *"And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the LORD met him and sought to kill him .Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast [it] at [Moses'] feet, and said, "Surely you [are] a husband of blood to me !So He let him go. Then she said, "[You are] a husband of blood!" -- because of the circumcision.*

We come across this principle (i.e. of circumcision) in the story of Moses when he was going to Egypt to bring his people out of the slavery of Pharaoh. At the border of Egypt, his wife and child were with him to say "Goodbye". All of a sudden, a certain appearance was there and it tried to kill Moses. Then his wife circumscribed her son and touched Moses' legs with the blood of circumcision and Moses was saved. This story is full of mysteries but we won't be able to cover them all now. The point we need to concentrate on though is that of circumcision. Moses was portrayed in spirit as a man of Covenant (circumcision is the token of a covenant). Moses was cut off the Kingdom of earth (Median desert or Egypt) and he belonged to another Kingdom, the heavenly one, so all the powers of the earthly Kingdom (seen and unseen) had no authority over him.

We need to learn how to be cut off from earthly things and to continuously realize our belongingness to the heavenly Kingdom; that we are citizens in the heavenly Kingdom and hence the powers of darkness can not hinder our calling.

Phil3:20 *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*

2Cor5:20 *"now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore [you] on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."*

D. Faith Training:

1Sam16:13 *"Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah."*

David received his anointing from the prophet Samuel and he was then able to accomplish a great victory over Goliath. All Israel acknowledged him. What followed, however, was a series of sufferings and wandering in the desert as Saul the king was tracing his steps and wanting to kill him. He was expecting to be the second man after the King and to receive the kingship once Saul died. This was the anointing he received; he was anointed to be King of Israel. Nonetheless, what followed was completely contrary to all his expectations. You can probably imagine the great confusion he went through. This, though, was intended by God as part of His plan to train His servant to accomplish the goals set ahead of him.

The final report of God about this man, though, reads: *"And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave*

testimony and said, 'I have found David the [son] of Jesse, a man after My [own] heart, who will do all My will' Acts13:22

What a beautiful testimony given by God himself!

We may perceive things differently as we read all the stories of David's suffering. We may wonder how this man can be a king and rule over Israel. People may stumble in him because of all these stories or they may think that David must have done wrong things and thus God took him away from the palace to the caves in the desert, etc. However, God has His ways which are a far from ours. God would say: this man will bring my Glory unto the kingdom of Israel, so he must first be completely set free from self and vain glory. He must be put to death and trained in my own school so that he can graduate and be ready for the task that awaits him. This is our God and these are His ways!

Isa 55:8, 9 *"For My thoughts [are] not your thoughts, Nor [are] your ways My ways," says the Lord. For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."*

The anointing:

When the divine process of preparing a person for a real calling is complete, the anointing comes and settles on them. This full anointing usually brings alongside with it some characteristics:

A. Enlightenment and understanding:

One begins to be enlightened towards the purposes of the kingdom he is called to and also understands how to achieve them.

1Jn2:20, 27 *"But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him."*

B. God's Ways:

The person also begins to learn how to act according to God's mind and ways. He receives the spirit of Christ in what he does.

Rom 8:9c *"Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His."*

C. Authority and Fruits:

The person receives the spirit of God's power in his/her ministry. He/she can experience times where God's hand is so clearly working with him/her.

Acts1:8 *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Acts10:38 *"how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him".*

Acts11:21 *"And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord."*

Characteristics of true genuine Anointing

Exodus 30:22-25 *"Moreover the LORD spoke to Moses, saying.: Also take for yourself quality spices -- five hundred [shekels] of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty [shekels],) two hundred and fifty [shekels] of sweet-smelling can",.five hundred [shekels] of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil".And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil.*

This part speaks symbolically of the characteristics of anointing and their impact on the life of the person who receives them.

The Components are:

Pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet cane(calamus), cassia, oil of olive.

Every component points to one main characteristic that the anointed must reflect in his/her life if his/her anointing is complete and genuine

- Pure myrrh: ready to bear sufferings for the cause of the kingdom

2Cor11:23-29 *"Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool. I [am] more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often .From the Jews five times I received forty [stripes] minus one .Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep, in journeys often, [in] perils of waters, [in] perils of robbers, [in] perils of [my own] countrymen, [in] perils of the Gentiles, [in] perils in the city, [in] perils in the wilderness, [in] perils in the sea, [in] perils among false brethren , in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and*

thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

- Sweet Cinnamon: beautiful gentleness and tenderness in dealing with others. His words are honey and milk.
Song of songs:4:11 *"Your lips, O [my] spouse, Drip as the honeycomb; Honey and milk [are] under your tongue; And the fragrance of your garments [is] like the fragrance of Lebanon."*
Notice also **v. 13, 14** *"Your plants [are] an orchard of pomegranates With pleasant fruits, Fragrant henna with spikenard ,Spikenard and saffron, Calamus and cinnamon, With all trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, With all the chief spices"*
- Sweet calamus: straightness of conduct as a result of straight heart (this plant is characterized by straightness).
Ps92:15 *"To declare that the LORD is upright; [He is] my rock, and [there is] no unrighteousness in Him"*
- Cassia: bearing hardships during the work. (This material [skin] is so tough).
2Tim1:8, 2:3 *"therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God., You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."*
- Olive oil: lubrication (avoiding conflicts with others).
2Tim2:24 *"And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient"*.