

Luke Chapter 13 v 18 - 21

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Preacher: Peter Robinson

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END Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[4 : 29] Good morning. Good morning. A warm welcome to all of you this morning, especially for visiting us. Welcome you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Prophet Isaiah often spoke and looked forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus and the Saviour of God's people. And he gives this song of praise in Isaiah chapter 12.

He says, in that day, in the day when Jesus comes, the Messiah comes, in that day you will say, give praise to the Lord. Proclaim his name. Make known among the nations what he has done and proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing to the Lord for he has done glorious things. Let this be known to all the world. All the world.

And, of course, the great thing that God has done in the sending of his son, in his death and resurrection, we are able to rejoice and come together as people who know that Jesus is alive from the dead.

He is our risen king. And we come to worship him. So we're going to worship him by singing a song on the screen behind me. Let's stand as we sing. Let's come to our God in prayer.

[5 : 51] Let's come in the name of the Lord Jesus. Let us pray. Lord, Father, our God, our creator, our provider, and our Lord, our saviour and redeemer, we come to you this morning as those who have so much to rejoice in.

Lord, it may be that we have had a very difficult week. You know that. You know how we come, perhaps some of us with heavy hearts, some of us with struggles and trials and difficulties.

And yet, Lord, we thank you that indeed we can rejoice because, oh, Lord, of who you are, for you are unchanging. Though our lives are full of change and full of difficulties at times and challenges, we thank you that you do not change in your love or faithfulness or goodness or kindness towards us.

And that, oh, Lord, our God, we thank you that in the midst of every circumstance and situation that we face, we know that you will never leave us nor forsake us. You are with us always.

And we thank you for that. We thank you, oh, Lord, for the assurance of your presence by your Holy Spirit. We thank you again that he is the one who guides and leads.

[7 : 07] He's the one who speaks to us from your word. He's the one who opens our eyes to see and to view the circumstances of life in a way which is considerably and contrastingly different to those who do not know you.

For we are people who have hope. Hope in the midst of death. Hope in the midst of life. Hope in the midst of difficulty. Hope in the midst of sorrow. We thank you that that hope is not just a vague dream, just crossing our fingers and hope things get better.

But our hope is in the reality, the certainty, the historical accuracy that our Lord Jesus Christ has conquered death and sin and hell for us.

That we have a living Savior. One who has lived and felt and endured what it is to live in this world. Who's felt pain and sorrow. But one who has triumphed over death and who has given to us that victory over death so that we cannot die.

But we can only, O Lord, pass from this world into the next, into your presence and into your love. We pray that this morning, O Lord, that whatever the state of our hearts are, that you would meet

with us and speak with us and help us.

[8 : 23] That we might worship, praise and adore you. That we might find ourselves, O Lord, rejoicing in the forgiveness of our sins. In the gift of life everlasting. In the assurance of your constant love.

For we ask these things now. In Jesus' name. Amen. Let's turn together in our Bibles to the Gospel of Luke and chapter 13.

Thank you for your prayers. For me, while I've been away, last Sunday I was preaching in Loftus. And, you know, the Sunday before that, I was here in the morning. But this lurgy still is hanging on, unfortunately. And so that's why I'm trying to just say my voice a little bit in the singing.

So, but God willing, we'll make it through to the end of the day. So Luke chapter 13. I know that Joel last week preached from verse 10 to 17.

[9 : 26] But we're going to read that portion again and then continue through to verse 21. So page 1046. A couple of the church Bibles. And reading from verse 10 of Luke 13.

On a Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues. And a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for 18 years.

She was bent over. Could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.

Then he put his hands on her. And immediately she straightened up and praised God. Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, The synagogue leader said to the people, There are six days for work.

So come and be healed on those days. Not on the Sabbath. The Lord answered him, You hypocrites. Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall And lead it out to give it water?

[10 : 35] Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, Whom Satan has kept bound for 18 long years, Be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?

When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated. But the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing. Then Jesus asked, What is the kingdom of God like?

What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, Which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, And the birds perched in its branches.

Again he asked, What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It's like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about 30 kilograms of flour, Until it worked all through the dough.

We'll come back to God's word in a moment. Please turn back then to Luke and chapter 13.

[11 : 35] And particularly those verses 18 and following, That we read just a few moments ago, Concerning these parables that Jesus taught. Do children still learn nursery rhymes?

Like when we were young? Humpty Dumpty and, What's the other one? No, there's lots of them, isn't there? The Grand Old Duke of York, Hey Diddle Diddle, The Cat and the Fiddle.

A lot of these nursery rhymes are rooted in historical events or people. Many of them are sort of mockery, mocking, They are taking the mick out of people in history.

And how about this nursery rhyme? I'm not going to sing it, But Mary, Mary, quite contrary, How does your garden grow?

With silver bells and cockle shells And pretty maids all in a row. Apparently that nursery rhyme was written about Mary, Queen Mary I, Who reigned during the 16th century.

[12 : 47] When she became the queen, She converted to Catholicism, Though she'd always been a Catholic. And so in that sense, She was contrary in people's minds During what was then a Protestant England.

The garden was her kingdom, Which she sought to grow into a Catholic country. It had been Protestant for some years. And she used torture and execution To put down Protestantism.

And the silver bells and the cockle shells Were instruments of torture. The maids in a row were the lines of Hundreds, in fact, Of Protestant women and men That she put to death For their faith.

She wanted to grow a Catholic kingdom. Jesus teaches us about another kingdom. He talks about the kingdom of God.

And he talks about how the kingdom of God Will grow and spread throughout the world. Not through the means of torture Or fear or death. But in another way altogether.

[14 : 01] But what is the kingdom of God? What does it mean? What is Jesus talking about? And why does he refer to it in this way As being like a mustard seed Which grows into a tree Or yeast

mixed in a batch of dough?

Well, we all live in a kingdom. We live in the united kingdom. And the united kingdom As many of you will know Is made up of four nations.

England And Scotland Wales And Northern Ireland. This is a geographical kingdom. We have borders Land borders Where the kingdom reaches its limits.

People can visit this kingdom. And people can leave this kingdom. This kingdom has its own laws. Which govern only this kingdom And not other kingdoms.

This kingdom has one ruler Who is different to the other rulers Of other kingdoms. And so we have the queen Who is the head of state.

[15:04] The sovereign of the united kingdom. But when Jesus talks about the kingdom of God He's not talking about a geographical kingdom. A land kingdom.

It's not a kingdom which has borders That you can cross over to. You can't visit this kingdom By car or train Or boat Or plane. You won't find this kingdom On any map Or atlas Of the world.

Jesus has been speaking About the kingdom of God All the way through His ministry. At the very beginning Luke tells us In chapter 4 Jesus spoke and said I must proclaim The good news Of the kingdom of God.

In Luke chapter 11 Of course He teaches his disciples That part of their daily prayer Should be Your kingdom come. And then Just a bit earlier In chapter 11 Verse 20 As he was healing people He declared to them If I drive out demons By the finger of God The kingdom of God Has come upon you.

So what is this Kingdom That Jesus Preaches? This kingdom That is upon Those who hear us That kingdom That the disciples Are to pray Should come.

[16:25] Later on In chapter 17 Of Luke Jesus explains That this kingdom Of God Is not something That can be observed Or seen. It's not something Visible.

And in John Chapter 18 As he stands Before Pontius Pilate He tells Pilate there That his kingdom Is not of this world.

It's not like Any kingdom Of this world Whether you're A knighted kingdom Or any other Physical kingdom. A kingdom of course Is a place That has A king Who rules over it.

And the kingdom of God Is ruled over By God himself. He is the King of the kingdom. So the kingdom of God Is wherever God rules Over With authority And power.

And there are Just two places Where God's Kingdom Exists. Firstly Of course His kingdom Is in heaven. That's why sometimes The kingdom of God Is also spoken of As the kingdom Of heaven.

[17:32] He rules there. We can't see That kingdom Of course But it's real. It's actual. It's not Fictitious. It's not a myth.

It's not an idea Or a dream. The kingdom of God And the kingdom of heaven Are real places And all those Who dwell in that Kingdom of heaven Love and delight In God's rule And authority.

There's another place That Jesus is talking About as well. Where at this time God rules as king And that's in the life Of every believer.

If you're a Christian Then you are In the kingdom of God Part of the kingdom Of God. That's why Jesus When he spoke To his disciples Told them The kingdom of God Is near Or at hand Or has come Upon you.

A Christian Is someone Who has And delights To have God As their God As their king And he rules Over their lives.

[18:34] The kingdom of God And the kingdom Of heaven. Much more to it Than that. But simply for us At the moment That will do. So let's get back To these parables. Now that I've established What the kingdom is That Jesus is talking about.

What is this kingdom? Jesus uses These parables And we know Again The parables Were ways In which Jesus Taught Using ordinary Everyday things That people would Know about And see And experience To explain Extraordinary Supernatural things That can't be seen.

And parables Like these Of Jesus Show us again The amazing kindness Of God to us. That he simplifies Truth For us. He brings it down And teaches us Like little children In ways that we Can understand Things that are Mind-blowing Things that are Exceptional That's why When Jesus Taught He said That unless You become Like little children You can never Enter the kingdom Of God We have to Recognize That God Wonderfully Explains Marvelous things In ways Which are Simple So what does Jesus want Those who are Listening to him To understand What is it he

wants Us to understand Here in these Simple parables In reality The very Simple truth A very simple

Truth But depending On who we Are We will be Affected In different Ways Depending on Our attitude Whether we Are in the Kingdom of God or not Will affect How we Understand What Jesus Is saying And how we Relate to it And how it Affects us In our lives First of all Jesus was Speaking there And I've Connected And I believe It's right to Connect verse 18 with Verse 17 In that this Is not some New different Time But rather This is Jesus In the Synagogue Or outside The synagogue But connected With what's Just happened With his Healing of This woman On the Sabbath day That he is Teaching and Explaining the Kingdom of God to Those people Who are there The synagogue Was like A bit like A church Building Like this In which God's people Met every Sabbath day To hear God's word The Jewish People And Jesus' Parable is

Aimed at Two groups Of people First of all It's aimed At those Who were not In the Kingdom Those who Were opposed In fact To Jesus And we Read about Them there In verse 17 All his Opponents They were Opponents To Jesus Then There were Opponents To Jesus Now And we've Seen as We've been Going through The gospel Of Luke How the Religious Leaders of Jesus' Day Had it In for Him Just turn Back a Page to Chapter 11 And verse 53 When Jesus Went outside The Pharisees And the Teachers of The law Began to Oppose him Fiercely To besiege Him with Questions Waiting to Catch him Out He had A group Of enemies Those who Were the Religious Those who Were the Pharisees And the Scribes They were His opponents They did Not like What Jesus Was doing Just here Simply in The healing Of this Woman who Was crippled For so [22 : 12] Long There was A rebuke Wasn't there In the Words of The religious Synagogue Leader They didn't Like Jesus They didn't Like what He taught They didn't Like what He did They were Already Planning to Get rid Of him Why Because they Despised Jesus They didn't Believe that He was God's Messiah They didn't Believe that He had Come from God Or that He was Doing what God Wanted They believed That they Were from God That they Had a Corner on The market That they Were the Ones who Had all The truth And that People should Follow Them Rather than Jesus Their great Hope was That Jesus' Mission Would Fail And what Was his Mission His Mission Was this To set Up God's Kingdom In their Country And in The world To establish The kingdom Of God They Did not Want this To happen So Jesus Tells Them This Parable And what

Is he Telling Them Well Just like A tiny Mustard Seed Jesus Is just One Man Seemingly Unimportant Seemingly Insignificant But what He has Begun In his Ministry In his Teaching Is going To grow And it's Going to Grow And it's Going to Grow so Large That even The birds In the Air Will perch In its Branches And find A nesting Place There And the Birds That Jesus Has in Mind Are again Those That the Religious Leaders Disliked They were The sinners They were The tax Collectors They were The prostitutes They were The people Who were The least In the eyes Of the Religious Leader The unclean The unworthy And more Than that They were The other Nations Who Elsewhere The bible Talks of As the Gentiles The kingdom

Of Jesus The kingdom Of God Is going To grow From this Tiny Beginning Of one Man To be So big That peoples And nations Around about Will find Shelter And a Place Within The kingdom And similarly The parable Of the Yeast In the Dough Only a Very small Amount of Yeast Is needed To be Mixed Into A large Dough And that Was a Massive Amount Of dough Wasn't it 30 kilograms Making a Great batch Of many Dozens Of loaves Of bread Yeast Is mixed In Probably I Should get Caleb to Come and Explain about That now Now that He's a Bake off Sort of Expert From what He's told Us about Making Cakes The yeast Spread Through the Whole of The dough Just started In one Place As it Mixed It Permeated It Effected It

Eventually Touched Every part Of the Dough So that All the Dough Would rise To a Loaf Of bread And again Jesus' Teaching Which at The moment Seems to Be so Very isolated Just in This small Area of Northern What we Know as Israel Now Really That's Where Jesus Ministered For his Life This Teaching Would spread Spread And spread And spread So that Eventually The whole World Would hear And be Affected The simple Point that Jesus is Making Is this No matter How much They hate Jesus No matter How much They seek To oppose Jesus No matter How hard They try To stop His teaching The kingdom Of God Must grow And spread And keep On growing And spreading Right all The way Through the Whole Of the World Even Though At this Time It appears So small And weak And insignificant

But the Other people That Jesus Of course Is teaching This parable To are His disciples To those Who were The people There who Were delighted With the Wonderful Things he Was doing And of

Course His words Are for Us As well We are His disciples And Jesus His words Concerning The spreading Of the Kingdom And the Growth Of the Kingdom Of God That is In other Words Hearts And lives Of men And women Being brought Under the Rule of God Being brought Under the Authority Of God The lordship Of God The kingship Of God These parables That Jesus Spoke Within a Very short Time Were fulfilled Began to Find Completion Just a Matter of Months Later on After Jesus Had died And raised And returned To his Father In heaven There were Just a Very small Number of

[27 : 17] Disciples We are told In Acts Chapter 1 120 That was the Whole If we can Put it The whole Kingdom of God On earth 120 People A tiny Seed Of a Church Amongst A massive Roman Empire Empire The Roman Empire It's estimated At that time Counted over 50 million People Not even as Many people As live in The UK Now And the Roman Empire Is thought To have Contained One fifth Of the World's Population So the World's Population Around about The first Century or So Was about 250 million People So 120 People I don't Know I couldn't Do the Math So Barry will Work it Out in His Head What Percentage Of 250 Million Is 120 Done it Yet No not Yet Okay A tiny Seed Tiny Church

A tiny Kingdom How on earth Could that Small number Of people Who Made up The kingdom Of god In the World At that Time How could They let Alone Survive Never mind Grow And spread But that's Exactly what They did For a chapter Later In Acts chapter Two What do we Find That in One day Three thousand People Entered the Kingdom of God And it Began To grow Within a Few more Days or Weeks We're told In Acts Four There was Five thousand That was Just the Men who Were counted And the Kingdom Not only Grew As Men and Women were Brought in But also It spread In its Influence From Jerusalem That minor City in the Middle East The good News of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ Was taken To the far Corners Within just A matter Of years In Acts Chapter Sixteen It had Already Reached Greece Europe And it Was causing A stink People Complained They said These men Who've Caused Trouble All Over The World Have Now Come Here By the End of The book Of Acts Probably Thirty Years After Jesus Death And Resurrection The Kingdom Of God Had Reached The Heart Of The Roman Empire Itself A Church Was In Rome Itself Under The Very Nose Of The Emperor And Of The Empire That Sought To Squash and Kill And Destroy The Church Church History And All History Has Recorded That Since These Parables Of Jesus Were Spoken Around About 30 A.D.

For 2000 Years Since The Kingdom Of God Has Grown Larger And Larger And Larger As Many And Women Are Brought Into The Kingdom Through Faith In Christ And The Gospel Has Spread Far And Wide There Must Be Hundreds Of Millions Of People Potentially Billions Who Have Entered The Kingdom Of God And Many Are Doing So Even Today And Yes Here In The UK In The United Kingdom We See The Kingdom Of God In The Churches Of Jesus Christ As Small Insignificant Unimportant In Our Generation Probably And This Is A Conservative Estimate No More Than Five Or Six Percent Of The Population Of The United Kingdom Are Real Disciples Of Jesus We're Written Off We're

Bound To Die There Can Be No Future But These Parables Of Jesus Tell Us No Matter How Small God's Kingdom Is At The Present In This Nation Or Any Nation It Must And It Will Keep Growing And The Good News Of God's Kingdom Must Keep On Spreading Right Up Until The Day When Jesus Comes Again And The Whole World Will Finally Ultimately Bow Before Him As Their Lord And King And He Brings All Nations Unto Submission This Is What Revelation Chapter 11 Verse 15 Tells Us There's Coming A Day When Voices Shout From Heaven The Kingdoms Of This World Have Become The Kingdom Of Our Lord And His Christ And He Will Reign Forever And Ever Therefore

[32 : 09] What Can Men Do To The Kingdom Of God What Can Militant Islam Do To The Kingdom Of God What Can Vocal Atheism Do To The Kingdom Of God Can It Hold Back The Work Of God's Kingdom Can It Prevent The Gospel From Reaching Men And Women Can It Stem The Growth Of God's Kingdom And Church Surely Not Surely Not It Hasn't Done In The Last 2000 Years Since The Words Of Jesus Were Spoken It Cannot In However Many Years There Is In The Future Before Jesus Comes Again Why Are We Afraid Why Are We Anxious Why Are We Worried We Have No Cause To Be Or Reason To Be Because The Kingdom Of Our Lord Jesus Christ Is Growing And Spreading But Here's The Question Here's The Real Nub Of The Matter

Are You In The Kingdom Or Not Because If You Are Not In The Kingdom Of God Then You Are An Opponent Of The Kingdom Of God And Outside The Kingdom Of God You Must Be In The

Kingdom To Enjoy The Benefits We Know Don't We Dear Friends That There Are Many Thousands Of People Traveling Across Thousands Of Miles Simply To Get Into The United Kingdom Because They Hope And Think That It Will Be The Place Where They Will Have Health And Wealth And Prosperity And Peace And Some As we Know Even Recently Have Gone To The Lence Even Unto Death To Get Into The United Kingdom It Is Such A Utopia A Paradise For Them But Dear Friends The United Kingdom Is A Suspid Compared To The Kingdom

Of God Every Kingdom On This Earth Is Just A Load Of Dung Compared To The Kingdom Of God And What Are You Doing To Press Into The Kingdom Have You Come Into The Kingdom If Men And Women Will Risk Their Lives Unto Death To Enter Into A Earthly Fragile Temporary And Spoiled Kingdom Then Why Haven't You Done Everything Within Your Power To Seek To Be In This Kingdom Of God This Kingdom Which Endures Forever And Ever This Kingdom In Which There Is Forgiveness This Kingdom In Which There Is Peace This Kingdom In Which There Is Life This Kingdom In Which There Is Power Over Death And Hell And Sin This Kingdom Which Is Which Is Which Is But By Whatever Means Necessary Seek The Kingdom Of God Dear Friend For There Must

Come A Day When There Will Be A Division Between Those Who Are In The Kingdom And Those Who Are Not There Must Come A Day When The Kingdoms Of This World Become The Kingdoms Of Our God And Those Who Are Not In The Kingdom Of Christ Not In The Kingdom Of God Will Weep And Cry And Ask Let Me In Let Me In But It Will Be Too Late And Instead Of Rejoicing In The Kingship Of Jesus Over Your Life You Will Forcibly Bow The Knee To Him And Acknowledge That He Is Your God But By Then He Will Not Be Your Saviour He Will Not Be Your Redeemer And You Will Be Cast Out Of That Kingdom Of Heaven For All Eternity How Do You Get Into The Kingdom Of God It's

So So Simple It's So So Easy Caleb's Told Us Jesus Is The Way It Is Only Through Him Faith In Him As God's Son And Our Saviour Faith In What He Has Done In Taking Upon Himself Your Sin And Guilt And Punishment Faith In Him As The One Who Is Alive From The Dead And Alive Today Who Will Rescue And Save You If You But Ask Him And Reception Of The Gift Of Life Which Conquers Death Which Scatters Fear Which Fills With Light What Are You Doing On The Outside In The Cold Come In Come In Come In Let's

[37 : 10] Pray Together We Thank You O Lord Our God That You Speak To Us In Ways That We Can Understand You Speak To Us O Lord In The Simplicity And Even The Foolishness Of Our Minds Plainly Of The Realities Of Life And Death Of Heaven And Hell We Thank You O Lord Our God That You Are Building Your Kingdom That You Are Building A Kingdom Of Men And Women And Boys And Girls A Kingdom In Which O Lord You Are The Good The Kind The Providing King And O Lord We Thank You That As Jesus Began That Wonderful Work So Lord We Thank You That From That Day

That Kingdom Has Grown And Developed And Matured And Men And Women Have Come In Through The Ages We Thank You That Around The World Today Men And Women Are Coming Into The Kingdom As They Are Being Born Again Of Tale ■■■ ■■■ And bring them in as they receive you.

And put their faith in you as their savior and lord and king. It does mean giving up the right to be the king of our own lives.

It means putting you in your proper place as lord and king of our lives. Lord do that work. And for those of us here lord who are in the kingdom.

We thank you that we are part of a kingdom which cannot be shaken. A kingdom which is not decreasing but increasing. A kingdom that is spreading throughout the world. And we thank you for those who are taking your gospel even today to the farthest most parts of the world.

[39 : 22] We pray that there oh lord men and women may be running into your kingdom. And enjoying the blessings thereof. Help us to keep on praying.

Help us to keep on living. That Christian life. That faithful life. That shows that we are members of a different kingdom. And encouraging and urging others to enter in.

That they might have life in its fullness too. For we ask all these things in the name of Jesus our lord and king. Amen. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath.

But to receive salvation through our lord Jesus Christ. He died for us. So that whether we are awake or asleep. We may live together with him.

Therefore encourage one another. And build each other up. Just as in fact. You are doing. Amen.