

**1072 The Kingdom of God Comes, Preserve Life, and Always Pray -Jesus (25)**  
(Verses refer to those in NASB unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)

First of all, we see that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven refer to the same thing, and the kingdom of God is in the heart. We will not know the time of the Lord's return, just like what happened to the people in the time of Noah and Lot. Second, the Bible clearly teaches how to preserve spiritual life. Although the Book of Revelation does not talk about the rapture of the church, we mentioned scriptures that have this concept in the Bible. We know that not everyone who goes to church will be raptured, but only those who believe. We know that for Christians, one salvation means eternal salvation. On this point, we illustrate why God is fair and see that God tells us through the Bible that it is consistent. Finally, we saw Jesus give an example of praying at all times. Prayer is not about repeating words, but about going into the inner room in faith.

### **1. The Kingdom of God Comes**

"Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.""(Luke 17:20-21)

The kingdom of God is the kingdom of heaven. There are many places where we can draw this conclusion. The easiest way is to compare these two scriptures. "Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.""(Mark 1:14-15) "Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; ...From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.""(Matthew 4:12-17)

The Bible has never clearly stated the time of the Lord's return, so all prophecies about the time of the Lord's return will be wrong. Just like this scripture says, "And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after them. For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."(Luke 17:22-25) He went to the cross eventually to fulfill the prophecy that He would be rejected by this generation.

His return is like what happened to both Noah and Lot, "And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. On that day, the one who is on the housetop and

**whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. Remember Lot's wife."(Luke 17:26-32)**

**In the case of Lot, it was also said that Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt when she looked back. It's like what Jesus said, "But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.""(Luke 9:62)**

## **2. How to preserve spiritual life**

**"Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other will be left. There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left. [Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left.]" And answering they said to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered.""(Luke 17:33-37)**

**The disciples asked, where is this happening? Jesus just answered a fact. You can know what happened by looking at the result of the matter. What is preserved is the spiritual life, and what is lost is the natural life, as the scriptures say, "for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live."(Romans 8:13) Another one also said that the way to preserve life is clear: "And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"(Mark 8:34-37)**

**There are similar words in the Gospel of Matthew: "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming."(Matthew 24:37-42)**

**Here we are talking about being on the alert. In this matter, we can see that God tells us through the Bible that it is consistent, because "The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."(1 Peter 4:7) It is clearly stated here that when the Lord returns, not every living person will be raptured, only Christians. The book of Revelation does not mention the rapture of the church, so no one knows when it will be raptured. The idea of the rapture of the church is chiefly derived from these verses, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain**

until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) If the rapture did not refer to all believers, Paul would not have used these words to comfort all people.

For Christians, it is once saved and eternally saved. As the scriptures say, "If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."(1 Corinthians 3:14-15) Some people think this is unfair, but God is very fair, "...From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more."(Luke 12:48)

Because God tells us through the Bible that is consistent, how should we look at this matter? When we look at the new heaven and new earth, the holy city, New Jerusalem, comes down from heaven from God. (See Revelation 21:1-2) At that time, there are people who cannot enter the city as the scriptures say, "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying."(Revelation 22:14-15) Some people say that my conscience can tell me that the people outside the city must be non-Christians, but the verse regarding the people outside the city gate did not say that there are unbelievers, like when describing the second death, which proclaims that there are unbelievers (cf. Revelation 21:8). These people may not have noticed that conscience is also stained by sin. For example, we cannot say that David had no conscience during the Bathsheba incident. We must rely on God's words, not such conscience.

Let us give an example to say that we have to rely on God's words. The New Testament says, "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."(Ephesians 3:20) If someone gives a current example to explain this scripture, it must be wrong. Why? This is because that example is something that can be imagined and sought after. So what is it that is far beyond all that we ask or think? In the time of Copernicus, he observed that the earth revolves around the sun. Not many scientists and people at that time would believe this, and the Bible said, "He (God) stretches out the north over empty space And hangs the earth on nothing."(Job 26:7) At that time, how could people believe that the earth was hanged on nothing? So this matter was beyond what one could ask or imagine at that time. Now the current science knows that this fact can be proved by spaceships. Thus, it isn't far beyond all that we ask or think about today. It is not the Bible that has a problem but man that has a problem. God is infinite and man is finite. "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares 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."(Isaiah 55:8-9) We believe today that there exists something far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, because the Bible says so.

Back to this article, at that time "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:15) So those who have never believed are already in the lake of fire. Don't underestimate the power of Satan, a man who once believed will become a liar by falling, etc. Thus, Peter would say, "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8) "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm." (Ephesians 6:13) We have shared before that, except for the sword of the Holy Spirit, the full armor of God are defensive items, so we must first stand firm.

Those who once believed and were saved but could not enter the city are much better off than going down to the lake of fire, but they will weep and gnash their teeth outside the city, as the scriptures say, "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 8:11-12) God is faithful, merciful and gracious. Since He told us that once we are saved, we will be saved forever, and there will be no ambiguity. In this matter, God is very fair by separating Christians in the city from the outside ones, and what God tells us through the Bible is indeed consistent.

### 3. Pray at all times

"Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.' For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:1-8)

The life to live today is, "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Even if a person can only lie in bed due to a stroke, what one thing cannot be done? This passage does not say that prayers should use many repetitions. The Bible clearly says, "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words." (Matthew 6:7) "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you." (Matthew 6:6) It goes on in Luke 18:8 to say, "...when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) To pray at all the times is to be in faith to pray.