

# *The Kingdom of God*

A few pages of [\*Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration\*](#), by Pope Benedict XVI, with Excerpts from the Book of Heaven



A few pages of [\*Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration\*](#), by Pope Benedict XVI, has highlighted for me some troubling trends in the Church. He sifts carefully through Catholic thought as it differed historically from extra-ecclesial trajectories, but what must concern today's reader is that many influential leaders in the Church have accepted non-Catholic premises in their views of the world.

In his explanation of the Kingdom that Jesus preached, Benedict reminds us that Origen had two basic thoughts on the topic. First was that Jesus himself is the "*autobasileia*, that is the Kingdom in person ... the Kingdom is not a thing, it is not a geographical dominion like worldly kingdoms" (p. 49). In this way, those who come to know Christ Jesus come to know God who dwells among them, and who wishes his divine will to prevail.

**From the Book of Heaven: V6 - Nov. 18, 1904** - "My daughter, when I came upon earth My Heaven was My Humanity...Now, when the Heaven of My Humanity Ascended into Heaven after My Resurrection, My Heaven upon earth was to continue to exist - and it is the souls who give a Dwelling to My Divinity. Dwelling in them, I

form My Heaven, and from them also do I make the order of the virtues contained inside shine forth...”

**From the Book of Heaven: V36 – May 10, 1938** – “...I put My Love in the heart of the creature, I let it flow in her mind, words, works and steps; I turn all this Love that flows everywhere into coins of Divine Love, and to let it circulate as Our Currency We impress on them My Image and the Writing: ‘Jesus, King of the Kingdom of the Divine Will.’

**From the Book of Heaven: V11 – Dec. 20, 1912** - "My Will must come before everything.”

Origen didn’t stop there, though. He insisted that not only does God dwell with his creatures, but He dwells *in* them. In a mystical way, it is understood that “man’s interiority [is] the essential location of the Kingdom of God”. And **Benedict** quotes from Origen’s *On Prayer*:

“Those who pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God pray without any doubt for the Kingdom of God that they contain in themselves, and they pray that this Kingdom might bear fruit and attain its fullness. For every holy man it is God who reigns...(p. 50).

**From the Book of Heaven: V24 – May 30, 1928** - ‘Take whatever you want, My little daughter, Luisa.’ And to give you the right to it, I have you mark all of Our works and Our dominions with your ‘*I love You*’; and in this ‘*I love You*’ of yours that repeats its refrain, ‘*Give me your Divine Fiat,*’ it seems that ‘*Fiat*’ and ‘*I love You*’ are braided together. And I, knowing that what you want and ask for is the greatest thing, and a Divine Kingdom in which, not only you, but all those who will be in this Kingdom, may all be kings and queens....

“If you knew what you are asking Me for! Heaven and earth are astonished, and all are watching the braveness of your request and My Goodness, all paternal, that longs for you and smiles at you with totally excessive love, to give you more confidence in asking for It with more braveness. In fact, My daughter, since it is so great a Kingdom that I must give, I want an entire people to ask Me for It, and the first people is the whole Creation; and by going around in the midst of It, you move all to ask for the coming of the Kingdom of My Divine Will upon earth.

“The second people are all My works and those of My Celestial Mama that were done on earth. These peoples are Divine and interminable peoples. Then there is the people of the low earth, that is formed of those who recite the ‘Our Father,’ and of the few who, in some way, know My Divine Will and ask that It come to reign upon earth. And when entire peoples pray Me, having at the head of them her to whom a mission so great has been entrusted, what We want to give, and that We are asked for with insistence, is conceded more easily...

...There is not one important thing that is done in a kingdom, for which some do not resort to the people, to make it cry out and even tumult, so as to give themselves a reason and say: 'It is the people that wants it.' ...

"...when I must give important things, universal goods, (I) want entire peoples to ask Me for them. And you, Luisa, must form these peoples—first, by making all the knowledges about My Divine Fiat known; second, by going around everywhere, moving Heaven and earth to ask for the Kingdom of My Divine Will."

**Pope Benedict XVI:** ... So if we want God to reign in us, then sin must not be allowed in any way to reign in our mortal body ... Then let God stroll at leisure in us as in a spiritual paradise and rule in us alone with his Christ" (p. 50).

**From the Book of Heaven: V15 – May 5, 1923** - "As many times as the soul enters into the Divine Will in order to pray, work, love, etc., so many ways does she open between Creator and creatures. And in seeing that the creature is making her way to go to It, the Divinity opens Its ways in order to meet Its creature. In this encounter she copies the virtues of her Creator, absorbs ever New Divine Life into herself, penetrates more into the Eternal Secrets of the Supreme Volition, and everything she does is no longer human in her, but Divine. This Divine Operating forms a Golden Heaven within her, on which the Divinity Strolls, delighting in finding Its own operating in the creature, awaiting the creature in order to receive her divine acts, and therefore open more ways for her in Its Divinity. And It keeps repeating with great love: 'Behold - here is how, in My Will, the creature comes closer to My Likeness, she accomplishes My Designs, she fulfills the Purpose of Creation.'

**From the Book of Heaven: V20 – Nov. 4, 1926** - "So, in looking at My Mama, one could see in Her portents never before seen. One could see heavens; one could see most refulgent sun; one could see crystal clear sea, in which We reflected Ourselves in order to see Our Daughter. One could see earth at springtime, always flowery, that attracted the Celestial Maker to take His strolls on it. Oh! how beautiful was the Celestial Sovereign, as We saw in Her not only Our copy, but all of Our works enclosed in Her. And this, because She enclosed Our Will within Herself.

"Now, for the coming of the Kingdom of the Supreme Fiat, another daughter (Luisa) of Our Will was needed, because if she were not Its daughter, Our Will could entrust to her neither Its secrets, nor Its sorrows, nor Its knowledges, Its prodigies, Its sanctity, Its dominions. Just as a father and a mother enjoy making their goods known to their children and making their children possess them—even more, they would like to possess more in order to make them more rich and happy—so does My Will enjoy making Its goods known to Its children, to make them rich and happy, of a happiness without end.

"Now, in the Kingdom of the Supreme Fiat, We will have the copies of the Sovereign Queen. So, She too longs for and awaits this Divine Kingdom on earth, in

order to have Her copies. What a beautiful Kingdom It will be—a Kingdom of light, of infinite riches, a Kingdom of perfect sanctity and of dominion. Our children of this Kingdom will all be kings and queens; they will all be members of the Divine and Royal Family. They will enclose all Creation within themselves; they will have the resemblance, the physiognomy of Our Celestial Father, and therefore will be the fulfillment of Our Glory and the crown of Our head.”

**From the Book of Heaven: V10 – Feb. 8, 1911** - ...He would say in my ear, but all of a sudden: "Luisa, you are My Paradise on earth, and your love renders Me happy."

**From the Book of Heaven: V34 – Mar. 26, 1937** - In fact, from Heaven I look at the earth and I find as many Jesuses who, taken by the same folly of My Love, give their life at the cost of sufferings and of death in order to tell Me: 'I am Your faithful copy, the sufferings make me smile because I enclose souls.' And I, O! how I Love them. I do not feel alone anymore. I feel Happy, Victorious, because having company in developing the same Life, in suffering the same sufferings, in wanting what I want, is My Greatest Happiness and My Paradise on earth.

The two images are not contradictory, but layered, so that Jesus is the kingdom, and Jesus is in the man of virtue, so as that man grasps the grace offered through the passion of Christ, he is both more Christ-like and the garden where Christ can reign.

Subsequently, **Benedict** shows that traditionally there is a third image of the Kingdom, which is the Church:

To be sure, neither the interpretation in terms of man's interiority nor the connection with Christ ever completely disappeared from sight. But nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theology did tend to speak of the Church as the Kingdom of God on earth; the Church was regarded as the actual presence of the Kingdom within history (p. 50).

**From the Book of Heaven: V24 – Oct. 3, 1928** - “My daughter, if Rome has the primacy of My Church, she owes it to Jerusalem, because the beginning of Redemption was precisely in Jerusalem. ...“Now there will be an exchange: if Jerusalem gave to Rome the life of religion and therefore of Redemption, Rome will give to Jerusalem the Kingdom of the Divine Will. And this is so true, that just as I chose a Virgin from the little town of Nazareth for the Redemption, so I have chosen another virgin in a little town of Italy belonging to Rome, to whom the mission of the Kingdom of the Divine Fiat has been entrusted. And since It must be known in Rome, just as My coming upon earth was known in Jerusalem, Rome will have the great honor of requiting Jerusalem for the great Gift received from her, which is Redemption, by making known to her the Kingdom of My Will.

“Then will Jerusalem repent of her ingratitude, and will embrace the life of the religion that she gave to Rome; and, grateful, she will receive from Rome the life and the great Gift of the Kingdom of My Divine Will. And not only Jerusalem, but all the other nations will receive from Rome the great Gift of the Kingdom of My Fiat, the first criers of It, Its Gospel—all full of peace, of happiness and of restoration of the creation of man.

Then Benedict explains that the Enlightenment sparked specific trends that proved antithetical to this traditional understanding. There was the radical individualism championed by Adolf von Harnack, and the corollary belief that morality was more important than ritual. Others preferred to see the kingdom in more communitarian terms, pitting ethics against sheer grace, and all of these efforts were upended by Albert Schweitzer’s book, *Jesus’ Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*. His thesis was still tied firmly to the notion of God and the saving work of Christ, but it was far more eschatological in the sense that it was “a proclamation of the imminent end of the world, of the inbreaking of a new world where, as the term kingdom suggests, God would reign” (p. 52).

Surely the trauma of the First World War led many believers to wonder what place such massive blood-letting among Christians meant in the unfolding of world history, but the accompanying trains of thought went wildly off-course from that point.

Since that time, a secularist reinterpretation of the idea of the Kingdom has gained considerable ground, particularly, though not exclusively, in Catholic theology. This reinterpretation propounds a new view of Christianity, religions, and history in general, and it claims that such radical refashioning will enable people to reappropriate Jesus’ supposed message (p. 53).

Previous shifts of emphasis were not nearly as dangerous theologically as that final lie, which carries the sympathetic soul from a generic theocentrism to regnocentrism without God. And yet that is where we are today in much of the world, ‘where peace, justice, and respect for creation are the dominant values’ (p. 54). How many times have we bit our tongues not to “proselytise” (the name of Jesus being so “divisive,” or the boundaries of the Church appearing so threatening)? Benedict acknowledges the temptation:

This sounds good; it seems like a way of finally enabling the whole world to appropriate Jesus’ message, but without requiring missionary evangelisation of other religions. It looks as if now, at long last, Jesus’ works have gained some practical content, because the establishment of the “Kingdom” has become a common task and is drawing nigh (p. 54).

But Benedict ultimately decries this utopian approach which removes God from the mission. The politicisation of the kingdom has marginalised religion, which already must genuflect to the state in so many settings. “This post-Christian vision of faith and religion is disturbingly close to Jesus’ third temptation [in the desert]” (p. 55).

We must keep this in mind as we consider how we approach all government promises in the near future. We see clearly the dangers of hoping that “princes” will advance our pet causes, for those power-brokers can turn on a dime and leave the Christian empty-handed. We must also recognise the dangers of ecumenical endeavors that rejoice in works that are mute about the faith that motivates them. We’ve attempted to baptise so much in the name of tolerance and compassion that we run the risk of losing the meaning of the very names in which we baptise.

Benedict summarises:

When Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God, he is quite simply proclaiming God, and proclaiming him to be the living God, who is able to act concretely in the world and in history and is even now so acting. He is telling us: “God exists” and “God is really God,” which means that he holds in his hands the threads of the world ... “Kingdom of God” is therefore an inadequate translation. It would be better to speak of God’s being Lord, of his lordship (pp. 56-57).

**From the Book of Heaven: V2 – July 18, 1899** - This time it seemed that in my heart there was Sacramental Jesus, spreading many rays in my interior from the Holy Host. Many threads were coming out of my heart, which intertwined with all those rays of light. It seemed to me that Jesus, with His love, was drawing all of my heart to Himself, and my heart, with those threads, was drawing and binding all of Jesus to remain with me.

**From the Book of Heaven: V14 – Apr. 29, 1922** - Finding myself in my usual state, I saw my soul and all of my interior - thoughts, affections, heartbeats, tendencies... - changed into as many threads of light, and these extended and expanded so much, that coming out from within my interior, they harmonized with the Sun, rose higher, touched the heavens, and diffused over the whole earth. While I was watching this, I saw my sweet Jesus, who was holding all those threads of light in His hand, and with enchanting mastery, directed them, stretched them, multiplied and enlarged them as much as He wanted. ... these threads of light that come out from your interior..., if your heart did not flow in my Will but in yours, or in another will, many heartbeats of Divine Life would be missing in your heart, while many human heartbeats would take their over, for as many as those which are missing to the Divine; and so with the fibers, affections... And since what is human is not capable of forming light, but darkness, many threads of darkness would be formed, and my Volition would remain saddened, unable to carry out all the Power of My Will within you."

**From the Book of Heaven: V6 – Aug. 5, 1904** - Continuing in my usual state, blessed Jesus came for just a little, in the act of ruling and dominating everything, and of reigning with the crown of King on His head and with the scepter of command in His

hand. While I was seeing Him in this position, He told me (though in Latin, but I will say it according to what I understood): “My daughter, I AM the Ruler of kings and the Lord of lords. To Me alone is this right of justice due, which the creature owes Me; and by not giving it to me, she denies Me as Creator and Master of everything.” While saying this, He seemed to take the world in His hand and turn it upside down, so that creatures would submit to His regime and dominion. At the same time I could also see how the Lord ruled and dominated my soul, with such mastery that I felt all submerged in Him. From Him came the regime of my mind, of my affections, of my desires; many electric wires passed between me and Him, through which He directed and dominated everything.

In an upside world where androgyny is to be preferred to man and woman, and “toxic masculinity” is thought to be at the heart of all our woes, we would do well to remember that Lordship has its place—both in the Son of God and those particularly called to live in *persona Christi*. Kingship carries within it many layered meanings, but primarily the understanding that hierarchy is preferred to mob rule, that sin corrodes the community, and a material kingdom is not what we seek. We cannot allow either the language to be diluted or the mission to be derailed, for Christ must be Lord, now and forever. Amen!

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