

The Good News About Jesus as Luke Wrote It

Chapter 11:1-54

HoneyBee base version for oral translation

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Background

- Teachers/Rabbis normally taught their disciples both common religious ideas and hard theological questions.
- Jewish people commonly addressed God as “heavenly Father”.
- The Jewish Law commanded Jews to forgive their debtors every 7th and 50th years.
- Avoiding shame is a major control for behavior in traditional societies.
- Jews believed that the Holy Spirit (1) had departed from the temple, (2) came only to the holiest, or (3) would return in the end-time.
- Jews who tried to expel demons employed fumigation and verbal formulae.
- A home lamp served as a sign that occupants were alive and well.

History

- Jews were aware from Scripture that their ancestors had killed prophets and other holy men.
- There was a group of Jews called Essenes who taught against worship at the Jerusalem temple. This made the temple religious leaders wary of non-official teaching and interpretations.
- Many, perhaps most of John’s disciples became disciples of Jesus after John died

Themes

- God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask.
- God answers prayers for those who keep on asking.
- God forgives those who repent of their sins.
- Jewish sources often personify God’s wisdom.
- Chronicles could be the last book in some Jewish ways of ordering their scrolls.
- Pharisees ceremonially washed their hands before eating.

Jesus teaches his disciples how God answers prayer

¹ One day, Jesus was somewhere praying. When he finished praying, one disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us what to say when we^(exc) pray, as John the Baptizer taught his disciples!” ² Jesus said to them, “When you pray, say things like this:

‘Father, please help us to honor you as God!

Please rule over our lives!

³ Please give to us^(exc) each day the food that we need!

⁴ Please forgive us for the wrong things that we have done,

¹ Licensed for use under Creative Commons. Text in *italics* is implied from historical or cultural context. Superscripted ^(pl) means plural, ^(sg) singular, ^(inc) inclusive, ^(exc) exclusive pronoun.

because² we forgive people who do wrong to us.³

Please do not let anything tempt us *so strongly that we sin against you!*”

⁵ Then he said to them, “

Suppose that one of you goes to a friend’s house at midnight. Suppose that you ^(sg) stand outside his door and call out to him, ‘My friend, please lend me three flatbreads!’ ⁶ Another friend who is traveling has just arrived at my house, but I have no food to give to him!’

⁷ Suppose that he answers you from inside his house, ‘Do not bother me! I have locked the door and all my family are in bed. So, I cannot get up and give you ^(sg) anything!’

⁸ I tell you *what that friend will do*. Even if he does not want to get up and give you any food because you are his friend, if you continue asking him to do so, he certainly will get up and give you whatever you need.

⁹ So I tell you *what God will do*: If you keep asking⁴ God for what you need, then he will give it to you ^(pl). If you keep expecting God to give you the things that you need, then he will give them to you. If you keep on praying urgently to God, like a man knocking on a friend’s door, then he will answer you. God does this for anyone who keeps asking, expecting and praying urgently. ¹⁰ This is because God gives things/answers to everyone who continues to ask him for them. He gives things/answers to anyone who keep searching/seeking after me. He will open a way for anyone to get the things that he needs if he keeps urgently praying for them.

¹¹ Suppose that you have a son who asks you ^(sg) for a fish to eat. You would certainly not give to him a *live poisonous* snake! ¹² If he asked you for an egg *to eat*, you certainly would not give him a *live scorpion*! ¹³ So, even though you people are evil, you know how to give good things to your children. But your Father in heaven is better than you are.⁵ He will certainly give something good to those who keep asking him. He will give to them/you^(pl) his Holy Spirit.”

Jesus expels an evil spirit and warns about spiritual evil⁶

¹⁴ One day a man was there who was not able to talk, because he had a demon. After Jesus expelled the demon, the man began to talk. This amazed the people who were there. ¹⁵ But some people said, “It is the demons’ ruler, Beelzebul,⁷ who enables Jesus to expel demons!” ¹⁶ Other people there asked Jesus to perform a miracle to show that his power was from God, to prove that he was the Messiah, *because they believed that Jesus’ miracles were from Satan*. ¹⁷ But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to them,

“If people in a nation fight against each other, then they will destroy their nation. If family members fight against each other, then their family will be divided. ¹⁸ Similarly, if Satan enables me to expel demons from people, then he will lose his power over people. I say this because you

² OR in the same way that.

³ OR the debts that they owe us. (In spoken Aramaic, the same word could be translated as ‘offense’ or as ‘debt’. Jews forgave others’ debts every seven and 50 years.)

⁴ Greek continuous action verb tense.

⁵ OR is very good.

⁶ OR Jesus and demons. OR Jesus is stronger than Satan.

⁷ OR Satan. OR (omit). See Luke 11:18.

say/think that I expel demons by Beelzebul's⁸ power.¹⁹ Furthermore, if it is true that it is Satan who enables⁹ me to expel demons, then it is also true that it is Satan who enables your disciples who/to expel demons. So, if you condemn me, then you also condemn your own disciples.²⁰ But if it is by God's power that I expel demons, then you must believe¹⁰ that I am the Messiah/King sent by God.

²¹ "Satan is like a strong man/warrior/soldier who has weapons. That man guards his house, so that no one can enter and steal the things in his house.²² But when someone else who is stronger attacks that man and subdues him, then the stronger man captures that man's weapons in which he had trusted. Then the stronger man takes from that man's/warrior's house anything he wants.²³ All those who do not join with me¹¹ become my enemies. And those who do not help me gather *people for God* are turning *people* against me."¹²

²⁴ Then Jesus said this:

"Sometimes when an evil spirit leaves someone, it wanders around in a wilderness area seeking someone else in whom it can stay. If it does not find anyone, then it says to itself, 'I shall return to the person in whom I used to stay!' ²⁵ So it goes back to that person and sees that the person's life is like a house that someone has swept clean, in which someone has put everything in order. *It also sees that it is empty; no other/stronger spirit has come into that person.*²⁶ Then this evil spirit goes and gets seven other spirits that are even more evil than it is. They all enter that person and stay there. So, although that person's condition was bad before, it *now* becomes much worse."¹³

²⁷ When Jesus said that, a woman who was listening called loudly out to him, "God is pleased¹⁴ with the woman¹⁵ who birthed you^(sg) and nursed you at her breasts!" ²⁸ But Jesus replied, "God is much more pleased¹⁶ with those who hear God's message and obey it!"

Jesus rebukes those who disbelieve his message¹⁷

²⁹ When the people/crowd around Jesus became many more, he said,

"Most people *who are alive here today* are evil. They want me to perform a big miracle *to prove that I have come from God*. But the only miracle that I will perform for¹⁸ you^(pl) will be like the

⁸ OR Satan's. See Luke 11:15. (If you used Beelzebul in verse 15, then also use it here. If you used Satan in verse 15, then also use Satan here. Be consistent.)

⁹ OR Satan enables.

¹⁰ OR since I expel demons by God's power, you must believe.

¹¹ OR become my disciples. (Jesus is telling a proverb here, that is, two statements that mean essentially the same thing. Both statements have two opposites or contrasting parts. Use opposites that are natural in your language (e.g. disciples/friends vs enemies; gather vs scatter)

¹² OR scattering *people so that they go* away from God

¹³ OR very very bad. OR truly bad.

¹⁴ OR God blessed.

¹⁵ OR your mother.

¹⁶ OR God blesses much more.

¹⁷ OR Jesus talks about Jonah and repentance. OR The people demand Jesus do miracles.

¹⁸ OR give to.

miracle that God did for Jonah.¹⁹ ³⁰ God *made a big fish that saved Jonah from dying in the sea. After three days in the fish, Jonah went and told people in Nineveh city to repent. God will perform a similar miracle for me, the Divine Human Son. Then you^(pl) will know that you, too, must repent and believe in me.*

³¹ Long ago the queen from/over Sheba,²⁰ a land far south from Israel, traveled a long distance to Israel to hear *King Solomon* speak many wise things. But now I am here in Israel. Although I am wiser than²¹ Solomon, you^(pl) have not believed my message. Therefore, at the time when God judges all people, God will reward the queen from Sheba, but he will condemn you^(pl).

³² When Jonah preached to the people who lived in Nineveh city, they repented. But now I *have come and preached to you. Although I am greater than Jonah, you have not repented. Therefore, at the time when God judges all people, God will reward the people who lived in Nineveh, but he will condemn you.*”

³³ Then Jesus said to them,

“People²² who light a lamp do not then hide it, or put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so that those who enter their house can see things from its light. Similarly, I have not concealed/hidden God’s truth. Instead, I have revealed his truth to you^(pl).

³⁴ Your eyes are like a lamp for your body, because they enable you to see things. If your eyes are healthy, then you are able to see everything clearly. *Similarly, if you^(sg) obey what I teach, then you will understand God’ truth.* But if your eyes are bad, then you are not able to see clearly. It is like being in darkness. *Similarly, if you do not obey what I teach, then you will not understand God’s truth.*

³⁵ *So think carefully about what I have already told you, so that you do not forget it. If you forget, then you will be like someone whose lamp has stopped burning.* ³⁶ *But if you obey all that I have told you, then you will understand God’s truth about me. It will be like being in a room with a lamp shining brightly, enabling you to see everything clearly.*”

Jesus rebukes and warns the corrupt Jewish religious leaders²³

³⁷ When Jesus finished saying those things, a Pharisee invited him to eat a meal with him. So, Jesus went to his house and ate with him. ³⁸ The Pharisee was surprised when he saw that Jesus did not *ceremonially* wash his hands²⁴ before eating, as the Pharisees do. ³⁹ The Lord Jesus said to him,

¹⁹ See Matt 12:40; Jonah 1-3.

²⁰ See 1 Kings 10; 2 Chron. 9.

²¹ OR I am very much more important than.

²² Verses 33 through 36 use a singular pronoun ‘you’, but it applies to everyone listening. Translate ‘you’ in a way that applies to everyone who was listening to Jesus.

²³ OR The foolish religious leaders.

²⁴ OR wash his hands with a certain ritual. (The Pharisees washed their hands in a certain way to be cleansed from anything that might have contaminated them. They were afraid that God might reject them if they had touched something unacceptable to God.)

“You Pharisees are concerned about things that are outside your bodies.²⁵ You^(pl) wash cups and dishes *thinking you make yourselves acceptable to God*. But within yourselves²⁶ you are very greedy and wicked. ⁴⁰ You people are foolish! *You forget* that God made both your outside and your inside. *So, you must be as concerned with your inside as much as with your outside.*

⁴⁰ You people are foolish! *You forget* that God made both your outside and your inside. *So, you must be as concerned with your inside as much as with your outside.* ⁴² God will punish you²⁷ Pharisees! You give to God a tenth from all that grows in your gardens, but you do not act with justice to others,²⁸ and you do not love God! It is good to give a tenth from your gardens, but it is better to love God and to act with justice/honesty to others.

⁴³ God will punish you Pharisees, because you like to sit in the best seats in your synagogues, *so that people will respect/honor you*. And you like people to greet you *respectfully* in public places.

⁴⁴ God will punish you Pharisees, because you are evil within/inside yourselves. You are like unmarked graves on which people walk without knowing that they are walking on a rotten body.”²⁹

⁴⁵ One law teacher said, “Teacher, by saying this, you ^(sg) are criticizing us also!” ⁴⁶ Jesus replied, “God will also punish you law teachers, because you require other people to obey many Jewish laws that are hard to do. But you do nothing to help others to obey God’s laws. ⁴⁷ God will punish you, because you build tombs/monuments for the prophets whom your ancestors murdered, but you do not obey what the prophets taught. ⁴⁸ You admit/testify that what your ancestors did was wrong: they dishonored the prophets by killing them. And you *also* dishonor the prophets by building their tombs without obeying them!

⁴⁹ That is why God wisely said to Jeremiah,³⁰ ‘I will send prophets and apostles to you Jews.’”
Jesus continued:

“You will kill some among them and will act unjustly to others. ⁵⁰ As a result, God will soon punish you Jews for all the prophets whom you and your ancestors killed since God created the world.

⁵¹ *After Cain murdered Abel,*³¹ *your ancestors murdered many other righteous men, until they murdered the priest Zachariah in the holy place between the altar and the temple. So, yes! I tell*

²⁵ OR body. (Use the plural or the singular as is natural in your language.)

²⁶ OR yourself. (Use the plural or the singular as is natural in your language.)

²⁷ OR God will bring trouble to you. OR God will make it very bad for you. OR God will bring sorrow/pain to you. See Luke 11:43-52. (Jesus repeats this phrase/idea seven times in his speech here. It is like a drumbeat for Jesus’ words. Translate this phrase/idea consistently, the same way each time. If you have a typical idiom in your language that warns others about consequences that will come for bad actions, consider using it here.)

²⁸ OR you do not act justly with others. OR you oppress others (who are not powerful). OR you steal and deceive other people.

²⁹ OR decomposed corpse.

³⁰ See Genesis 4:8; 2 Chronicles 24:20-22; Jer.7:25-26; Mat. 12:34. (The change in pronouns in Lk 11:49 indicates an end of the Jeremiah quotation. The parallel Mt 12:34, mentions crucifixion and synagogues that did not exist in Jeremiah’s time.)

³¹ See Gen 4; 2Chron. 24:20-21.

you that God will punish you Jews who are alive today for all the murders you have committed *and will soon commit.*

⁵² God will punish you law teachers, *because you have kept people from knowing God's truth. You teach laws and rules, not justice, mercy and faithfulness.*³² *You are like a man who lost the key to his house.*³³ Neither you nor anyone else can enter that house, even if they want to enter."

⁵³ After Jesus left the Pharisee's house, the law teachers and Pharisees became very angry and hostile/hateful³⁴ toward Jesus. ⁵⁴ They kept trying to ambush/trap him with many questions, waiting for him to say something wrong for which they could accuse him.

³² See Matthew 23:23.

³³ OR removed what is required to open the door to his house.

³⁴ OR oppositional. OR acting toward Jesus like an enemy.