

The Good News About Jesus as Luke Wrote It

Chapter 18:1-34

HoneyBee base version for oral translation

September 2023 Draft¹

Background

- God's law required that judges uphold the rights of poor widows.
- Jesus often warned about difficult times in the end times: Luke 17:22-37; 21:8-19, 34-36; 22:31-32, 40, 46
- Pharisees were considered the most pious people in regular Jewish society, while tax gatherers were considered the most despicable, often regarded as traitors.
- Jewish people considered it pious to thank God for one's own righteousness.
- Pious people fasted two full days a week, and gave away a tenth of all their food.
- Beating one's breast was a sign of great mourning or grief.
- It was shocking to hear that one could be forgiven without first making restitution.
- Jews often used hyperbole (exaggeration) as figurative language .
- Common Jewish expectations did not accommodate a suffering Messiah.
- "Son of David" was a title for the expected Messiah.

History

- Jericho may be the oldest, continuously settled city in the world.
- Jericho is about 25 km from Jerusalem.
- Jericho was a prosperous town with a good climate, and many wealthy priests resided there.
- Many of Jesus' disciples would lose their economic security, so would have to survive by sharing.

Themes

- God will grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night.
- God will exalt all who humble themselves before Him.
- People must receive the kingdom of God without claiming that they have earned it, just as children come to those who love them.
- Whatever people give up to serve Christ will be paid back with much more.
- God can do whatever human beings cannot do.

Parable about a persistent widow²

¹ Jesus told to his disciples a parable to teach them that they always ought to pray confidently and not be discouraged *if God does not immediately answer their prayers*. ² He said,

"In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear/believe in God, and he also did not care about people. ³ There was a widow in that city who kept coming to him, saying, 'Please decide

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.

² OR Jesus tells a parable about praying to God.

what is just in the dispute between me and the man who is opposing me in court!³ ⁴ For a long time the judge refused to help her. But later he thought to himself, 'I do not fear⁴ God and I do not care about people,⁵ but this widow keeps bothering me! So, I shall treat her justly. If I do not do so, then she will keep bothering me!'"

⁶ Then the Lord *Jesus* said,

"Even though the judge was not a righteous man, think carefully about what he said! ⁷ Similarly, God will certainly show that what you have done is right! He will do so for you whom he has chosen, if/when you pray earnestly to him night and day, asking him to help you. He always patiently listens to you.⁵ ⁸ But I tell you, God will soon show that what you did is right.⁶ But when I, the Divine Human Son, return from heaven, not everyone on earth will have faith in God/me."

Parable about two men who went to pray⁷

⁹ Jesus also told a parable to warn people who wrongly thought that they were righteous, while despising other people. ¹⁰ He said this:

"Two men went up to the temple *in Jerusalem* to pray. One was a Pharisee. The other was a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed silently, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men. Some extort/steal money from others; some treat others unjustly; some commit adultery. I do not do such things. And I am certainly not like this tax collector who is a traitor to our nation/people! ¹² I fast twice every week, and I give to you one tenth from all that I earn!'

¹³ But the tax collector stood far *from the other people in the temple courtyard because he felt very unworthy*. He would not even look up toward heaven. Instead, he beat on his chest *to show that he was sorry for his sin*. He said, 'God, I am a sinner! *Please be merciful to me and forgive me!*' "

¹⁴ Then Jesus said,

"I tell you^(p) that before the tax collector went home, God considered him to be righteous, but not the Pharisee. Remember this: God will humble all those who exalt themselves, and he will exalt those who humble themselves."

How to enter God's Kingdom⁸

¹⁵ One day, when many people were coming to Jesus, they were also bringing small children. They wanted Jesus to put his hands on the children and to bless them. When the disciples saw that, they sternly ordered people to stop bringing those children, *because they thought that children are not important enough*.

³ OR accusing me. OR exploiting me.

⁴ OR respect/honor.

⁵ OR *And unlike the bad judge*, God will always patiently listen to you. (God is patient with us in contrast with the judge's impatience with the widow.)

⁶ OR some day he will show that what you did is right, and when he does so, he will do it quickly.

⁷ OR Jesus tells a parable about humble repentance.

⁸ OR Jesus blesses children. OR Jesus teaches about what people must do to enter God's kingdom.

¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to come to him. He said to his disciples, “Let the children come to me! Do not stop them! It is people who are *humble and trusting* like children who can enter God’s Kingdom.”¹⁷ Listen to this truth: Only those who welcome God’s kingdom *as freely* as children do, will *be allowed to* enter God’s Kingdom.”

It is difficult for rich people to enter God’s Kingdom⁹

¹⁸ A Jewish leader asked Jesus, “Good teacher, what must I do in order to receive everlasting life?”

¹⁹ Jesus replied to him, “You say that I am good, and *I say that* only God is good! *So, you must recognize that you are not good.*”²⁰ You^(sg) know the commandments that God gave Moses:¹⁰ ‘Do not commit adultery, do not commit murder, do not steal, do not testify falsely about what you have seen or heard, honor your father and mother.’ “

²¹ The man said, “I have obeyed all those commandments ever since I was young. *So, is there something else that I must do?*”

²² When Jesus heard him say that, he replied to him, “There is one thing that you^(sg) have not done yet. You must sell all that you own and give *all your money* to poor people. This will cause you to have¹¹ treasure/riches in heaven. *After you have done so, come back and become my disciple!*”²³ When the man heard that, he became sad, because he was very rich *and he did not want to give everything away.*

²⁴ Then Jesus said *to everyone there*, “It is very difficult for those who are wealthy to enter into God’s Kingdom.”²⁵ It would be easier for a camel to pass through the small hole in a needle than for those who are wealthy to enter into God’s Kingdom.”

²⁶ Those who heard Jesus say this said, “If that is so, then God will not save anyone, *because we all have wealth and cannot live without it.*”²⁷ But Jesus said, “Although it is impossible for people *to live without wealth, yet God can save them,*¹² *because God can do anything that he chooses to do!*”¹³

²⁸ Then Peter said, “You know that we^(exc) *12 disciples* have left everything we had and have become your disciples. (*So, what will God do for us?*)”²⁹ He said to them, “You^(pl) who have left your homes, wives, brothers, parents, children, *or any other family members, to go announce* God’s Kingdom, keep this in mind: ³⁰ You will certainly receive, during the present time and in the future age, much more than you left and *also* everlasting life.”¹⁴

⁹ OR A rich person wants to follow Jesus, but he is not able.

¹⁰ Although the commandments are given as singular verbs. they are addressed to a nation, so you may translate them as plural verbs.

¹¹ OR As a result, *God will give* you.

¹² OR These things are impossible for people. But God can save them.

¹³ OR Nothing is too difficult for God to do. OR God can do anything.

¹⁴ OR during the present time, many times as much as you left. And in the future age, you will have everlasting life. OR many times as much as you left. Both during the present time and in the future age, you will have everlasting life. (The Greek grammar allows for several options.)

Jesus again foretells his death and resurrection¹⁵

³¹ Jesus took the twelve disciples to a place by themselves and said to them, “Listen carefully! We^(inc) shall soon go up to Jerusalem. While we are there, everything that the prophets have written about me, the Divine Human Son, will be fulfilled/will happen. ³² Jewish temple leaders will hand me over to Roman/gentile authorities. The Romans will ridicule me, will mistreat me, and will spit on me. ³³ They will whip me, and then they will kill me. But on the third day *after that*, I will become alive again.”

³⁴ But the disciples did not understand anything that Jesus said. Something prevented them from understanding what Jesus' words meant.¹⁶

Jesus arrives in Jericho where he heals a blind man¹⁷

³⁵ As Jesus *and his disciples* came near Jericho city, *they met* a blind man who was sitting beside the road. He was begging for money. ³⁶ When he heard a crowd passing by, he asked someone, “What is happening?” ³⁷ Someone told him, “Jesus, the man from Nazareth town, is passing by.” ³⁸ He shouted, “Jesus, *you are the Messiah* descended from King David!¹⁸ Please pity me!”¹⁹

³⁹ Those who were walking before the crowd scolded the man and told him to be quiet. But he shouted more loudly, “You are *the Messiah* descended from King David! Please pity me!”²⁰ ⁴⁰ Jesus stood still and told some people to bring the blind man to him. When the blind man came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ “What do you^(sg) want me to do for you?” He replied, “Lord, please enable me to see again!”

⁴² Jesus said to him, “See! Because you have trusted *in me*, *I have* healed you!” ⁴³ Immediately, the man was able to see! And he began following Jesus, praising God. And when everyone who saw him also began praising God.

¹⁵ OR Jesus again tells that he will be killed and then become alive again.

¹⁶ OR The meaning about Jesus' words was hidden from them.

¹⁷ OR Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus.

¹⁸ See 2Samuel 7:8-16. Literally, in the Greek language, the blind man called Jesus the “Son of David.” The term “son” can have different meanings: (1) biological son; (2) descendant; (3) a person who acts like another; (4) a greeting for a younger man; (5) an adopted son; (6) a student/learner of a teacher. Here, when the blind man calls Jesus, the “son of David”, he is proclaiming that he believes Jesus is the promised descendant from King David (that is, the Messiah) whom God said would establish an eternal kingdom.

¹⁹ OR Please show compassion to me!

²⁰ OR Please show compassion to me!