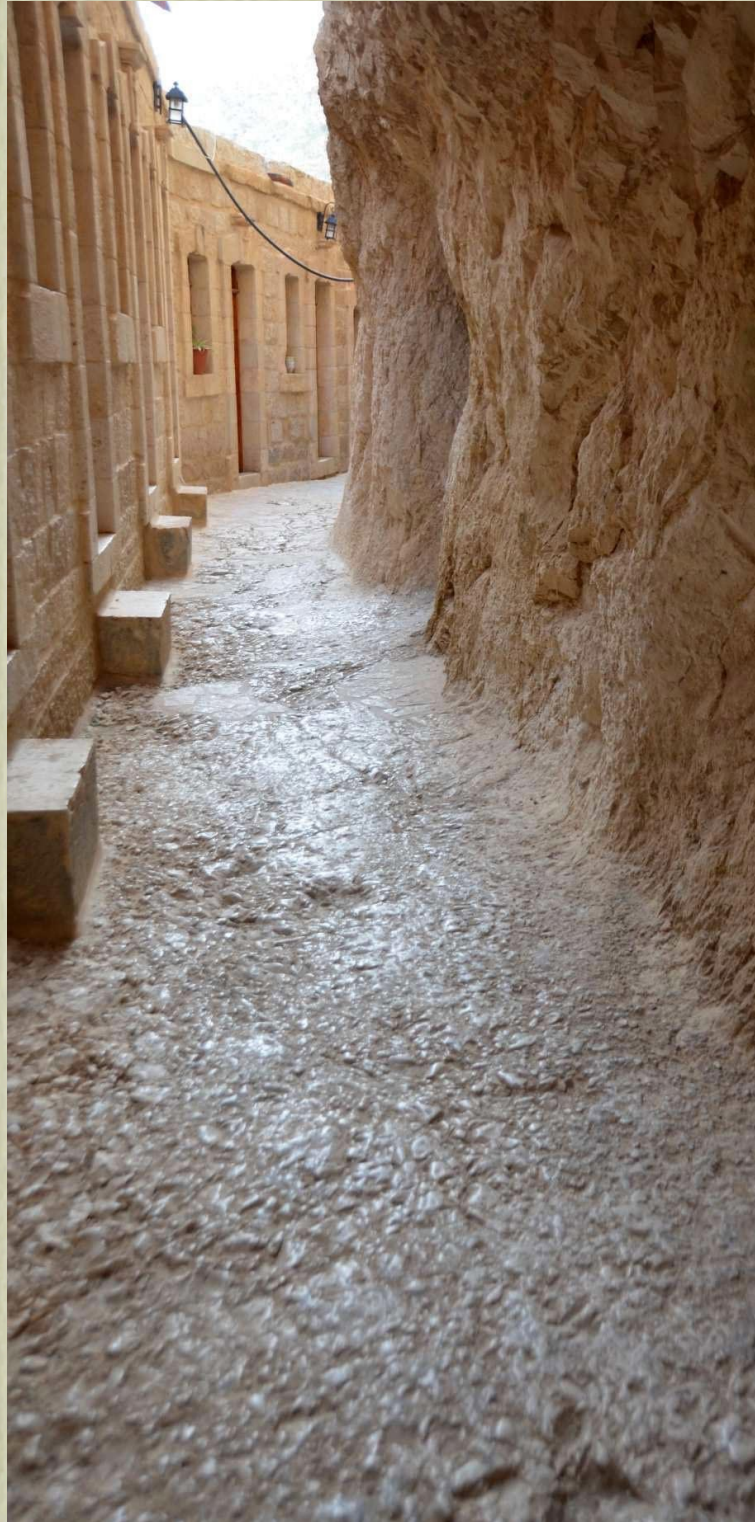


14. Luke 17:1 - 19:48



d: Sensitivity in the life of a disciple

Luke 17:1-3 (see Mark 9:42)

Jesus said to his disciples, “**Scandals** (causes of stumbling : σκάνδαλα) are bound to come, but woe to the person by whom they come! It would be better for them if a millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea than for them to cause one of these **little ones** to stumble. Be on your guard!

Jesus is concerned for his disciples, called ‘**little ones**’ in this passage. Being a disciple of Jesus makes a person as vulnerable as is Jesus himself. Opening one’s heart in love makes a person vulnerable to rejection, to abuse of trust, and so to hurt. Jesus wants to protect his disciples against those who would take advantage of their vulnerability to hurt and oppress them.

‘Let us resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance (σκάνδαλον) in the way of another’ (Romans 14:13).

Forgiveness in the life of a disciple

Luke 17:3-4 (compare Matthew 18:21-22)

Perhaps the worst scandal that can be given is the refusal to forgive. It is true that forgiveness is not effective till it is received and that its reception depends on recognition of fault and repentance (Luke 17:3). It is also true that an important means of coming to recognise one's fault is the correction offered by another. Correcting others, however, is necessarily a delicate task. It cannot properly be done except from love.

If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive.

And if the same person sins against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, 'I repent,' you must forgive."

e: Grace is a gift as is the faith that enables us to respond to it 17:5-19

Luke 17:5-6 (compare Mark 11:23 'mountain')

*The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our **faith**!"*

The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

The tiniest bit of faith is enough, so long as it is real faith — a reliance, not on self, but on God. For 'nothing is impossible for God' (Luke 1:37). When they find themselves following Jesus in his service of others, they still need to remember that they are not to take credit to themselves for this. All is grace.

Jesus taught us to pray that we would not fail in the time of trial (Luke 11:4). God's answer to our prayer is to draw us close to his Son. This is something we do by choosing to believe that the one we call 'God' is love, that we are held in existence by this love and that everything is graced. This 'choosing to believe' can be seen in the final poem of James McAuley, written in the last months of his struggle with cancer:

I know that faith is like a root
that's tough, inert and old,
yet it can send up its green shoot
and flower against the cold.

I know there is a grace that flows
when all the springs run dry;
it wells up to renew the rose
and lift the cedars high.

Luke 17:7-10

“Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from ploughing or tending sheep in the field, ‘Come here at once and take your place at the table’?

Would you not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink’?

Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, ‘We are only slaves, of no special worth; we have done only what we ought to have done!’”

Ten men suffering from “leprosy” : Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” When he saw them, he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were made clean.

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” Then he said to him, “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well (σωζω : ‘saved you’).”

9. The coming of God into our lives

a: God is present in Jesus 17:20-21

Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, “The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you (plural).”
(ἐντὸς)

‘Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away.

It is not in heaven, that you should say, “Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?”

Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say,

“Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?”

No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe’ (Deuteronomy 30:11-14).

b: God's judgment and our encounter now with Jesus the Son of Man

Collection of Jesus' apocalyptic maxims: Luke 17:22-37

Luke 17:22-23

Then he said to the disciples, "The days are coming 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!' or 'Look here!' Do not go, do not set off in pursuit. (see Mark 13:21)

Luke 17:24-25 (Matthew 24:27)

As the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.

*But first he must endure much suffering
and be rejected by this generation.*

Luke 17:26-27 (Matthew 24:37-39)

Just as it was in the days of Noah, Water
so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man.
They were eating and drinking, and marrying
and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark,
and the flood came and destroyed all of them.

Luke 17:28-30

Fire

Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot:
they were eating and drinking, buying and selling,
planting and building, but on the day that Lot left Sodom,
it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed all of them –
it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.

Luke 17:31-33 (compare Matthew 24:17-18)

On that day, anyone on the housetop who has belongings in the house must not come down to take them away;
and likewise anyone in the field must not turn back. (see Mark 13:15-16)
Remember Lot's wife.

Those who try to make their life secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it. (see Mark 8:35)

Luke 17:34-37 (Matthew 24:40-41)

I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding meal together; one will be taken and the other left.”

Then they asked him, “Where, Lord?” He said to them, “Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.” (Matthew 24:18)

10. How to welcome the coming of God into our lives

a: God hears the cry of the poor 18:1-8

Parable of the unjust judge and the persistent widow

Luke 18:1-5

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’ For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’”

Luke 18:6-8

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says.
And will not God grant justice to his **chosen ones who cry to him**
day and night? Will he delay long in helping them?
I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them.

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes,
will he find **faith** on earth?”

b: We must recognise our need

Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector: Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt:

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’

I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:12)

c. We must look to God in trusting humility

Luke 18:15-17

(Mark 10:13-16)

People were bringing infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it.

But Jesus called for them and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'



d: We must learn to rely on God and not on ourselves 18:18-27

Inheriting eternal life : Luke 18:18-19 (Mark 10:17-18)

A certain ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.”

This comes as a necessary reminder to us of the central reference point in Jesus’ life: his Father. He wants this man, as he addresses this request to Jesus and looks upon his face, to see there the ‘glory of God’ (2 Corinthians 4:6). Jesus wants to point the ruler to the Father. Jesus’ attention was not on himself but on his Father. His heart was directed to God. His will was conformed to God. His prayer was directed to God. God revealed himself to Jesus at the heart of every event and every person in Jesus’ life. Jesus wants his disciples to have the same experience. Note that the first three commandments are replaced by the call to follow Jesus – to God.

Luke 18:20-23 (Mark 10:19-22)

You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honour your father and mother.’”

He replied, “I have kept all these since my youth.”

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”

But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich.

Inheriting eternal life : Luke 18:24-27

(Mark 10:23-27)

Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel [κάμηλος ; hawser: κάμιλος] to go through the eye of a needle

than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?”

He replied, “What is impossible for humans is possible for God.”

e: To attain to God we must leave everything that is not God

Luke 18:28-30

(Mark 10:28-30)

Then Peter said, “Look, we have left our homes and followed you.” And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house *or wife* or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”

f: We must realise that he is giving his life, and be prepared to follow him

Luke 18:31-34 (Mark 10:32-34)

Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

For he will be handed over to the Gentiles;
and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon.
After they have flogged him, they will kill him,
and on the third day he will rise again.”

But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

II. God's offer of salvation through Jesus

a. Only through a miracle of grace can we see and follow Jesus

Luke 18:35-43

(Mark 10:32-34)

‘As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.’ Then he shouted, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’ Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, ‘Son of David, have mercy on me!’ Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ He said, ‘Lord, let me see again.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Receive your sight; **your faith has saved you.**’ Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people praised God.’

b: In Jesus, God reaches out to the lost 19:1-10

The rich tax collector : Luke 19:1-6

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see Jesus, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. Jesus looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.



Luke 19:7-10

All who saw it began to grumble and said,
“He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.”
Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord,
“Lord, half of my possessions I **give** to the poor;
and if I have defrauded anyone of anything,
I **pay back** four times as much.”

Then Jesus said to him,
“Today salvation has come to this house,
because he too is a son of Abraham.
For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.”

12. The responsibility inherent in discipleship 19:11-28

Luke 19:11-15 (compare Matthew 25:14ff)

As they were listening to this, he went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

{Archelaus 4BC to 6AD}

So he said, “A nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power for himself and then return. He summoned ten of his slaves, and gave them each a mina (100 drachmas. Drachma = 4.3 grams), and said to them, ‘Do business with these until I come back.’

But the citizens of his country hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to rule over us.’

When he returned, having received royal power, he ordered these slaves, to whom he had given the money, to be summoned so that he might find out what they had gained by trading.

Luke 19:16-21

The first came forward and said, 'Lord, your mina has made ten more minas.' He said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities.'

Then the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' He said to him, 'And you, rule over five cities.'

Then the other came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina. I wrapped it up in a piece of cloth, for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

Luke 19:22-28

He said to him, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! You knew, did you, that I was a harsh man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? Why then did you not put my money into the bank? Then when I returned, I could have collected it with interest.’

He said to the bystanders, ‘Take the mina from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

‘I tell you, to all those who have, more will be given; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

{Luke 8:18; Mark 4:25}

But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them – bring them here and slaughter them in my presence.”

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

The journey to Jerusalem, the journey in which a disciple learns what it means to follow Jesus, is drawing to a close. Luke concludes his study of discipleship with a parable which highlights the responsibility which disciples have not to neglect the grace that is given them.

To receive a gift is to accept a responsibility. We are made in the image of God. We are called to be creators, life-givers. Love that is not offered lies stagnant. It destroys. A tree is for bearing fruit. The more we love, the more capable of love we become. The less we love, the less capable of loving we become till life dries up within us. A life centred on self, not wanting to risk oneself, leads to a definitive egoism. We choose to exist in the outer darkness, separated from the community of love.

C. Jerusalem the goal of the journey Luke 19:29-40

Luke 19:29-34 (see Mark 11:1-6)

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, “Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it.’”

‘Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey’ (Zechariah 9:9).

So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.”

Luke 19:35-40 (see Mark 11:7-10)

Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying:

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! (Psalm 118:26)
Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, order your disciples to stop.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones (Luke 3:8) would shout out.”

VI: Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem 19:41 - 21:38

A. God's judgment of religion

1. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem 19:41-44

As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, 'If you, even you, had only recognised on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.'



Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side (compare Isaiah 29:3). They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognise the time of your visitation from God.'

Luke 19:45-46

(Mark 11:15-17)

Then Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; and he said, 'It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer but you have made it a den of robbers.'



‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. It is he that shall build the temple of the Lord’ (Zechariah 6:12-13).

Isaiah 56:1-5

Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed ... Do not let the foreigner joined to the Lord say, 'The Lord will surely separate me from his people'; and do not let the eunuch say, 'I am just a dry tree.' For thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

Isaiah 56:6-8

And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for **my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.** Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered'

Jeremiah 7:1-7

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.' For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

Jeremiah 7:8-11

Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are safe!’ – only to go on doing all these abominations? Has **this house**, which is called by my name, **become a den of robbers** in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the Lord.’

Luke 19:47-48

(Mark 11:18)

Every day he was teaching in the temple.
The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people
kept looking for a way to kill him;
but they did not find anything they could do,
for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.