

# CHAPTER 19

In this chapter we have,

- I. The conversion of Zaccheus the publican at Jericho (v. 1-10).
- II. The parable of the pounds which the king entrusted with his servants, and of his rebellious citizens (v. 11-27).
- III. Christ's riding in triumph (such triumph as it was) into Jerusalem; and his lamentation in prospect of the ruin of that city (v. 28-44).
- IV. His teaching in the temple, and casting the buyers and sellers out of it (v. 45-48).

## LUKE 19:1-10

### THE CONVERSION OF ZACCHEUS

Many, no doubt, were converted to the faith of Christ of whom no account is kept in the gospels; but the conversion of some, whose case had something in it extraordinary, is recorded, as this of Zaccheus. Christ passed through Jericho, v. 1. This city was build under a curse, yet Christ honoured it with his presence, for the gospel *takes away the curse*. Though it ought not to have been built, yet it was not therefore a sin to live in it when it was built. Christ was now going from the other side Jordan to Bethany near Jerusalem, to raise Lazarus to life; when he was going to do one good work he contrived to do many by the way. He did good both to the *souls* and to the *bodies* of people; we have here an instance of the former. Observe,

I. Who, and what, this Zaccheus was. His name bespeaks him a Jew. *Zaccai* was a common name among the Jews; they had a famous rabbi, much about this time, of that name. Observe,

1. His calling, and the post he was in: *He was the chief among the publicans*, receiver-general; other publicans were officers under him; he was, as some think, farmer of the customs. We often read of publicans coming to Christ; but here was one that was *chief* of the publicans, was in

authority, that enquired after him. God has his remnant among all sorts. Christ came to save even the *chief of publicans*.

2. His circumstances in the world were very considerable: *He was rich*. The inferior publicans were commonly men of broken fortunes, and low in the world; but he that was *chief of the publicans* had raised a good estate. Christ had lately shown how *hard* it is for *rich people to enter into the kingdom of God*, yet presently produces an instance on one rich man that had been lost, and was found, and that not as the prodigal by being reduced to want.

II. How he came in Christ's way, and what was the occasion of his acquaintance with him.

1. He had a great *curiosity to see Jesus*, what kind of a man he was, having heard great talk of him, v. 3. It is natural to us to come in sight, if we can, of those whose fame has filled our ears, as being apt to imagine there is something extraordinary in their countenances; at least, we shall be able to say hereafter that we have seen such and such *great men*. But the eye is *not satisfied with seeing*. We should now *seek to see Jesus* with an eye of faith, to see *who he is*; we should address ourselves in holy ordinances with this in our eye, *We would see Jesus*.

2. He could not get his curiosity gratified in this matter because he was *little*, and the crowd was *great*. Christ did not study to *show himself*, was not carried on men's shoulders (as the pope is in procession), that all men might see him; neither he nor his kingdom *came with observation*. He did not ride in an open chariot, as princes do, but, as *one of us*, he was *lost in a crowd*; for that was the day of his humiliation. *Zaccheus was low of stature*, and over-topped by all about him, so that he could not get a sight of Jesus. Many that are little of stature have large souls, and are lively in spirit. Who would not rather be a Zaccheus than a Saul, though he was *higher by head and shoulders* than all about him? Let not those that are little of stature *take thought of adding cubits* to it.

3. Because he would not disappoint his curiosity he *forgot his gravity*, as chief of the publicans, and *ran before*, like a boy, and *climbed up into a sycamore-tree, to see him*. Note, Those that sincerely desire a sight of Christ will use the proper means for gaining a sight of him, and will break through a deal of difficulty and opposition, and be willing to take pains to see him. Those that find themselves *little* must take all the advantages they

can get to *raise themselves* to a sight of Christ, and not be ashamed to own that they need them, and all little enough. Let not dwarfs despair, with good help, by aiming high to reach high.

**III.** The notice Christ took of him, the call he gave him to a further acquaintance (v. 5), and the efficacy of that call, v. 6.

**1.** Christ *invited himself* to Zaccheus's house, not doubting of his hearty welcome there; nay, wherever Christ comes, as he brings his own *entertainment* along with him, so he brings his own *welcome*; he opens the heart, and inclines it to receive him. Christ *looked up* into the tree, and *saw* Zaccheus. He came to look upon Christ, and resolved to take particular notice of him, but little thought of being taken notice of by Christ. That was an honour too great, and too far above his merit, for him to have any thought of. See how Christ *prevented* him with the blessings of his goodness, and *outdid* his expectations; and see how he *encouraged* very weak beginnings, and helped them forward. He that had a mind to know Christ shall be *known of him*; he that only courted to see him shall be admitted to converse with him. Note, Those that are faithful in a little shall be entrusted with more. And sometimes those that come to hear the word of Christ, as Zaccheus did, only for curiosity, beyond what they thought of, have their consciences awakened, and their hearts changed. Christ called him *by name*, *Zaccheus*, for he knows his chosen *by name*; *are they not in his book*? He might ask, as Nathanael did (~~418~~ John 1:48), *Whence knowest thou me*? But before he climbed the sycamore-tree Christ saw him, and knew him. He bade him *make haste, and come down*. Those that Christ calls must *come down*, must humble themselves, and not think to climb to heaven by any righteousness of their own; and they must *make haste* and come down, for delays are dangerous. Zaccheus must not hesitate, but hasten; he knows it is not a matter that needs consideration whether he should welcome such a guest to his house. He must *come down*, for Christ intends this day to *bait at his house*, and stay an hour or two with him. *Behold, he stands at the door and knocks*.

**2.** Zaccheus was *overjoyed* to have such an honour put upon his house (v. 6): *He made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully*; and his receiving him *into his house* was an indication and token of his receiving him *into his heart*. Note, When Christ *calls* to us we must *make haste* to answer his calls; and when he *comes to us* we must *receive him joyfully*. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates*. We may well *receive him joyfully* who

brings all good along with him, and, when he takes possession of the soul, opens springs of joy there which shall flow to eternity. How often has Christ said to us, *Open to me*, when we have, with the spouse, made excuses! <sup>218B</sup>Song of Solomon 5:2, 3. Zaccheus's forwardness to receive Christ will shame us. We have not now Christ to entertain in our houses, but we have his disciples, and what is done to them he takes as done to himself.

**IV.** The offence which the people took at this *kind greeting* between Christ and Zaccheus. Those narrow-souled censorious Jews *murmured*, saying that he was *gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner*, *para hamartolo andri* — *with a sinful man*; and were not they themselves sinful men? Was it not Christ's errand into the world to seek and save *men* that are *sinners*? But Zaccheus they think to be a sinner above all men that dwelt in Jericho, such a sinner as was not fit to be conversed with. Now this was very unjust to blame Christ for going *to his house*; for,

**1.** Though he was a *publican*, and many of the publicans were *bad men*, it did not therefore follow that they were *all so*. We must take heed of condemning men in the lump, or by common fame, for at God's bar every man will be judged as he is.

**2.** Though he *had been a sinner*, it did not therefore follow that he was now as bad as he had been; though they knew his past life to be bad, Christ might know his present frame to be good. God allows room for repentance, and so must we.

**3.** Though he was *now a sinner*, they ought not to blame Christ for going to him, because he was in *no danger* of getting hurt by a sinner, but in *great hopes* of doing good to a sinner; whither should the physician go but to the sick? Yet see how that which is *well done* may be *ill construed*.

**V.** The proofs which Zaccheus gave publicly that, though he had been a *sinner*, he was now a *penitent*, and a true *convert*, v. 8. He does not expect to be justified by his works as the Pharisee who boasted of what he had done, but by his *good works* he will, through the grace of God, evidence the *sincerity* of his *faith* and *repentance*; and here he declares what his determination was. He made this declaration *standing*, that he might be seen and heard by those who murmured at Christ for coming to his house; *with the mouth confession is made* of repentance as well as faith. He *stood*, which denotes his saying it deliberately and with solemnity, in the nature

of a vow to God. He addressed himself to Christ in it, not to the people (they were not to be his judges), but to the Lord, and he *stood* as it were at his bar. What we do that is good we must do *as unto him*; we must appeal to him, and approve ourselves to him, in our integrity, in all our good purposes and resolutions. He makes it appear that there is a change *in his heart* (and that is repentance), for there is a change in his way. His resolutions are of second-table duties; for Christ, upon all occasions, laid great stress on them: and they are such as are suited to his condition and character; for in them will best appear the truth of our repentance.

**1.** Zaccheus had a good estate, and, whereas he had been in it hitherto laying up treasure for himself, and doing hurt to himself, now he resolves that for the future he will be all towards God, and do good to others with it: *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.* Not, “I will give it by my will when I die,” but, “I *do* give it now.” Probably he had heard of the command of trial which Christ gave to another rich man to sell what he had, and give to the poor (<sup>402</sup>Matthew 19:21), and how he broke with Christ upon it. “But so will not I,” saith Zaccheus; “I agree to it at the first word; though hitherto I have been uncharitable to the poor, now I will relieve them, and give so much the more for having neglected the duty so long, even the *half of my goods.*” This is a very large proportion to be set apart for works of piety and charity. The Jews used to say that a fifth part of a man's income yearly was very fair to be given to pious uses, and about that share the law directed; but Zaccheus would go much further, and give one moiety to the poor, which would oblige him to retrench all his extravagant expenses, as his retrenching these would enable him to relieve many with his superfluities. If we were but more temperate and self-denying, we should be more charitable; and, were we content with less ourselves, we should have the more to give to them that need. This he mentions here as a fruit of his repentance. Note, It well becomes converts to God to be charitable to the poor.

**2.** Zaccheus was conscious to himself that he had not gotten all he had honestly and fairly, but some by indirect and unlawful means, and of what he had gotten by such means he promises to make restitution: “If *I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation*, or if I have wronged any man in the way of my business as a *publican*, exacting more than was appointed, I promise to restore him *four-fold.*” This was the restitution that a thief was to make, (<sup>421</sup>Exodus 22:1.

(1.) He seems plainly to own that he had *done wrong*; his office, as a publican, gave him opportunity to do wrong, imposing upon the merchants to curry favour with the government. True penitents will own themselves not only in general guilty before God, but will particularly reflect upon that which has been their own iniquity, and which, by reason of their business and employment in the world, has most easily beset them.

(2.) That he had done wrong *by false accusation*; this was the temptation of the publicans, which John Baptist had warned them of particularly, ~~and~~ Luke 3:14. They had the ear of the government, and every thing would be stretched in favour of the revenue, which gave them an opportunity of gratifying their revenge if they bore a man an ill will.

(3.) He promises to restore *four-fold*, as far as he could recollect or find by his books that he had *wronged any man*. He does not say, “If I be sued, and compelled to it, I will make restitution” (some are *honest* when they cannot help it); but he will do it *voluntarily*: It shall be *my own act and deed*. Note, Those who are convinced of having done wrong cannot evidence the sincerity of their repentance but by *making restitution*. Observe, He does not think that his giving half his estate to the poor will atone for the wrong he has done. God *hates robbery for burnt-offerings*, and we must first *do justly* and then *love mercy*. It is no charity, but hypocrisy, to give that which is *none of our own*; and we are not to reckon that our own which we have not come honestly by, nor that our own which is not so when all our debts are paid, and restitution made for wrong done.

**VI.** Christ's *approbation* and *acceptance* of Zaccheus's conversion, by which also he cleared himself from any imputation in going to be a guest with him, v. 9, 10.

1. Zaccheus is declared to be now a *happy man*. Now he is turned from sin to God; now he has bidden Christ welcome to his house, and is become an honest, charitable, good man: *This day is salvation come to this house*. Now that he is *converted* he is in effect *saved*, saved from his sins, from the guilt of them, from the power of them; all the benefits of salvation are his. Christ is come *to his house*, and, where Christ comes, he brings salvation along with him. He is, and will be, the *Author of eternal salvation* to all that own him as Zaccheus did. Yet this is not all. Salvation *this day comes to his house*.

(1.) When Zaccheus becomes a convert, he will be, more than he had been, a *blessing to his house*. He will bring the means of grace and salvation to his house, for he is a *son of Abraham* indeed now, and therefore, like Abraham, will teach his household to *keep the way of the Lord*. *He that is greedy of gain troubles his own house*, and brings a curse upon it (<sup><BIB></sup>Habakkuk 2:9), but he that is charitable to the poor does a kindness to his own house, and brings a blessing upon it and salvation to it, temporal at least, <sup><BIB></sup>Psalms 112:3.

(2.) When Zaccheus is brought to Christ himself his *family* also become related to Christ, and his children are admitted members of his church, and so *salvation comes to his house*, for that he is a *son of Abraham*, and therefore interested in God's covenant with Abraham, that *blessing of Abraham* which comes upon the publicans, *upon the Gentiles*, through faith, that God will be a God *to them and to their children*; and therefore, when he believes, *salvation comes* to his house, as the gaoler's to whom it was said, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, *and thou shalt be saved, and thy house*, <sup><BIB></sup>Acts 16:31. Zaccheus is by birth a son of Abraham, but, being a publican, he was deemed a heathen; they are put upon a level, <sup><BIB></sup>Matthew 18:17. And as such the Jews were shy of conversing with him, and expected Christ should be so; but he shows that, being a true penitent, he is become *rectus in curia* — *upright in court*, as good a son of Abraham as if he had never been an publican, which therefore ought not to be mentioned against him.

2. What Christ had done to make him, in particular, a happy man, was consonant to the great design and intention of his coming into the world, v. 10. With the same argument he had before justified his conversing with publicans, <sup><BIB></sup>Matthew 9:13. There he pleaded that he came to *call sinners to repentance*; now that he came to *seek and save that which was lost*, *to apololos* — *the lost thing*. Observe,

(1.) The *deplorable case* of the *sons of men*: they were *lost*; and here the whole race of mankind is spoken of as *one body*. Note, The whole world of mankind, by the fall, is become a *lost world*: lost as a city is lost when it has revolted to the rebels, as a traveller is lost when he has missed his way in a wilderness, as a sick man is lost when his disease is incurable, or as a prisoner is lost when sentence is passed upon him.

(2.) The *gracious design* of the *Son of God*: he came to *seek and save*, to seek in order to saving. He came from heaven to earth (a long journey), to

seek that which was *lost* (which had *wandered and gone astray*), and to bring it back (<sup><481></sup>Matthew 18:11, 12), and to *save* that which was lost, which was perishing, and in a manner destroyed and cut off. Christ undertook the cause when it was given up for *lost*: undertook to bring those to themselves that were *lost* to God and all goodness. Observe, Christ *came* into this lost world to seek and save it. His design was to *save*, when *there was not salvation in any other*. In prosecution of that design, he *sought*, took all probable means to effect that salvation. He seeks those that were not worth seeking to; he seeks those that sought him not, and asked not for him, as Zaccheus here.

## <491> LUKE 19:11-27

### THE NOBLEMAN AND HIS SERVANTS

Our Lord Jesus is now upon his way to Jerusalem, to his last passover, when he was to suffer and die; now here we are told,

**I.** How the expectations of his friends were *raised* upon this occasion: *They thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear*, v. 11. The Pharisees expected it about this time (<sup><477></sup>Luke 17:20), and, it seems, so did Christ's own disciples; but they both had a mistaken notion of it. The Pharisees thought that it must be introduced by some other temporal prince or potentate. The disciples thought that their Master would introduce it, but with temporal pomp and power, which, with the power he had to work miracles, they knew he could clothe himself with in a short time, whenever he pleased. Jerusalem, they concluded, must be the seat of his kingdom, and therefore, now that he is going directly thither, they doubt not but in a little time to see him upon the throne there. Note, Even good men are subject to mistakes concerning the kingdom of Christ, and to form wrong notions of it, and are ready to think that will *immediately* appear which is reserved for hereafter.

**II.** How their expectations were *checked*, and the mistakes *rectified* upon which they were founded; and this he does in three things: —

**1.** They expected that he should appear in his glory now *presently*, but he tells them that he must not be publicly installed in his kingdom for a great while yet. He is like *a certain nobleman anthropos tis eugenes* — *a*



*certain man of high birth* (so Dr. Hammond), for he is the Lord from heaven, and is entitled by birth to the kingdom; but he *goes into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom*. Christ must go to heaven, to sit down at the right hand of the Father there, and to receive from him *honour and glory*, before the Spirit was poured out by which his kingdom was to be set up on earth, and before a church was to be set up for him in the Gentile world. He must receive the kingdom, and then *return*. Christ returned when the Spirit was poured out, when Jerusalem was destroyed, by which time that generation, both of friends and enemies, which he had personally conversed with, was wholly worn off by death, and gone to give up their account. But his chief return here meant is that at the great day, of which we are yet in expectation. That which they thought would *immediately appear*, Christ tells them will not appear till this same Jesus who is taken into heaven shall *in like manner come again*; see [Acts 1:11](#).

**2.** They expected that his apostles and immediate attendants should be advanced to dignity and honour, that they should all be made princes and peers, privy-counsellors and judges, and have all the pomp and preferments of the court and of the town. But Christ here tells them that, instead of this, he designed them to be *men of business*; they must expect no other preferment in this world than that of the trading end of the town; he would set them up with a stock under their hands, that they might employ it themselves, in serving him and the interest of his kingdom among men. That is the true honour of a Christian and a minister which, if we be as we ought to be truly ambitious of it, will enable us to look upon all temporal honours with a holy contempt. The apostles had dreamed of *sitting on his right hand and on his left in his kingdom*, enjoying ease after their present toil and honour after the present contempt put upon them, and were pleasing themselves with this dream; but Christ tells them that which, if they understood it aright, would fill them with care, and concern, and serious thoughts, instead of those *aspiring* ones with which they filled their heads.

**(1.)** They have a *great work* to do now. Their Master leaves them, to receive his kingdom, and, at parting, he gives each of them a *pound*, which the margin of our common bibles tells us amounts in our money to *three pounds and half a crown*; this signifies the same thing with the talents in the parable that is parallel to this (Matthew 25), all the gifts with which Christ's apostles were endued, and the advantages and capacities which

they had of serving the interests of Christ in the world, and others, both ministers and Christians, like them in a lower degree. But perhaps it is in the parable thus represented to make them the more humble; their honour in this world is only that of *traders*, and that not of first-rate merchants, who have vast stocks to begin upon, but that of poor traders, who must take a great deal of care and pains to make any thing of what they have. He gave these pounds to his servants, not to buy rich liveries, much less robes, and a splendid equipage, for themselves to appear in, as they expected, but with this charge: *Occupy till I come*. Or, as it might much better be translated, *Trade till I come*, *Pragmateusasthe* — *Be busy*. So the word properly signifies. “You are sent forth to preach the gospel, to set up a church for Christ in the world, to bring the nations to the obedience of faith, and to build them up in it. *You shall receive power to do this*, for you shall be filled with the *Holy Ghost*,” ~~Acts~~ Acts 1:8. When Christ *breathed on* the eleven disciples, saying, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, then he delivered them *ten pounds*. “Now,” saith he, “mind your business, and make a business of it; set about it in good earnest, and stick to it. Lay out yourselves to do all the good you can to the souls of men, and to gather them in to Christ.” Note,

[1.] All Christians have *business* to do for Christ in this world, and ministers especially; the former were not *baptized*, nor the latter *ordained*, to be *idle*.

[2.] Those that are called to business for Christ he furnishes with gifts necessary for their business; and, on the other hand, from those to whom he gives power he expects service. He delivers the *pounds* with this charge, Go work, go trade. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*, ~~1 Cor~~ 1 Corinthians 12:7. And *as every one has received the gift*, so let him *minister the same*, ~~1 Pet~~ 1 Peter 4:10.

[3.] We must continue to mind our business *till our Master comes*, whatever difficulties or oppositions we may meet with in it; those only that *endure to the end* shall be saved.

(2.) They have a *great account* to make shortly. These servants are *called to him*, to show what use they made of the gifts they were dignified with, what service they had done for Christ, and what good to the souls of men, *that he might know what every man had gained by trading*. Note,

[1.] They that trade diligently and faithfully in the service of Christ shall be *gainers*. We cannot say so of the business of the world; many a labouring tradesman has been a loser; but those that trade for Christ shall be *gainers*; though *Israel be not gathered*, yet they *will be glorious*.

[2.] The conversion of souls is the *winning* of them; every true convert is clear gain to Jesus Christ. Ministers are but factors for him, and to him they must give account what fish they have enclosed in the gospel-net, what guests they have prevailed with to come to the wedding-supper; that is, what they have *gained by trading*. Now observe,

*First*, The *good account* which was given by *some* of the servants, and the master's approbation of them. Two such are instanced, v. 16, 19.

1. They had both made considerable improvements, but not both *alike*; one had gained *ten pounds* by his trading, and another *five*. Those that are diligent and faithful in serving Christ are commonly blessed in being made blessings to the places where they live. They shall *see the travail of their soul*, and not *labour in vain*. And yet all that are alike *faithful* are not alike *successful*. And perhaps, though they were both faithful, it is intimated that one of them took more pains, and applied himself more closely to his business, than the other, and sped accordingly. Blessed Paul was surely this servant that gained *ten pounds*, double to what any of the rest did, for he *laboured more abundantly than they all*, and *fully preached the gospel of Christ*.

2. They both acknowledged their obligations to their Master for entrusting them with these abilities and opportunities to do him service: Lord, it is not *my* industry, but *thy* pound, that has gained *ten pounds*. Note, God must have all the glory of all our gains; *not unto us*, but unto him, must be *the praise*, <sup><481></sup>Psalm 115:1. Paul, who gained the *ten pounds*, acknowledges, "*I laboured, yet not I. By the grace of God, I am what I am, and do what I do; and his grace was not in vain*," <sup><450></sup>1 Corinthians 15:10. He will not speak of what he had done, but of what God *had done by him*, <sup><4518></sup>Romans 15:18.

3. They were both commended for their fidelity and industry: *Well done, thou good servant*, v. 17. And to the other he *said likewise*, v. 19. Note, They who do that which is good shall have *praise of the same*. *Do well*, and Christ will say to thee, *Well done*: and, if he says

*Well done*, the matter is not great who says otherwise. See <sup><0007></sup>Genesis 4:7.

4. They were *preferred* in proportion to the improvement they had made: “*Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, and didst not say, ‘As good sit still as go to trade with one pound, what can one do with so small a stock?’ but didst humbly and honestly apply thyself to the improvement of that, have thou authority over ten cities.*” Note, Those are in a fair way to rise who are content to begin low. *He that has used the office of a deacon well purchaseth to himself a good degree,* <sup><54B3></sup>1 Timothy 3:13. Two things are hereby promised the apostles: —

(1.) That when they have taken pains to *plant* many churches they shall have the satisfaction and honour of presiding in them, and governing among them; they shall have great respect paid them, and have a great interest in the love and esteem of good Christians. *He that keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof;* and he that *laboureth in the word and doctrine* shall be *counted worthy of double honour.*

(2.) That, when they have served their generation, according to the will of Christ, though they pass through this world despised and trampled upon, and perhaps pass out of it under disgrace and persecution as the apostles did, yet in the other world they shall reign as kings with Christ, shall sit with him on his throne, shall have *power over the nations,* <sup><6125></sup>Revelation 2:26. The happiness of heaven will be a much greater advancement to a good minister or Christian than it would be to a poor tradesman, that with much ado had cleared ten pounds, to be made governor of ten cities. He that had gained but *five pounds* had dominion over *five cities*. This intimates that there are *degrees of glory* in heaven; every vessel will be alike *full*, but not alike *large*. And the degrees of glory there will be according to the degrees of usefulness here.

*Secondly*, The *bad account* that was given by *one* of them, and the sentence passed upon him for his slothfulness and unfaithfulness, v. 20, etc.

1. He owned that he had not *traded* with the pound with which he had been entrusted (v. 20): “*Lord, behold, here is thy pound;* it is true, I have not made it *more*, but withal I have not made it *less*; I have kept

it safely *laid up in a napkin*.” This represents the carelessness of those who have gifts, but never lay out themselves to do good with them. It is all one to them whether the interests of Christ's kingdom sink or swim, go backward or forward; for their parts, they will take no care about it, no pains, be at no expenses, run no hazard. Those are the servants that lay up their pound *in a napkin* who think it enough to say that they have done no hurt in the world, but *did no good*.

**2.** He justified himself in his omission, with a plea that made the matter worse and not better (v. 21): *I feared thee, because thou art an austere man, rigid and severe, anthropros austeros ei*. *Austere* is the Greed word itself: a *sharp* man: *Thou takest up that which thou laidst not down*. He thought that his master put a hardship upon his servants when he required and expected the improvement of their pounds, and that it was *reaping where he did not sow*; whereas really it was reaping where he *had sown*, and, as the husbandman, expecting in proportion to what he had sown. He had no reason to *fear* his master's austerity, nor blame his expectations, but this was a mere sham, a frivolous groundless excuse for his idleness, which there was no manner of colour for. Note, The pleas of slothful professors, when they come to be examined, will be found more to their *shame* than in their *justification*.

**3.** His excuse is turned upon him: *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant*, v. 22. He will be *condemned* by his crime, but *self-condemned* by his plea. “If thou didst look upon it as hard that I should expect the profit of thy trading, which would have been the greater profit, yet, if thou hadst had any regard to my interest, thou mightest have put my money *into the bank*, into some of the funds, that I might have had, not only *my own*, but my own *with usury*, which, though a *less* advantage, would have been *some*.” If he durst not *trade* for fear of *losing* the principal, and so being made accountable to his lord for it though it was lost, which he pretends, yet that would be no excuse for his not setting it out to interest, where it would be sure. Note, Whatever may be the pretences of slothful professors, in excuse of their slothfulness, the true reason of it is a reigning indifference to the interests of Christ and his kingdom, and their coldness therein. They care not whether religion gets around or loses ground, so they can but live at ease.

**4.** His pound is taken from him, v. 24. It is fit that those should *lose* their gifts who will not *use* them, and that those who have dealt falsely should be no longer trusted. Those who will not serve their Master with what he bestows upon them, why should they be suffered to serve themselves with it? *Take from him the pound.*

**5.** It is given to him that had the *ten pounds*. When this was objected against by the standers-by, because he had so much already (*Lord, he has ten pounds*, v. 25), it is answered (v. 26), *Unto every one that hath shall be given*. It is the rule of justice,

**(1.)** That those should be most encouraged who have been most industrious, and that those who have laid out themselves most to do good should have their opportunities of doing good *enlarged*, and be put into a higher and more extensive sphere of usefulness. To him that hath gotten shall more be given, that he may be in a capacity to get more.

**(2.)** That those who have their gifts, as if they had them not, who have them to no purpose, who do no good with them, should be deprived of them. To those who endeavour to increase the grace they have, God will impart more; those who neglect it, and suffer it to decline, can expect no other than that God should do so too. This needful warning Christ gives to his disciples, lest, while they were gaping for honours on earth, they should neglect their business, and so come short of their happiness in heaven.

**3.** Another thing they expected was, that, when the kingdom of God should appear, the body of the Jewish nation would immediately fall in with it, and submit to it, and all their aversions to Christ and his gospel would immediately vanish; but Christ tells them that, after his departure, the generality of them would persist in their obstinacy and rebellion, and it would be their ruin. This is shown here,

**(1.)** In the message which his citizens sent after him, v. 14. They not only opposed him, while he was in obscurity; but, when he was gone into glory, to be invested in his kingdom, then they continued their enmity to him, protested against his dominion, and said, *We will not have this man to reign over us.*

[1.] This was fulfilled in the prevailing infidelity of the Jews after the ascension of Christ, and the setting up of the gospel kingdom. They would not submit their necks to his yoke, nor touch the top of his golden sceptre. They said, *Let us break his bands in sunder*, <sup><391></sup>Psalm 2:1-3; <sup><402></sup>Acts 4:26.

[2.] It speaks the language of all unbelievers; they could be content that Christ should *save them*, but they will not have him to *reign over them*; whereas Christ is a Saviour to those only to whom he is a prince, and who are willing to obey him.

(2.) In the sentence passed upon them at his return: *Those mine enemies bring hither*, v. 27. When his faithful subjects are preferred and rewarded, then he will take vengeance on his enemies, and particularly on the Jewish nation, the doom of which is here read. When Christ had set up his gospel kingdom, and thereby put reputation upon the gospel ministry, then he comes to *reckon with* the Jews; then it is remembered against them that they had particularly disclaimed and protested against his kingly office, when they said, *We have no king but Caesar*, nor would own him for their king. They appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar they shall go; Caesar shall be their ruin. Then the *kingdom of God appeared* when vengeance was taken on those irreconcilable enemies to Christ and his government; they were *brought forth and slain before him*. Never was so much slaughter made in any war as in the wars of the Jews. That nation lived to see Christianity victorious in the Gentile world, in spite of their enmity and opposition to it, and then it was *taken away as dross*. The wrath of Christ came upon them to the uttermost (<sup><502></sup>1 Thessalonians 2:15, 16), and their destruction redounded very much to the honour of Christ and the peace of the church. But this is applicable to all others who *persist* in their infidelity, and will undoubtedly perish in it. Note,

[1.] Utter ruin will certainly be the portion of all Christ's enemies; in the day of vengeance they shall all be brought *forth*, and *slain before him*. *Bring them hither*, to be made a spectacle to saints and angels; see <sup><602></sup>Joshua 10:22, 24. *Bring them hither*, that they may see the glory and happiness of Christ and his followers, whom they hated and persecuted. *Bring them hither*, to have their frivolous pleas overruled, and to receive sentence according to their merits. Bring them, and *slay them before me*, as Agag before Samuel. The Saviour whom they have slighted will stand by and see them slain, and not interpose on their behalf.

[2.] Those that *will not have Christ to reign over them* shall be reputed and dealt with as his enemies. We are ready to think that none are Christ's enemies but persecutors of Christianity, or scoffers at least; but you see that those will be accounted so that dislike the terms of salvation, will not submit to Christ's yoke, but will be their own masters. Note, Whoever will not be *ruled* by the grace of Christ will inevitably be ruined by the wrath of Christ.

## LUKE 19:28-40

### CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

We have here the same account of Christ's riding in some sort of triumph (such as it was) into Jerusalem which we had before in Matthew and Mark; let us therefore here only observe,

**I.** Jesus Christ was forward and willing to suffer and die for us. He went forward, *bound in the spirit, to Jerusalem*, knowing very well the *things* that should *befal him there*, and yet *he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem*, v. 28. He was the foremost of the company, as if he longed to be upon the spot, longed to engage, to take the field, and to enter upon action. Was he so forward to suffer and die for us, and shall we draw back from any service we are capable of doing for him?

**II.** It was no ways inconsistent either with Christ's humility or with his present state of humiliation to make a *public entry* into Jerusalem a little before he died. Thus he made himself to be the more taken notice of, that the ignominy of his death might appear the greater.

**III.** Christ is entitled to a dominion over all the creatures, and may use them when and as he pleases. No man has a property in his estate against Christ, but that *his* title is prior and superior. Christ sent to fetch an *ass* and her *colt* from their *owner's* and *master's crib*, when he had occasion for their service, and might do so, for all the *beasts of the forest are his*, and the tame beasts too.

**IV.** Christ has all men's hearts both under his eye and in his hand. He could influence those to whom the ass and the colt belonged to consent to



their taking them away, as soon as they were told that the Lord had occasion for them.

**V.** Those that go on Christ's errands are sure to speed (v. 32): *They that were sent found* what he told them they should find, and the owners willing to part with them. It is a comfort to Christ's messengers that they shall bring what they are sent for, if indeed the Lord has occasion for it.

**VI.** The disciples of Christ, who fetch that for him from others which he has occasion for, and which they have not, should not think that enough, but, whatever they have themselves wherewith he may be served and honoured, they should be ready to serve him with it. Many can be willing to attend Christ at other people's expense who care not to be at any charge upon him themselves; but those disciples not only fetched the ass's colt for him, but *cast their own garments upon the colt*, and were willing that they should be used for his trappings.

**VII.** Christ's triumphs are the matter of his disciples' praises. When Christ came nigh to Jerusalem, God put it of a sudden into the hearts of the *whole multitude of the disciples*, not of the twelve only, but abundance more, that were disciples at large, *to rejoice and praise God* (v. 37), and the *spreading of their clothes in the way* (v. 36) was a common expression of joy, as at the feast of tabernacles. Observe,

**1.** What was the matter or occasion of their joy and praise. They praised God *for all the mighty works they had seen*, all the miracles Christ had wrought, especially the *raising of Lazarus*, which is particularly mentioned, <sup>4827</sup>John 12:17, 18. That brought others to mind, for fresh miracles and mercies should revive the remembrance of the former.

**2.** How they expressed their joy and praise (v. 38): *Blessed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord*. Christ is *the king*; he *comes in the name of the Lord*, clothed with a divine authority, commissioned from heaven to *give law and treat of peace*. *Blessed be he*. Let us *praise him*, let God *prosper him*. He is *blessed* for ever, and we will speak well of him. *Peace in heaven*. Let the God of heaven send peace and success to his undertaking, and then there will be *glory in the highest*. It will redound to the glory of the most high God; and the angels, the glorious inhabitants of the upper world, will give him the glory of it. Compare this song of the saints on earth with that of the angels, <sup>4814</sup>Luke 2:14. They both agree to give glory to God in the highest. There the praises of both centre; the

angels say, *On earth peace*, rejoicing in the benefit which men on earth have by Christ; the saints say, *Peace in heaven*, rejoicing in the benefit which the angels have by Christ. Such is the communion we have with the holy angels that, as *they* rejoice in the *peace on earth*, so *we* rejoice in the *peace in heaven*, the *peace* God makes in his high places (~~KJV~~ Job 25:2), and both in Christ, who hath reconciled all things to himself, whether *things on earth or things in heaven*.

**VIII.** Christ's triumph's, and his disciples' joyful praises of them, are the vexation of proud Pharisees, that are enemies to him and his kingdom. There were some Pharisees among *the multitude* who were so far from joining with them that they were enraged at them, and, Christ being a famous example of humility, they thought that he would not admit such acclamations as these, and therefore expected that he should *rebuke his disciples*, v. 39. But it is the honour of Christ that, as he despises the contempt of the proud, so he accepts the praises of the humble.

**IX.** Whether men praise Christ or no he will, and shall, and must be praised (v. 40): *If these should hold their peace*, and not speak the praises of the Messiah's kingdom, *the stones would immediately cry out*, rather than that Christ should not be praised. This was, in effect, literally fulfilled, when, upon men's reviling Christ upon the cross, instead of praising him, and his own disciples' sinking into a profound silence, the *earth did quake and the rocks rent*. Pharisees would silence the praises of Christ, but they cannot gain their point; for as God can *out of stones raise up children unto Abraham*, so he can out of the mouths of those children perfect praise.

## ~~Q94~~ LUKE 19:41-48

### THE DOOM OF JERUSALEM FORETOLD

The great Ambassador from heaven is here making his public entry into Jerusalem, not to be *respected* there, but to be *rejected*; he knew what a nest of vipers he was throwing himself into, and yet see here two instances of his love to that place and his concern for it.

**I.** The *tears he shed* for the *approaching ruin* of the city (v. 41): *When he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it*. Probably, it was when

he was coming down the descent of the hill from the *mount of Olives*, where he had a full view of the city, the large extent of it, and the many stately structures in it, and his eye affected his heart, and his heart his eye again. See here,

**1.** What a tender spirit Christ was of; we never read that he laughed, but we often find him in tears. In this very place his father David wept, and those that were with him, though he and they were *men of war*. There are cases in which it is no disparagement to the stoutest of men to melt into tears.

**2.** That Jesus Christ *wept* in the midst of his triumphs, *wept* when all about him were *rejoicing*, to show how little he was elevated with the applause and acclamation of the people. Thus he would teach us to *rejoice with trembling*, and *as though we rejoiced not*. If Providence do not stain the beauty of our triumphs, we may ourselves see cause to sully it with our sorrows.

**3.** That he *wept over Jerusalem*. Note, There are cities to be wept over, and none to be more lamented than Jerusalem, that had been the holy city, and the joy of the whole earth, if it be degenerated. But why did Christ weep at the sight of Jerusalem? Was it because “Yonder is the city in which I must be betrayed and bound, scourged and spit upon, condemned and crucified?” No, he himself gives us the reason of his tears.

**(1.)** Jerusalem has not improved the day of her opportunities. He wept, and said, *If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day*, if thou wouldst but yet know, while the gospel is preached to thee, and salvation offered thee by it; if thou wouldest at length bethink thyself, and understand *the things that belong to thy peace*, the making of thy peace with God, and the securing of thine own spiritual and eternal welfare — but thou *dost not know the day of thy visitation*, v. 44. The manner of speaking is abrupt: *If thou hadst known! O that thou hadst*, so some take it; like that *O that my people had hearkened unto me*, <sup>3813</sup>Psalm 81:13; <sup>388</sup>Isaiah 48:18. Or, *If thou hadst known, well*; like that of the *fig-tree*, ch. 13:9. How happy had it been for thee! Or, “If thou hadst known, thou wouldest have wept for thyself, and I should have no occasion to weep for thee, but should have rejoiced rather.” What he says lays all the blame of Jerusalem's impending ruin upon herself. Note,

[1.] There are things which *belong to our peace*, which we are all concerned to *know* and *understand*; the way how peace is made, the offers made of peace, the terms on which we may have the benefit of peace. The things that belong to our peace are those things that relate to our present and future welfare; these we must know with application.

[2.] There is a *time of visitation* when those things which *belong to our peace* may be *known by us*, and known to good purpose. When we enjoy the means of grace in great plenty, and have the word of God powerfully preached to us — when the Spirit strives with us, and our own consciences are startled and awakened — then is the *time of visitation*, which we are concerned to improve.

[3.] With those that have long neglected the time of their visitation, if at length, if at last, in this their day, their eyes be opened, and they bethink themselves, all will be well yet. Those shall not be refused that come into the vineyard *at the eleventh hour*.

[4.] It is the amazing folly of multitudes that enjoy the means of grace, and it will be of fatal consequence to them, that they do not improve the day of their opportunities. The *things of their peace* are revealed to them, but are not minded or regarded by them; they *hide their eyes* from them, as if they were not worth taking notice of. They are not aware of the *accepted time* and the *day of salvation*, and to let it slip and perish through mere carelessness. None are so *blind* as those that will not *see*; nor have any the things of their peace more certainly hidden from their eyes than those that turn their back upon them.

[5.] The sin and folly of those that persist in a contempt of gospel grace are a great grief to the Lord Jesus, and should be so to us. He looks with weeping eyes upon lost souls, that continue impenitent, and run headlong upon their own ruin; he had rather that they would *turn and live* than *go on and die*, for he is not willing that any should perish.

(2.) Jerusalem cannot escape the day of her desolation. The *things of her peace* are now in a manner hidden from her eyes; they will be shortly. Not but that after this the gospel was preached to them by the apostles; *all the house of Israel* were called to *know assuredly* that Christ was their *peace* (<sup><41B></sup>Acts 2:36), and multitudes were convinced and converted. But as to the body of the nation, and the leading part of it, they were sealed up under unbelief; God had *given them the spirit of slumber*, <sup><51B></sup>Romans 11:8. They

were so prejudiced and enraged against the gospel, and those few that did embrace it then, that nothing less than a miracle of divine grace (like that which converted Paul) would work upon them; and it could not be expected that such a miracle should be wrought, and so they were justly given up to *judicial* blindness and hardness. The *peaceful things* are not *hidden from the eyes* of particular persons; but it is too late to think now of the nation of the Jews, *as such*, becoming a Christian nation, by embracing Christ. And therefore they are marked for ruin, which Christ here foresees and foretels, as the certain consequence of their rejecting Christ. Note, Neglecting the great salvation often brings temporal judgments upon a people; it did so upon Jerusalem in less than forty years after this, when all that Christ here foretold was exactly fulfilled.

[1.] The Romans besieged the city, *cast a trench about it, compassed it round, and kept their inhabitants in on every side*. Josephus relates that Titus ran up a wall in a very short time, which surrounded the city, and cut off all hopes of escaping.

[2.] They *laid it even with the ground*. Titus commanded his soldiers to *dig up the city*, and the whole compass of it was levelled, except three towers; see Josephus's history of the wars of the Jews, 5.356-360; 7.1. Not only the city, but the citizens were laid even with the ground (*thy children within thee*), by the cruel slaughters that were made of them: and there was scarcely one stone *left upon another*. This was for their crucifying Christ; this was because they *knew not the day of their visitation*. Let other cities and nations take warning.

II. The *zeal he showed for the present purification of the temple*. Though it must be destroyed ere long, it does not therefore follow that no care must be taken of it in the mean time.

1. Christ cleared it of those who profaned it. He went straight to the temple, and *began to cast out the buyers and sellers*, v. 45. Hereby (though he was represented as an enemy to the temple, and that was the crime laid to his charge before the high priest) he made it to appear that he had a truer love for the temple than they had who had such a veneration for its corban, its treasury, as a sacred thing; for its purity was more its glory than its wealth was. Christ gave reason for his dislodging the temple-merchants, v. 46. The temple is a *house of prayer*, set apart for communion with God: the *buyers and sellers* made it a *den of thieves* by

the fraudulent bargains they made there, which was by no means to be suffered, for it would be a distraction to those who came there to pray.

**2.** He put it to the best use that ever it was put to, for he *taught daily in the temple*, v. 47. Note, It is not enough that the corruptions of a church be purged out, but the preaching of the gospel must be encouraged. Now, when Christ preached in the temple, observe here,

**(1.)** How spiteful the church-rulers were against him; how industrious to seek an *opportunity, or pretence* rather, to do him a mischief (v. 47): *The chief priests and scribes, and the chief of the people*, the great sanhedrim, that should have attended him, and summoned the people too to attend him, *sought to destroy him*, and put him to death.

**(2.)** How respectful the common people were to him. They were *very attentive to hear him*. He spent most of his time in the country, and did not then preach in the temple, but, when he did, the people paid him great respect, attended on his preaching with diligence, and let no opportunity slip of hearing him, attended to it with care, and would not lose a word. Some read it, *All the people as they heard him, took his part*; and so it comes in very properly as a reason why his enemies *could not find what they might* do against him; they saw the people ready to fly in their faces if they offered him any violence. Till his hour was come his interest in the common people protected him; but, when his hour was come, the chief priests' influence upon the common people delivered him up.