

# The End of the Beginning

## Lesson Twenty-One

Matthew 20,21; Mark 10, 11; Luke 15-19; John 11, 12

This lesson will continue with more of the parables of Jesus. Another episode of healing will be examined. The lesson includes the interactions of Jesus with Pharisees and with the tax collector Zacchaeus. The miracle of the raising of Jesus' friend Lazarus from the dead will also be studied. Finally, the lesson will cover Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem before His crucifixion.

### THE PRODIGAL SON

Luke 15

This parable occurs only in Luke. It is one of the best known of the parables of Jesus. The Bible contains no further explanation of this parable. It is fairly clear and straightforward. The father's role is like that of God our Father. There are many lessons to be learned from this one story of the father's love for his sons.

*And Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' And he divided among them his living. Not many days after the younger son gathered all his inheritance together and took his journey into a far country. 1 There he wasted his substance with riotous living."*

For what does the younger son ask? His portion of inheritance

This request was very unusual. It amounted to telling his father that he considered him to be dead.

Does the son take everything with him? yes

Do you think the younger son has any intentions of coming back? No

Does the younger son spend his inheritance wisely or foolishly? foolishly

For the next part of the story, **read Luke 15:14-20a. (Slide 2)**

Does he run out of money? yes

What natural phenomenon occurs? famine

What job does he get? Feeding pigs (anti-Jewish)

What plan does he devise? Go home and offer to be a hired hand



"And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet way off, his father saw him and had compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. **3** The man said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight and am no more worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring the best robe and put it on him. And put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. Bring the fatted calf and kill it.

Let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry."

Has the father held the son's previous actions against him? no

How is this like our relationship with our heavenly Father? When we mess up,

God will forgive us and take us back

There is still the matter of the other brother. For his reaction to the above scene, **read Luke 15:25-32.**

What is the reaction of the older brother? anger

Is the older brother concerned for the welfare of his brother? no

About whom is the older brother concerned? himself

Does the father love the older son? yes

## THE RICH MAN AND POOR LAZARUS

Luke 16

This parable contains a character named Lazarus. This is not the same person as the Lazarus who is the brother of Martha and Mary. This parable is the only one in which a character has a name.

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and ate sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, **4** who was laid at his gate, full of sores and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores."

What is the major difference between the two characters? One is rich one is poor

**Read Luke 16:22-28** for more of the story.

What happens to Lazarus? He dies

What happens to the rich man? He dies

Where does the rich man go after his death? hell

With whom is Lazarus? Abraham

What request does the rich man make? Send Lazarus with some water

The rich man's request is denied for two reasons. What are they?

1.) he had good things in life

2.) there is a chasm between them that cannot be crossed

What is the next request of the rich man? Send Lazarus back to his brothers

to warn them

*"Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham. But if one went to them from the dead, they would repent.' And he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead.'"*

What is the problem the rich man and his brothers had? They did not believe in Scripture

Once a person has made up his mind that the Scriptures are not true, will even the miracle of someone coming back from the dead change that person's mind? no

To whom is the part about sending someone back from the dead referring? Jesus

## THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

Luke 18

The religious leaders of the day were convinced that they were more righteous than the rest of the people. They were proud of their "goodness." They looked down on others and considered themselves to be better than anyone else. This attitude is in sharp contrast to what the scriptures have to say about what God desires from us. He looks for humility. Psalm 51:17 says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."

**Read Luke 18:9-14. (Slide 5)**

What are the occupations of the two characters? Pharisee and tax collector

Who is proud of his behavior? Pharisee

Who recognizes that he is indeed a sinner (as we all are)? Tax collector

Which man is justified before the Lord? Tax collector

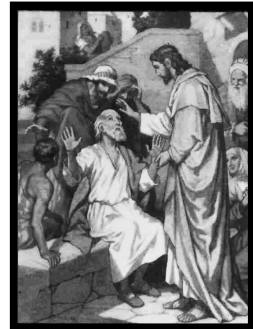
What does "exalt" mean? Lift up

What does verse 14b mean? The proud are brought down and the humble are lifted up

## THE BLIND MAN ZACCHAEUS

Matthew 20; Mark 10;  
Luke 18, 19

*As He was come near Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside, begging. Hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He cried saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." Those who were with him rebuked him that he should hold his peace. But he cried all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought to Him. 6 When he had come near, He asked him saying, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, I want to receive my sight." Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Him, glorifying God. All the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.*



What does the use of the title "Son of David" indicate? He knew Jesus as the Messiah

What does the man do after he receives his sight? Follows Jesus and gives glory to God

What do the people who saw the miracle do? Praise God

Miracles indicate an occurrence that is not understood. Whenever someone is cured of a disease and the doctors do not know how it happened, it is called a miracle. Miracles do not have a logical explanation.

Jesus' miracles have several closely connected functions. First, they point to the divinity of Jesus. They let people know that this is surely God incarnate (God in the form of man). The reaction to the miracle is almost always one of praise of God or the glorifying of God. The Holy Spirit works this reaction in us. Miracles also show the great compassion God has for people's suffering. This leads to the question of which miracle is the greatest of all. Write down what you think it is.

Death and resurrection of Jesus

This miracle elicits all of the responses listed above. The resurrection is not able to be explained logically. Why God would love sinful man so much as to send His Son to die a terrible death for us is unfathomable. We do not deserve such great love or such total forgiveness. Our reaction to this miracle should then be one of praising God for His great love and mercy. We should give glory to God for this great miracle each day of our lives.

One man who experienced the miracle of God's love and forgiveness was Zacchaeus. Notice that Zacchaeus was the "Chief" tax collector. He probably had other tax collectors working under him. As a tax collector he was a socially despised man in Jewish society.

**Read Luke 19:1-10. (Slide 7, 8)**

What physical limitation does Zacchaeus have? He is short

How does he overcome this limitation? Climbs a tree

What announcement does Jesus make to him? He will stay with him

How does Zacchaeus respond to this news? gladly

How does the crowd respond to this news? suspicion

Zacchaeus is so touched by the Lord that he promises to do what?

1.) give half of what he has to the poor

2.) pay back four times those he has cheated

Has Zacchaeus received salvation? yes

## THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

John 11

In an earlier lesson Jesus raised a little girl from death. The son of a widow was also raised. This lesson shows the raising from the dead of a close friend of Jesus. This Lazarus is the brother of Mary and Martha.

*Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus of Bethany. Therefore his sisters, Mary and Martha, sent to Jesus saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." 9 When Jesus heard that He said, "This sickness is not to death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it." And He stayed two days in the same place where He was. After that he said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." They thought that He had spoken of taking rest in sleep. Then said Jesus to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him."*

What has happened to Lazarus? He has died

**Read John 11:17-31** to see what happens as Jesus arrives in Bethany.

For how long has Lazarus been dead? four days

Who goes out to meet Jesus? Martha

Who does she believe Jesus is? Christ, the Son of God

For whom does Jesus ask? Mary

Where do the Jews think Mary is going? To the tomb

*Then, when Mary had come where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at His feet saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus, therefore, saw her weeping and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept.*

What does Mary tell Jesus? He would not have died if Jesus had been there

What is Jesus' reaction to Mary and the others? He weeps, His spirit groans

**Read John 11:36-44** to see what Jesus does. (Slide 10, 11)

When they reach the tomb, what does Jesus ask them to do? Move the stone

Why does Martha object? The body will smell after being dead four days

Does Lazarus come out? Yes

Not everyone is pleased that Jesus has brought Lazarus back from the dead. In fact, some people are so upset they want to see Jesus dead.

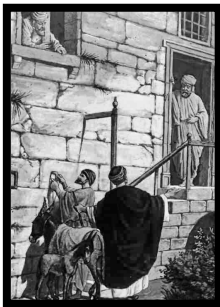
*Then many of the Jews who had seen the things that Jesus did believed in Him. But some of them went their way to the Pharisees and told them what things Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees from that day forth took counsel together to put Him to death.*

Who want to kill Jesus? Pharisees and chief priests

## JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Matthew 21; Mark 11;  
Luke 19; John 12

The event we celebrate on Palm Sunday took place on the day when Jesus made His final entry into Jerusalem. Up to this point, Jesus had not made public statements of His identity. He had told individuals, and the disciples knew. But He had not gone around making proclamations of His role as Messiah. Now the time has come for Jesus to finish the work He has come to do. He no longer keeps a low profile. This is the beginning of the week in which Jesus will die.



*And it came to pass, when He had come near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples saying, "Go into the village ahead of you and at your entering you shall find a colt tied up on which no man has yet sat. **12** Untie him and bring him here. And if any man asks you, 'Why do you untie him?' thus shall you say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of him.'" All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying, "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King comes to you.'"*

What are the disciples to get for Jesus? A colt  
(In this case the colt is that of a donkey.)

**Read Mark 11:4-10. (Slide 13, 14)**

Are the disciples questioned about the colt? yes

What two things are placed on the road? 1. branches 2. cloaks

Do those who are shouting recognize Jesus as the Messiah? yes

The people's expectations of a Messiah are a bit different from what God has in mind. The people expect their Messiah to be an earthly ruler who will overthrow those who are in power. Emotions are running high on this day. Jesus understands the difference between what His kingdom really is and what the people expect it to be. He understands that most of the Jews will not believe in Him.

*When He had come near, He beheld the city and wept over it saying, **15** "If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which would bring you peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you that your enemies shall cast a trench about you and surround you. And they shall tear you down to the ground and your children within you. And they shall not leave in you one stone upon another because you did not know the time of your visitation."*

To whom is Jesus speaking? *Jerusalem*

What will happen to it? *It will be destroyed along with the people*

"Your visitation" refers to God coming to Jerusalem. When and how did this happen?

*Jesus is God and He is there at this time*

Before the last section is dealt with, the arrangement of the temple and the type of worship that went on there must be examined. Outside the main temple were areas known as courts. There was a women's court (for women were not allowed to enter the main temple) and a Gentile court. This was where the Gentiles came to worship. They also were not allowed into the main temple. The Gentile court had become the place where the merchants sold animals for sacrifices. It was also the place where moneychangers converted money into the local currency. Remember that this area was the only place a Gentile believer could go at the temple for worship and prayer.

**Read** what happens when Jesus comes to this court. One of the places it is recorded is in **Mark 11:15-17. (Slide 16s)**

What does Jesus do? *Overturns tables; drives out merchants*

Jesus identifies the problem. What is it? *Temple is a place for prayer and worship, not for business*



## REVIEW

1. Why is the younger son's request so unusual? It indicated he considers his father to be dead
2. Is the younger son forgiven when he comes home? yes
3. Who gets angry at the younger son's return? brother
4. Does the rich man help Lazarus? no
5. With what attitude should we approach prayer? humility
6. Is God impressed by "proud" people? no
7. Does the blind man be quiet when people tell him to quit calling Jesus? no
8. How do people respond to the miracles of Jesus? Praise to God
9. What is the greatest miracle of all? Jesus' redemption of us
10. What was Zacchaeus' profession? Tax collector
11. How does Zacchaeus respond to the love of God? Give away a half of all he has and pay back four times to anyone he has cheated
12. To whom is Lazarus related? Mary and Martha
13. What happens to Lazarus? dies
14. For how long has he been dead? four days
15. What does Jesus do about Lazarus? Raises him from the dead
16. Why has Jesus come back to Jerusalem? To die
17. Will Jesus establish an earthly kingdom? no
18. What will happen to Jerusalem? It will be destroyed
19. What area of the temple does Jesus clean out? The court of the Gentiles
20. Why? it had become a place of business instead a place of prayer

