

LESSON 9

CONTINUATION OF THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Luke 16:1—19:27

Mark 10:1-52

Luke's journey narratives continue independently of Mark until Luke 18:15. The remainder of Luke 18 duplicates much of the material of Mark 10.

The Use of Riches

Luke 16: 1-31

The Pharisees thought that wealth was God's blessing bestowed upon the righteous; therefore, their lives centred in selfish accumulation and use of possessions. Their economic success was interpreted to mean that God had blessed them because of their righteousness. Jesus refuted the belief that one could centre his life both in gaining wealth and in serving God. Man's conduct becomes wayward if he gives primary attention to accumulating possessions.

The unjust steward (16:1-13)

This parable is very difficult to interpret because of Jesus' commendation of the steward who was guilty of dishonest practices. The parable may be comparing the leaders of Israel to the unjust steward in order to advise them concerning the use of their wealth. The prodigal son had squandered in evil living the inheritance from his father. Jesus suggested there is a better way to dispense wealth.

The unfaithful steward faced dismissal for misusing his lord's possessions (v. 2). He summoned his master's debtors and greatly reduced their indebtedness in order that he would have friends to assist him when he was dismissed as steward (vv. 3-9). The master commended the steward for his prudent action (v. 8). Perhaps Jesus was saying no more than to use wealth in a way to prepare for future welfare (v. 9). Neither the Pharisees nor the prodigal son used their wealth in such a manner. Jesus may have been saying to the Pharisees to share their wealth with those whom they had oppressed and cheated. They had been squandering the possessions which actually belonged to God when they should have been sharing them with the oppressed who were entering the Kingdom of God. To Jesus, wealth was no indication of righteousness and no guarantee of kingdom citizenship. The poor and oppressed, whom the Pharisees thought were sinners, entered the Kingdom on the basis of God's grace and would be present to welcome the dismissed steward who could no longer depend on wealth.

Verse 10 states that the character of God's stewards must be different from the person in the previous parable. They must be faithful with that which is entrusted to them. The one who is faithful with 'little' material goods will be entrusted with 'much' in eternal riches. True riches are eternal in contrast to 'unrighteous mammon' which is illusory.

Verse 11 implies that the Pharisees as stewards of God's cre-

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The Pharisees believed that wealth was God's reward for _____ living.

(righteous)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The central teaching of the parable of the unjust steward probably was to use wealth in a way to prepare for f _____ w _____.

(future welfare)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

God's stewards are required to be _____ with that which is _____ to them.

(faithful, entrusted)

ation had been unfaithful in handling their possessions. They should have used the wealth that God had placed in their charge to benefit the needy. If they were unjust with God's possessions, they could not expect to receive eternal possessions which are more valuable than earthly possessions.

False confidence in wealth (16:14-18)

Because of their love for money, the Pharisees rationalized that the wealthy are righteous; therefore, they rejected the teachings of Jesus (v. 14). They boasted of keeping the Law and earning salvation rather than depending on God's grace (v. 15). Jesus reminded them that partial and external obedience to the Law might be highly esteemed among men, but it was detestable in the sight of God. In contrast, the gospel was highly esteemed by those entering the Kingdom. The gospel was such good news that unrighteous men pressed their way into the Kingdom (v. 16). The 'good news' was that outcasts and sinners who repented received the undeserved favour and love of the Father. If their entrance were dependent on righteousness obtained by keeping the Law, they had no chance since one who fails in one point is condemned. Pharisical practices regarding divorce indicated that the Pharisees had already fallen short of keeping the Law (v. 18).

The rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31)

The concept that wealth is God's blessing bestowed upon the righteous was so deeply ingrained in the Pharisees that they could not conceive of Jesus' teaching that the poor, the objects of God's scorn, would be welcomed into the Kingdom on the basis of God's grace. Jesus contrasted the condition of the rich man who lived sumptuously every day to that of the poor man who was bitterly afflicted during his earthly life (vv. 19-20). The Pharisees thought his condition was because of his sinfulness. Jesus used the parable to emphasize that earthly wealth does not denote acceptance with God (v. 22). In death, the rich man experienced torment, but the poor man received the blessings of God described as being in the presence of Abraham (vv. 22-24). The torment of the condemned man was deserved. He had enjoyed and lived sumptuously on that which belonged to God while refusing to share God's creation with the poor man (v. 25). He had to account for his earthly stewardship, and the consequences of his condemnation were eternal (vv. 26-27). The rich man implied that he and his brothers had not been instructed concerning the way of life which would please God (v. 28). Abraham replied that Moses and the Prophets (the Old Testament) gave clear instructions but the rich man had ignored them and had followed the traditions of the scribes (vv. 29-31). In the parable, Jesus clearly taught that he who is rich but refuses to share with the needy will not enter the Kingdom of God.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches:

1. Earthly wealth does not denote acceptance with _____.
2. The poor, who were considered objects of God's scorn, would be welcomed into the _____ on the basis of grace.

(1. God, 2. Kingdom)

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus also teaches—

The wealthy are accountable for their use of God's _____.

(blessings)

Instructions to the Disciples

Luke 17:1—18:8

Avoiding hindrances (17:1-6)

Verse 1 parallels Mark 9:42 in warning disciples against offences. Temptations to sin are inevitable, but the Christian must avoid sins which lead a weaker brother or a child astray (v. 2). If a brother sins, a Christian is responsible to seek him out, make him aware of the problem and its seriousness, and express the desire for fellowship to be restored (v. 3). The instruction does not allow the offended Christian to wait for the offending brother to take the initiative in reconciliation. If the offending brother acknowledges sorrow for his wrong deed, he is to be forgiven. 'Seven times in a day' means that there is no limit to forgiveness (v. 4). The apostles recognized the latter requirement as difficult and requested additional faith (v. 5). Jesus emphasized the victorious power available through faith by using the metaphor of the mustard seed. The smallest amount of faith is sufficient to bring about seemingly impossible accomplishments—the removal of a sycamore tree (v. 6). The illustration means that the smallest amount of genuine faith becomes the instrument of God's unlimited power. That which is impossible through human ability is possible through God's power.

Why did the disciples ask Jesus to increase their faith?

(Because of the difficult requirement of repeatedly forgiving on offender)

The servant's reward (17:7-10)

The servant was to do the will of the master with no regard for his own desires and no thought of reward (v. 7). The tired servant coming in from the fields still had the responsibility to prepare the meal and serve his master (v. 8). The servant did not expect to be thanked when he did his duty (v. 9). The Christian is to serve in obedience to his Master, but he should expect no special reward or merit when he does his duty (v. 10). All that we have and are belongs to the Master. Even sacrificial service does not go beyond what is required. Since all service is already due the Master, good deeds cannot be counted as merit with which to earn salvation.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The parable of the servant's reward teaches that the Christian already owes all to His _____, and good deeds cannot be counted as merit towards _____.

(Master, salvation)

Expressing gratitude (17:11-19)

Lepers were required to stay outside the village (v. 12) and to cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' when anyone approached. Instead of giving the warning, the ten lepers called out to Jesus for help (v. 13). Ten were healed, but only one returned to give thanks (vv. 14-15). Perhaps the nine Jews felt that as members of God's chosen nation they deserved the gift of healing. They represent the masses who readily take God's daily blessings but never stop to say 'Thank you' in worship and service. The selfish spirits of nine had not been changed, but the one who returned to express gratitude was made whole (vv. 16-19). Nine received only physical healing, but the Samaritan entered the Kingdom of God. God's grace and man's gratitude cannot be separated. Ingratitude denies us fellowship with Christ in His Kingdom. Gratitude is the Christian's response in worship and dedicated service to God's redeeming grace.

MATCH.

Nine lepers Also entered the Kingdom of God

One leper Received only physical healing

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The day of the Son of Man (17:20-37)

The Pharisees inquired of Jesus when the Kingdom of God was coming (v. 20). They were expecting God's anointed to appear with an army and to establish a government with control over a defined territory. Jesus stated that the Kingdom of God would not come in a visible manner. 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation' (v. 20b). He stated that it was already in their midst: 'For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you' (v. 21). The power of God's Kingdom was already working through Jesus in defeating the works of Satan. A historical kingdom with definite national boundaries and a specific date for its origin was expected by the Pharisees, but the Kingdom of God rises above and cannot be forced into the limitations of the historical, physical order. Since God is infinite and spirit, the Kingdom of God cannot be limited to finite and visible matter—to time and place — nor to one nation. It was already in existence!

Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man, perhaps in the sense of the heavenly Son of Man who would be given the glorious Kingdom (prepared by the Father) 'when the Son of man is revealed' (see v. 30 and Dan. 7:13f.). He continued discussing the subject of the Kingdom, not its beginning but rather its completion when the Son of Man will come again. His disciples were to live in the power of the Kingdom, yet they would often long for the coming of the final victory at the end of the Age (v. 22). Jesus indicated that no sign would be needed for His second appearing because His coming would be as obvious as the lightning flashing across the sky (v. 24). His coming would not take place until after He had suffered many things at the hands of that generation (v. 25). He was not to be a messiah who would bring the Kingdom to an immediate completion through a military victory. Although the Kingdom was already present, its completion would not come until after His and the disciples' suffering and His return (v. 25).

Jesus warned that the coming of the Son of Man will be as unexpected as the judgement of God by the flood in the days of Noah (v. 26). People will be carrying on their normal daily activities (v. 27). When He does come, it will be too late for them to prepare.

A second illustration was drawn from the life of Lot (v. 28). The coming of the Son of man will mean deliverance for the elect and condemnation for the wicked (vv. 27, 29). The Day of the Lord has become the Day of the Son of Man (vv. 22, 24, 25, 30). The believer must live in constant expectancy and readiness (v. 31). The delay of the Son of Man will tend to cause carelessness, but the disciple is not to permit himself to become tied to the goods of the world. When He appears, worldly values must be abandoned. Those who seek to hold on to material values will lose their lives just as Lot's wife did (vv. 32-33). Those prepared for the Kingdom will be taken by the angels, and the unprepared will be left behind (vv. 34-36).

A further attempt was made to limit the Kingdom to a historical place: 'Where, Lord?' (v. 37) Jesus answered with an illustration that would not identify the Kingdom with a certain place.

Although the phrase 'the coming of the Son of Man' has

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Jesus' view of the Kingdom differed from that of the Pharisees.

1. They expected a messiah to appear with an _____ and to establish a government over a defined _____.
2. Jesus held the coming Kingdom would be invisible and of a _____ nature in defeating the works of _____. He further said that the Kingdom was already _____.

(1. army, territory; 2. spiritual, Satan, present)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Jesus said that His coming would be _____. He said that no _____ of His second appearance would be necessary.

(obvious, sign)

What characteristic will the coming of the Son of Man and the flood in Noah's day have in common?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The illustration of Lot's experience was used to point out that the coming of the Son of Man will mean deliverance for the _____ and condemnation for the _____.

(elect, wicked)

been used, more accurate expressions are: 'the manifesting of the Son of Man' and the Son of Man WHO IS ('so shall also the Son of man be in his day...in the day when the Son of man is revealed', (vv. 26, 30). The Kingdom of God which is present but invisible will be manifested in the day of the Son of Man's manifestation.

The parable of the unjust judge (18:1-8)

Before the revealing of the Son of Man, the disciples will continue to live in a hostile and alien age. Since there will always be the danger of despair, He gave them a parable of encouragement. Instead of yielding to despair, they are to commit themselves continually to prayer (v. 1). The parable speaks of the widow who besought the judge to vindicate her of her adversary, but he was unjust and refused (v. 3). However, because the widow continued to annoy him he determined to settle her case (v. 5). Jesus assured His disciples that a loving God will vindicate His elect who cry to Him day and night. The disciples under distress were encouraged to pray to God because He would surely respond (v. 7). The widow was the epitome of helplessness and defencelessness, but her persistence brought an answer to her problem (v. 8). The unjust judge vindicated her simply to free himself from her pleading. The argument is from the lesser to the greater. If a corrupt judge will respond to pleading, how much more will God be moved by the cries of His elect.

Teachings to the Multitudes

Luke 18:9-30

Mark 10:1-31

The Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14)

Jesus needed to correct two wrong impressions. First, He had spoken of the necessity of persistent prayer which might be misinterpreted to mean that endless repetition causes a mechanical response. He gave a parable, therefore, to teach that not all prayer was genuine. Second, the Pharisees felt they were preparing for the Kingdom of God by external piety (v. 9). The parable showed them that their legal righteousness did not justify them before God.

The Pharisee prayed to be heard of men and revealed an arrogant, self-righteous spirit (v. 11). He reminded God of what He deserved because of his faithfulness in fasting, tithing, and praying (v. 12). The prayer of the tax-collector revealed humility and repentance (v. 13). He realized that he had no claim on God's blessings; therefore, he trusted himself to God's mercy and grace. Jesus concluded the description by judging that the depraved publican who humbled himself before God was accepted, but the Pharisee was rejected (v. 14).

The question of divorce (Mark 10:1-12)

Mark notes that Jesus and the disciples were in the regions of Judaea and Transjordan (v. 1). A Pharisee posed the question whether it was lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause (v. 2). The question was based on the debate between

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The central truth of the parable of the unjust judge is that the loving God responds to the cries of His _____.

(elect)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Two truths taught by the parable of the Pharisee and publican are:

1. Not every prayer is g_____ and will be a _____.
2. External piety does not prepare for the K_____ of G_____.

(1. genuine, answered; 2. Kingdom, God)

Shammai and Hillel, two great rabbis, concerning the interpretation of Deuteronomy 24:1-4. Hillel interpreted the right of the husband to divorce his wife who 'finds no favour in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her' to include such insignificant matters as careless preparation of meals. Shammai was much more strict and permitted divorce only as a result of unchastity. The Pharisee was attempting to draw Jesus into the dispute—'tempting him' (v. 2). When the question was placed before Jesus, He admitted that Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, but divorce was not in God's original plan. Divorce was permitted only because of man's blindness, sinfulness, and unteachableness (v. 5). God originally designed male and female to join together in the unity of one flesh (vv. 6-8; see Gen. 2:24). Man is not to destroy this unity by a bill of divorce (v. 9). Since the physical relation was divinely designed by God who made the male and female bodies for union—to become one flesh, the relation is holy and not to be defiled through unfaithfulness. To violate God's design is to commit adultery, even if one holds a bill of divorcement. A person breaks the unit of one flesh with his companion when he commit adultery.

The reception of children (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17)

Parents or friends were bringing children to Jesus in order that He might touch them to bestow a blessing on them (v. 13). The disciples considered the children less important and reproved those who brought them for annoying their Teacher. Jesus rebuked the disciples and welcomed the children, stating that the Kingdom belongs to such as these (vv. 14-15). The Kingdom must be entered with the attitude of a little child, for it belongs to the weak, the insignificant, and the unimportant of this world rather than to the mighty and the self-sufficient.

The requirement for the rich man (Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30)

Luke identifies the man as a ruler, and Matthew identifies him as a young man. With his wealth and success, the young man was inclined to trust in himself; however, he was sincere in his quest for eternal life (v. 17). He had conscientiously kept the Law, and he felt capable of doing even more to insure his salvation, if Jesus had any other suggestions. When he addressed Jesus as 'Good Teacher', Jesus had to remind him that any goodness in man comes from dependence on God (v. 18). The ruler thought that goodness was man's achievement. He had placed himself, rather than God, at the centre of his life. Keeping the Commandments was his human achievement without dependence on God (v. 20). To enable the young man to recognize that he was not really trusting God, Jesus commanded him to dispose of what he had and live by faith in God (v. 21).

When the young man turned away, Jesus commented concerning the difficulty of the wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God (v. 23). Having been schooled in the theology of the Jews, the disciples were amazed because they thought wealth was God's blessing for righteous living; therefore, the rich deserved the Kingdom of God (vv. 24, 26). Jesus pointed out

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Concerning divorce, Jesus taught—

1. It was not in God's _____ plan.
2. Divorce was permitted because of man's _____ and _____, but it does not exempt one from committing _____.

(1. original; 2. sinfulness, unteachableness, adultery)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

When Jesus said that the Kingdom belongs to such as little children, He was saying that the Kingdom must be entered with the attitude of a _____ who recognizes he is _____, _____, and _____ in contrast to the mighty and self-sufficient.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

that as it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, so it is impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom trusting in himself (v. 25). Only with God is entrance to the Kingdom possible for the rich or the poor (v. 27).

The disciples then began to question the benefit of doing righteous deeds (v. 28). Jesus assured them that any sacrifice which they made in serving God would be rewarded; however, entrance into the Kingdom was by the grace of God (vv. 29-30). Jesus concluded the discussion by reminding the disciples that there would be some surprises at the revelation of those who enter the Kingdom—the last would be first (v. 31).

The Third Prediction of the Passion

Mark 10:32-45

Luke 18:31-34

Luke separates the second and third predictions of the Passion by the extended travel narratives. In Mark, the third prediction follows the second more directly. Mark calls attention to Jesus' determined movement towards Jerusalem (v. 32). Jesus discussed with His disciples the events which would take place when He arrived in Jerusalem. He gave them the details that He would be delivered by the chief priests and the scribes to the Gentiles who would put Him to death after mocking Him (vv. 33-34). He mentioned again the resurrection after three days.

Traditional views are difficult to replace. James and John continued to think in terms of a kingdom with positions of honour and power. They requested Jesus to promise to reserve the two chief places in the Kingdom for them (vv. 35-37). Probably they were still thinking of a victorious, military messiah. They were absorbed by the standards of greatness they had envisaged from childhood. Jesus again emphasized suffering and servanthood when He spoke of the cup which He must drink and the baptism with which He must be baptized (v. 38). To drink one's cup meant to accept one's destiny and endure one's lot. The cup in the Christian community came to symbolize the Lord's Supper which speaks of the death of Jesus. Baptism speaks of servanthood, dying to self, and resurrection to a new life of service in the Kingdom. James and John did not perceive the degree of suffering which lay ahead for their Master and for themselves; thus they answered impulsively that they could drink His cup (v. 39). Jesus assured them that they would experience suffering and servanthood as His followers. He stated that appointments to positions were the prerogative of God (v. 40).

At the time when Jesus was struggling under the burden of the supreme sacrifice in Jerusalem, the disciples were quarrelling over honoured positions (v. 41). They continued to dream of 'lording it over others' rather than humbly serving others (v. 42). Surely Jesus felt alone since even His disciples did not understand the revolutionary way of life of the Kingdom. Man is not to establish a master-slave relationship to his fellow-man but a relationship of self-giving love. Greatness in the sight of God is not determined by position, power, wealth, and authority over others Jesus came to give His life for many, not to gain a position by which He would be

Explain Jesus' statement, 'For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God' (Luke 18:25).

(Compare your answer with the text.)

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

Jesus responded to the request of John and James for the chief positions in the Kingdom by—

1. emphasizing s_____ and s_____.
2. saying that appointments to positions was God's p_____.

(1. suffering, servanthood; 2. prerogative)

DRAW A CIRCLE AROUND QUALITIES OF TRUE GREATNESS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, THEN UNDERLINE CHARACTERISTICS OF GREATNESS IN THE SIGHT OF MAN.

'lording over others'	sacrifice
humble service	mastery over others
power	self-giving love
wealth	

(Compare your answer with the text.)

served by many. The Gentiles represent the natural man of this world who exerts mastery over others, but that is not the way of life in the Kingdom (vv. 42-43). Kingdom servants must follow their Master in service and sacrifice to achieve greatness (v. 44).

Events at Jericho

Luke 18:35—19:27

Mark 10:46-52

The healing of blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43)

Matthew speaks of two blind men; Luke has the meeting with the one blind man as Jesus and the disciples entered Jericho; and Mark indicates the encounter with Bartimaeus took place as they left Jericho on the way to Jerusalem (v. 46). Bartimaeus means son of Timaeus. He probably had heard of Jesus, and he addressed Him as 'Jesus, son of David', a messianic title which Jesus accepted in anticipation of His entrance into Jerusalem as the Messiah (v. 47). The title implied the political nature of the Messiah. Bartimaeus would not be silenced by those who rebuked him (v. 48). His persistence revealed his faith, and Jesus responded by healing him (v. 49). Perhaps the restoring of physical sight symbolized his spiritual insight into the nature of Jesus (vv. 50-52). He became a follower of Jesus.

The conversion of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

Luke notes that Zacchaeus was a chief tax-collector, and he was wealthy (v. 2). According to Judaism, his occupation excluded him from the Kingdom of God. The pressure of the crowd and his religious ostracism kept him away from Jesus (v. 3). Jesus beckoned Zacchaeus from the tree and announced that He would be a guest in his house (v. 5). As Jesus began to acknowledge publicly His messiahship, He continued to distinguish between the Jewish concept of the Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Suffering Servant who calls sinners to enter (v. 7). The story emphasizes that sinners who enter the Kingdom are converted and changed in nature (v. 8). Zacchaeus offered to make restitution for his wrongs and revealed his new character by his willingness to share with the poor. Jesus announced that salvation had come to him (v. 9). What happened to Zacchaeus illustrates the mission of the Son of Man who 'came to seek and to save that which was lost' (v. 10).

The parable of the pounds (Luke 19:11-27)

The parable was directed mainly to Jesus' disciples, but it had application to the Jewish nation as well. Luke notes again that the Jews 'supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately' (v. 11, NASB). The purpose of the parable is to show there will be a long period of waiting before the Kingdom appears in its fullness. During the interim, the disciples were responsible for serving in the midst of a hostile environment.

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

The experience of Zacchaeus shows the mission of Jesus 'to _____ and to _____ that which was _____' and to change the nature of _____.

(seek, save, lost, sinners)

TRUE OR FALSE?

The parable of the pounds shows there will be a long period of waiting before the Kingdom appears in its fullness.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The parable describes a nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom for himself (v. 12). Perhaps the reference is to Archelaus who journeyed to Rome to receive confirmation of his rule over Judaea upon the death of Herod the Great. The Jewish people sent a delegation to Rome to inform the emperor that Archelaus was unwanted. During the nobleman's absence, possessions were entrusted to the servants to be used in increasing the nobleman's possessions (v. 13). Upon the return of the master, each servant gave account of his stewardship (v. 15). All except one had increased their possessions according to their opportunities and abilities. The pound is an analogy of the message and power which Jesus gave to the disciples to use in making other disciples during His absence. Jesus would ascend to the Father to receive the Kingdom. During His absence, each disciple was responsible for faithfulness in sharing the entrusted riches of the Kingdom, but Jesus did not require a specific increase. Those who were faithful were rewarded with a larger service, but the unfaithful lost what he had (vv. 24-26). At His return, the enemies of Jesus and the foes of His Kingdom would be defeated (v. 27).

FILL IN THE BLANKS.

In the parable of the pounds, the pound is an analogy of the m_____ and p_____ which Jesus gave to the disciples to use in making other d_____ during His absence.

(message, power, disciples)

Home Study Exercise

Basic assignment (Levels 1, 2, and 3)

1. Explain the Pharisees' view concerning the relation of wealth and righteousness.

2. What is the central teaching of the parable of the unjust steward?

3. What is required of God's stewards?

4. Give three important teachings of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

5. Why did the disciples request the Lord to increase their faith?

6. Give the central teaching of the parable of the servant's reward.

7. What truth is drawn from the healing of the ten lepers?

8. How did Jesus' view of the Kingdom differ from that of the Pharisees?

9. Why is the time of Jesus' coming compared to the days of Noah?

10. What is the central truth of the parable of the unjust judge?

11. What are two truths taught in the parable of the Pharisee and publican?

12. What did Jesus teach concerning a bill of divorce?

13. What did Jesus mean by the statement that the Kingdom belongs to such as little children?

14. Explain: 'For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God' (Luke 18:25).

15. What was Jesus' response to the request of John and James for the chief positions in the Kingdom?

16. How does the experience of Zacchaeus sum up the mission of Jesus?

17. What is the central truth of the parable of the pounds?

Supplementary assignment (*Levels 2 and 3*)

1. What indications are there in the Scriptures of this lesson that Jesus considered the desire for possessions to be a hindrance to one's spiritual life?
2. How did Jesus warn His hearers about the dangers arising from earthly possessions and wealth?
3. Does Luke show a special interest in Jesus' dealings with people considered outcasts by the strict Jews? Illustrate your answer.

Advanced assignment (*Level 3*)

1. What is meant by 'the day of the Son of man'?
2. What incidents are recorded only by Luke in his account of Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem? Comment briefly on two of these.
3. 'The kingdom of God is in your midst.' What evidence is there in the Synoptics that this was the distinctive message of Jesus?

Seminar Discussion

1. Explain how the Kingdom of God was in the midst of Jesus' contemporaries (Luke 17:21) and the day of the Son of Man would be in the future (Luke 17:22ff.).
2. What misconceptions are there today concerning entering the Kingdom of God? What is the greatest hindrance to entering it?
3. Is there any danger in misunderstanding the moral requirements of the Kingdom in the light of Luke's stress on 'publicans and sinners' entering by God's grace? Does Luke give corrective teachings for that emphasis?
4. Why did Jesus give so many parables relating to the hindrances of wealth?
5. What is the nature of the Kingdom according to Luke 17?
6. How does a little child illustrate those who enter the Kingdom?
7. What should be the Church's position regarding divorce?