



## CATHOLIC SCRIPTURE STUDY

Catholic Scripture Study Notes written by Sister Marie Therese, are provided for the personal use of students during their active participation and must not be loaned or given to others.

### SERIES I

#### THE GOSPEL OF LUKE AND ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 16 Commentary Luke 19:28 – 21:38

Lesson 17 Questions Luke 22:1 - 65

#### THE JERUSALEM MINISTRY Luke 19:28 - 21:38

### I. INTRODUCTION

In these last chapters before the Paschal events, Jesus goes to Jerusalem, takes possession, as it were, of the Temple, cleansing it, teaching there daily, and meeting head-on with various groups of religious leaders of the Jews. These finally “won the battle and lost the war” in the paradox of Jesus’ victory over death. Important teachings of Jesus occur in these chapters about the future of Jerusalem, the temple, the world, and the hereafter.

### II. LAST DAYS OF JESUS’ PUBLIC MINISTRY

**A. Entry into Jerusalem** (Luke 19:28-48, Mark 11:1-10, Matthew 21:1-9, and John 12:12-16). Luke follows Mark so closely here that there are almost the exact words, except that Mark adds a very human touch—Jesus promising to send the colt “back at once.”

This entry into Jerusalem was probably many days before the arrest of Jesus, as Luke and Mark mention that He was teaching “day after day in the Temple.” The Church begins our remem-

brance of Jesus’ last days by putting this entry the Sunday before the Last Passover, probably because John’s Gospel has Jesus in Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths in the Autumn, the feast of Dedication in the winter, and moving east to Perea across the Jordan until Passover time; then he places the entry into Jerusalem spoken of in Luke, the next day after the anointing at Bethany, six days before Passover.

### **B. Jesus’ Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28-40).**

All four evangelists describe this important day with Jesus entering from the Mount of Olives, after leaving Bethany. Luke has Jesus’ great moments on mountains: transfiguration, entry into Jerusalem, death, resurrection, ascension. He writes at some length about Jesus entering on an ass (a beast of burden). Matthew says it was an ass and a colt (!) causing us to wonder how that was done. He quotes an important Messianic text from the prophet Zechariah 9:9—the rejoicing and shouting acclamations in Jerusalem when “your king shall come to you... meek... on a colt.” These meant, in Jewish tradition, that He would not be like the proud kings of Judah who used to ride into the city in chariots and on horses, but instead, peacefully and gently.

**C. Sorrow Over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).** The evangelists speak of a “great crowd,” probably those excited about the raising of Lazarus. These people cry out two verses from Psalm 118, one of the “Hallel” songs of praise, and the Aramaic word, “Hosanna!” Luke adds two lines from his own hymn of the Angels in his chapter 2, singing of the peace and glory in heaven that this king shares. The garments in the road were also part of a royal acclaim. The whole scene points up Jesus as king, a Savior.

Jesus saw with His prophetic gaze, the end of the week, that He had foretold in plain terms to the Apostles more than once (which they disavowed and promptly forgot). He knows the fickleness of this crowd, that will soon call for His bloody death. No one ever foresaw the future so clearly as Jesus. On this day of a brief triumph in the Holy City, He must have sorrowed further as He sees the end of the earthly glory of Jerusalem—the Judeo-Roman war which, in 70 A.D. forty years away, will topple the Temple and destroy the city and its inhabitants. He sees still further down the ages, and will tell us of the Church and its followers, their struggles and their suffering. He sees even further to the Endtime, and to the great eternal times. He tells it all, as His heart prepares to give His last messages before so many reject Him. And for His followers, He reveals that it will all come to joy and triumph in a very real, untouchable Kingdom.

**D. Entry into the Temple (Luke 19:45-47, Mark 11:15-17, John 2:13-17).** As one with authority, Jesus enters the beautiful temple, and with a rope He had made, says John, He expelled the traders, whom He knew cheated the people, with the words from Isaiah 56:7. It is like Luke to cherish this scene of Jesus teaching prayer and reverence for God’s house. Then He taught from day to day all the people who came in large numbers to hear Him (Luke 21:37-38). He spent His nights on the mount of Olives. we picture Him

there in prayer, preparing for His coming last night there.

### III. JERUSALEM’S RESPONSE TO JESUS (Luke 19:48 - 21:4)

**A. A Divided City.** “The entire populace was listening to Him and hanging on His words” (Luke 19:48). And they did this day after day—“from day to day” (Luke 19:47). But for the leaders of the city it was just the opposite, although among all groups that Jesus confronted, there were some that saw the compelling beauty and wisdom of Jesus and His message, but were afraid of the Pharisees (See John 12:42-43). How many times have we not witnessed through fear!

The Pharisees in the crowd that acclaimed Jesus objected, asking Him to rebuke those praising Him. Then the chief priests and scribes “were looking for a way to destroy Him”; next the high priest and elders asked what authority He had to do the things He did in the temple. Then they sent spies “in the guise of honest men to trap him” (Luke 20:20). Finally, the Sadducees came with an improbable problem for Him (Luke 20:27-38).

#### B. Warning, Taxes, and Condemnation

**1. Parable of the Tenants** (Luke 20:9-19). The parable of the tenants is a direct warning to the leaders who were seeking to kill Him (verse 14b). The owner, said Jesus, would do away with those caretakers and give the vineyard to others (See Isaiah 5:1-8 and Ezekiel 19:10-14). And the leaders knew that He meant the story for them. He let them know that He knew they would hand Him over to Pilate the procurator, and His form of sentencing on Calvary. The words, “they dragged him outside the city and killed him” also mean that His redemptive death applied no longer to the Jews only, but to all those outside,

**2. Tribute to Caesar** (Luke 20:20-26). Jesus’ reply to the spies sent to trap Him about the payment of taxes is a masterful trap of His own,

which “completely disconcerted them and reduced them to silence.” For Luke, the question about paying tax to Caesar (Luke 20:20-25) was important to his Gentile communities. Jesus was innocent of any crime against the state. He rejected the position of the Zealots, who advocated force, without accepting the position of the Herodians. These were supporters of Herod as king and refused to pay such taxes. At that time, only Rome could mint money or permit a city or ruler to do so. By having the coins with them, the questioners showed that they accepted the authority of Rome. The image on the coins showed the propriety of paying the tax. In “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s,” Jesus did not mean to divide the world into God’s and Caesar’s, as though politically. He left it to the decision of each person to solve the opposing claims of God and Caesar. Where they conflict, Christians must speak out for their beliefs. Our bishops have recently said that in the public forum, Christians must be heard. Do we speak up?

**3. Sadducees; Resurrection of the Dead** (Luke 20:27-38). The Sadducees have a question to trap Jesus, too. (Remember, they were the landed class of aristocrats in Israel, who protected their land and fortunes by upholding Herod and lying low about Rome.) Their question about the woman married to seven brothers, without having a child, was the case of a “levirate” marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-6) which provided for the continuation of a family in the clan and tribe. We will take up Jesus’ answer later.

**4. Scribes** (Luke 20:39—21:4). Some Scribes were impressed by His answer to the Sadducees; and said so, but Jesus challenged them with a question of His own (Luke 20:41-44) which showed their inconsistency in rejecting Him. And then He launched into an uncovering of their hidden evils, their “parading around” to receive honor, their long prayers in public as though holy, while at the same time “they go through the savings of widows,” which the people did not realize. He said this before all the people,

and promised that “the heavier sentence will be theirs.”

This sort of talk did not make Jesus’ life any safer. Again, He has spoken out on the theme of wealth and stewardship, which we saw so strongly last week. And He compared this ill-gotten wealth of the scribes with the little savings of one poor widow who gave all of it to the temple treasure. In the eyes of God she put in more than all the rest. When we give out of our need, not our surplus, Jesus’ reward and praise and gratitude is given quickly. Do we see that Jesus did the same as the widow, sacrificing a longer life and apostolate to give His “all” in one generous self-sacrifice?

#### **IV. JESUS LOOKS INTO THE FUTURE—NEAR AND FAR**

**A. The Destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem** (Luke 21:5-9). Some of His disciples commented on how the temple was adorned with precious stones and votive offerings, and Jesus told them of its destruction. (The Roman general, Titus, son of the emperor, later besieged Jerusalem, burned the temple and ordered the debris removed.) The apostles asked when it would be, and Jesus cautioned them not to be misled; He made it clear that the Temple’s ruin, as the Jews believed, would not be the end of the world. “The end will not follow immediately.”

**B. The Siege of Jerusalem** (Luke 21:20-24). Luke, always so aware of suffering, shows us the sorrow and pain of Jesus as He came in sight of the holy city lying below the Mount of Olives: “And Jesus wept.” Then He reveals an event to come, “An enemy will wipe you out, you and your children.” He saw the whole terrible, devastating thing: “When you see Jerusalem encircled by soldiers...” He advises those in the city to flee, and those out not to come in. He thinks of the women with children. They will all “be trampled by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” Eusebius, an early historian, tells us that

the Christians were fore-warned and fled Jerusalem across the Jordan to Pella. In the words “times of the Gentiles,” Luke uses “kairos” which alluded to God’s time for an event. He uses the word “klaio”—a strong word for “anguished emotion” for Jesus’ lament.

**C. The Kingdom on Earth** (Luke 21:10-19, 29-34). Jesus tells the Apostles and the people of signs to come that we now see as a history of each age in the church, beginning with the Apostles: “nation will rise against nation ... earthquakes, plagues, famines...—they have been throughout history—and He adds one (for our times?) “in the sky, fearful omens and great signs.” But, “Before any of this” He says, will be persecutions because of His name. He strengthens the sad tale by promising that He would give them words of wisdom against their adversaries and that by patient endurance, “you will save your lives.”

As the world waits for the protracted and unexpected endtime, Jesus speaks to us as well as His first listeners: “Be on guard lest your spirits become bloated with indulgence and drunkenness and worldly cares.” The “day of the Lord” mentioned many times in scripture (See Amos 5:18, Zephaniah 1:14ff, Matthew 11:22, 2 Peter 2:9, and 1 Thessalonians 5:2) can come at any time. But it is a mistake to try to lay out a calendar of events and days. It cannot be computed as a calendar day. “The Father has reserved that to Himself.” This is the expectation that saves many and keeps them faithful to Jesus’ teaching. The Church is secure as a Plan Of God, firmly based on the word of Jesus, looking forward in the hope and expectation of soon being gathered home in an attitude of watching and fidelity. Are we on guard, with our spirits free from “indulgence ... and worldly cares”?

**D. The Kingdom of God.** For centuries, the Jews also expected a kingdom of God on earth. With Rome ruling, to them it was Satan’s rule, and when John the Baptist came, followed by Jesus, proclaiming the approach of the kingdom of

God, it was truly exciting. When Jesus said it was “near at hand” and would suddenly come, they looked for an event, clear and unmistakable. When He did not produce it, they rejected Him. But Jesus also had said that the day of the Lord, the kingdom of God, would come unknown to us; even that it was already here. In fact, the Messianic age, the time after Jesus, is the final age. We are already in the kingdom of God on earth, for Satan has already been overcome again and again; the sick have been healed again and again. Jesus’ miracles were the sign of its beginning, but not the end of the victories. The parables of the seed and the dough are about the kingdom of God among us. As we heard last week, the kingdom is never earned but always bestowed. After all, an inheritance is an unearned gift. The banquet-meal stories of Jesus imply communion with God and with each other in that kingdom, and it begins on earth with Baptism!

## **V. THE END OF THE WORLD (Luke 21:25-28, Matthew 24:29)**

These cosmic upheavals are like the fig tree—signs of the budding, after winter, the deadest-looking time of all, to a summer of beauty and fruit. They precede the final achievement of Jesus’ redemption—God’s powerful liberation of His people: Then will come the day of the Lord, which we first heard about in Daniel 7:13.

**A. The Endtime.** The Greek word for endtime is “eschaton”—the fact of an endtime, and its study is called eschatology. For the Jews, history was moving toward an end, a fulfillment; it was time pushing toward a goal. Another Greek term, “Apocalyptic” means; the how of the endtime. We find both ideas mixed together in the Synoptic accounts of Jesus’ words just before His death. This is a most important and strengthening aspect of our belief as Christians. In with these terms, another, “Parousia,” means a visit, a coming of a great visitor such as an emperor or king. We have, in these accounts of Jesus’ words, the fact, the how, of the endtime, and that it will be followed

by other events: a return of Jesus to the world, a final judgment of the human race as individuals, and a new time and world! Let us look at these teachings.

**B. The Parousia** (Luke 21:27-28, Matthew 24:30-31). The Son of Man will step forth from the tumbled cosmic powers, escorted by angels, His assistants in judgment. The archangels will announce Jesus' coming (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The angels will gather men to judgment (Matthew 13:39-41) on the highest mountains (Mark 13:27). And Jesus tells us to "stand erect" (with unbowed heads, but not for the reason the Pharisee had!) "and hold your heads high, for your deliverance is at hand." Note this time He does not say; "the Kingdom is near," for we have already been in the kingdom and have helped bring it to completion. No, our deliverance is near! There will be tremendous bursts of joy in the redeemed over the earth at the glorious sight in the sky—Jesus at last visible to us in glory!

**C. Then Comes the Judgment.** Matthew wrote of it in Jesus' words (Chapter 25:31-46) as a shepherd separating the sheep from the goats—the good from the bad, and calling his sheep to the Kingdom "prepared for you from the beginning of the world." John in 20:11-14 of Revelation (last book in the Bible), sees a "large white throne and the One who sat upon it." Each person was judged according to his conduct. "Where we go there depends on what we go after here," is a Christian axiom.

We go back to the Sadducees' question, trying to trap Jesus; "Whose wife will she be in the resurrection?" Now, the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, so they thought they had Jesus trapped. But He transcended such earthly situations, saying that bodily generation would not be needed in heaven, that all would be in a special relationship with others as God is in Himself, and

as the angels are. All is a time of mutual love. His words taught the after life of the dead, and He cited the living Abraham and the patriarchs in God's presence.

## VI. THE NEW JERUSALEM AND THE NEW EARTH

John in Revelations 21 tells us of a wonderful fact of the Endtime, as also does St. Peter in 2 Peter 3:13. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... I saw a new Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride prepared to meet her husband." In John 21:1-21, he tries again to describe it, gleaming with the splendor of God. It is a great consolation and strength for Christians on the earth still, to read these verses. They are written for the very purpose that apocalyptic writings have: to encourage God's people by showing the final victory, the great reward for perseverance. "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes—no more death or mourning, nor crying nor pain."

Further, there will be a new temple, "The Lord, the Almighty, is its temple—he and the Lamb." Jesus and His Church, all united to Him, are the temple. Jesus is the light whose glory shines through all. It is sobering to think that after the Romans destroyed the temple of the Jews, that they have never re-built it, have they ever offered a sacrifice to God since? Since 1517, have most Protestant Christians? Catholics offer to God on every altar daily, the spotless Lamb. In heaven, all will see Him "face to face and bear his name on their foreheads. The Lord God shall give them light and they shall reign forever" (Revelations 22:5).

We then, if we witness faithfully, will arrive at the New Jerusalem, after our journey with Jesus to this City of God, with its Temple of the Persons in Godhead, and with all the saved of our race—in the Kingdom—to live, as we heard in our childhood, happily ever after.

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**QUESTIONS FOR LESSON 17**  
**Luke 22:1 - 65**

Day 1 Read all the Notes and references. Pinpoint a lesson you learned on

a. the actions and attitudes of the Jewish leaders

b. Jesus' response to their pressures

c. the End-Time

Day 2 Read Luke 22:1-6; Matthew 26:1-5; Mark 14:1-2.

a. What were the high priests, scribes, (and Satan) doing at that Passover?

b. Read Luke 22:7-13, Matthew 26:17-19. How does Luke 22:13 suggest what we call the Eucharist?

Day 3

a. How is the Eucharist (the Mass) a remembrance of Jesus (Luke 22:19)?

b. What does the Eucharist do for your life?

Day 4      How might one today play the role of Judas at Mass (Luke 22:21-22)?

Day 5      Why do you think Peter was not disqualified from leadership by his denials (Luke 22:21-32, Luke 22:54-62)?

Day 6

a. If you had a time when you prayed like Jesus (Luke 22:42), what advice can you give to others about such a time?

b. How did you get through the difficulty (Hebrews 5:7-8, Matthew 6:10)?