

*Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws*

Adam Hamilton

*Chapter 4 Discussion*

*On the Journey to Jerusalem (pgs. 59-80)*

*Biblical Foundations Luke 9-17*

**Opening Prayer**

Faithful God, your Son Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem, where he would accomplish the work of your salvation. As we study incidents from his journey to that holy city, may your Spirit show us how we may more closely and faithfully follow him—caring for the kind of people for whom he cared, and demonstrating your power to heal, to seek, and to save—until we come, by his grace, to praise you in the New Jerusalem forever.

Amen.

**Before We Start...**

- Why do you think Luke devoted so much of his gospel to narrating this journey?
- Christians sometimes refer to living as Jesus's disciples as a journey. Do you find this image helpful? Why or why not?

**Lessons from Jesus's Final Journey**

- Hamilton leads us through several stories in Luke about Jesus's final journey. The point that is made clear is that the journey, isn't linear.
  - What does the writer of Luke seem to want to emphasize on Jesus's journey to Jerusalem?

**SKIM Luke 9-19**

- Some have been encountered already in this study.
  - Which of the stories or teachings stand out to you the most?
  - How do these stories highlight Jesus's ministry to lift up the lowly?
- Hamilton highlights the increasing tension between Jesus and the Pharisees and other religious leaders as Jesus journeys toward Jerusalem.

**In our study book Skim pgs. 63-68**

- Religious leaders and others in the crowd claim that Jesus casts out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons (Luke 11:14-26).

- A Pharisee criticizes Jesus for not washing his hands before eating, and Jesus responds with a harsh criticism of his own against the Pharisees and legal experts (11:37-52).
- The Pharisees and legal experts begin to plot against Jesus and the resent him (11:53-54).
- Jesus teaches the crowd to “watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees—I mean, the mismatch between their hearts and lives” (12:1).
- Jesus heals a woman on the sabbath, leading to an exchange between him and the synagogue leader over whether healing on the sabbath is appropriate (13:10-17).

### *Food for thought...*

- Why do you think the tension between Jesus and the religious leaders was increasing at this time?
  - At this time Jesus is making his final journey. He is on his way to be crucified, he is taking in everything that he possibly can while remaining calm. He is in the stages preparing for his trial, death, and resurrection, but most of all he is trying to also prepare his disciples on how to continue to heal and teach the great mission after he his gone.
- What did the religious leaders seem to be responding to?
  - They seem to be still responding to how he preaches and teaches and disregards the law itself when people are involved.
- What seems to be the priority for the religious leaders in these encounters?
  - What is Jesus’s priority? Bringing, life and salvation to the outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws. Lifting up the lowly and resetting the whole of creation.
- In what way do you see Jesus ministering with the outsider, outcast, and outlaws in these parables?
- Where and how does Jesus lift up the lowly?
  - Everywhere he goes, by helping the people that no one else wants to help, no one cares to help, or the people that everyone judged wrongfully and rudely.
- Who in your community or in our world would be critical of Jesus today?
  - What would they criticize about him? ○ How do you think Jesus would respond?

- Where in your life do you behave more like the religious leaders than Jesus toward others?
- What do you hear God calling you to do in order to be more Christlike?
- Where do you find hope in these stories of Jesus's encounter with the religious leaders and with the outsiders and outcasts?

### *The Samaritan Leper: The Ultimate Outsider and Outcast*

#### *Read Luke 17:11-19*

- Jesus meets these men in the broader region between Samaria and Galilee (verse 11).
  - Why is this in-between setting important to understanding the story?
    - This provides a context for the people that we will encounter, and the way that people will act towards one another.
    - Have you ever had an important encounter with someone in an in-between setting? ○ What happened?
  - Why is knowing about the first-century relationship between Jew and Samaritans important for understanding the story of Jesus healing the ten men with skin disease?
  - What other parallels, if any, to these people's relationship do you see in society today?
  - The "uncleanness" skin disease caused was ritual, not moral. Yet as Hamilton shows us, the lepers had to live as outsiders—literally prohibited from living in the community. That social marginalization would have compounded their suffering from the disease.
  - Who does our society push to its margins, and why?
    - How much direct contact have you had, or do you have with people on society's margins?
  - How commonly do you think people make moral assumptions about people who have been marginalized?

#### *Giving Thanks*

Hamilton notes in verse 15, "Here the story shifts from Jesus's compassion to one leper's gratitude" (Luke pg. 76).

- Why is Jesus surprised at the Samaritan man's return? (verses 17-18)
  - Because others were overlooking the fact that they have been healed. They did not say "Thank You" to Jesus. They are celebrating their gain. Not realizing that their loss will be much greater later.
- Why do you imagine the nine other men didn't return?
- What, if anything, do you imagine Jesus thought about those nine men, and why?
  - There are several things that could be said here, but what do we think Jesus truly thought.
    - They are healed, let them live their lives.
    - They are healed, they finally can rejoin their families.
    - They are healed, but do they truly see the love of God that was just shown to them. They were given mercy, and they are totally oblivious.
    - Can't they see I just gave them new life through mercy that I showed them, but they in return do not thank me, and I will now give my life for these people, who seem to be ungrateful.
    - Their lives are restored, now I must make the ultimate sacrifice, to lay down ones life for their friends.
- When, if ever, has an expression of faith from someone outside your community of faith surprised you?
- How do you most often express gratitude to other people?
- What's the most powerful way someone has expressed gratitude to you?

Hamilton writes, "The Samaritan leper helps us learn that the appropriate response to Jesus, to his love and grace, his friendship and mercy, his lifting up the lowly, is gratitude (Luke Pg. 76).

- How do you express gratitude in your life?
- What are you moved to give thanks to God for?
- When have you found or when do you find it most difficult, if ever, to give thanks for God's blessings?
- Who do you know or know of who is a model of gratitude, and why?

- How do you encourage other people to give thanks to God?
- In what ways does your family or can your family give thanks to God together?

### ***As we come to a close...***

*As Jesus nears the end of his journey, drawing near to Jericho, we find the familiar story of Jesus welcoming the children.*

### ***Read Luke 18:15-17***

- *Think about the importance of children in your life—such as your children, your grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other children you know.*
- *What hopes do you have for these children?*
- *What do you desire for those children in life?*

*Intercessions for the children and youth of today... silently or aloud.*

***Keep this in mind—Jesus lifted up the lowly—that is, those who have little power to act or speak for themselves, who are dependent on others and, too often, dismissed. Jesus saw them, valued them, and welcomed them, and calls us to do the same.***

### ***Closing Prayer...***

*As you journeyed to Jerusalem, Lord Jesus, you showed God's love and mercy to those whom others pushed away or overlooked altogether. Fill us with your compassion for those who are marginalized, despised, and ignored, for as we draw closer to them, you draw us closer to yourself. Amen.*

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### *The Journey to Jerusalem*

Forty percent of Luke’s Gospel, ten chapters, has its setting as Jesus’s journey to Jerusalem, where he will be put to death. This journey begins at 9:51, where it is stated that Jesus “determined to go to” or “he set his face to go” to Jerusalem.

We read:

As we read in Luke 9:22-25 Jesus attempted to prepare them for this journey.

<sup>22</sup>And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

<sup>23</sup>Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. <sup>24</sup>For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. <sup>25</sup>What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

However, we see again in this reading the reversal of fortunes. He said that the Son of man must suffer, be rejected and die, but he will be raised again on the third day.

The author also notes that anyone who wants to follow Jesus must deny themselves, be willing to sacrifice themselves daily, and follow him. The one who wishes to save his life will lose it, and the one who loses his life will be saved.

These things that Jesus taught were very confusing for the people, and they are still confusing today. Jesus sometimes taught them things that didn't make sense to them, but they were at least able to hear Christ's call to self-denial, the reminder that you can gain the world and lose your soul.

### *Not a Linear Journey*

There were only two main routes to get from Galilee to Jerusalem. No matter which route was taken it would take about five to nine days to get there depending on your pace, and the number of times you stopped.

As we follow Jesus during these Chapters, it does not make too much chronological sense, or even geographical sense. However, knowing that he was on his way to be crucified, the parables we just studied start to mean something different, and we realize that Jesus is thinking about his death in Jerusalem as he teaches each day.

The Story of Mary and Martha took place on this final journey. This changes Jesus' words to Martha "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. One thing is necessary, Mary has chosen the better part. It won't be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42)

These words start to take on a more serious and maybe even somber meaning and have more of a sense of urgency.

### *Lessons from Jesus's Final Journey*

Luke 10, Jesus sends out his seventy-two disciples to the towns and villages of the region, commissioning them to "heal the sick who are there, and say to them "God's kingdom has come upon you." (Verse 9)

In doing this we are seeing that Jesus is preparing for his departure, which is not far off. There will come a time when he will not be with them. His plan of succession is this: *He sends them out in pairs of two, and tells them to do what they've seen him do.* He is getting them ready for his death, however, they are not aware of this yet. Upon returning, He has a celebration for what they have



accomplished, he also encourages them, and tells them he has given them authority over “all the power of the enemy.” (Verse 19)

Luke 10 also give us the two greatest commandments:

### *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

<sup>25</sup>On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>26</sup>“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

<sup>27</sup>He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’<sup>[a]</sup>; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>[b]</sup>”

<sup>28</sup>“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

At this time, Jesus’ tone begins to change. He is on his way to Jerusalem to be put to death at the request of these religious leaders, and that his time is short, that Jesus becomes harsh with the religious leaders and their rules.

### ***Luke 11:37-54***

#### *Woes on the Pharisees and the Experts in the Law*

<sup>37</sup>When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. <sup>38</sup>But the Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal.

<sup>39</sup>Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. <sup>40</sup>You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? <sup>41</sup>But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

<sup>42</sup>“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

<sup>43</sup>“Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces.

<sup>44</sup>“Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it.”

<sup>45</sup>One of the experts in the law answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also.”

<sup>46</sup>Jesus replied, “And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.

<sup>47</sup>“Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them.<sup>48</sup> So you testify that you approve of what your ancestors did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs.<sup>49</sup> Because of this, God in his wisdom said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.’<sup>50</sup> Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world,<sup>51</sup> from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all.

<sup>52</sup>“Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.”

<sup>53</sup>When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions,<sup>54</sup> waiting to catch him in something he might say.

The Pharisees criticize Jesus for not ritually washing his hands as their rules required (Luke 11:37-38). At that point he unleashes a series of critiques that were quite harsh as if to say, Really? You’re upset that I didn’t pour the cup of water over my hands for ritual purity before I eat? “You Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and platter, but your insides are stuffed with greed and

wickedness. Foolish people! Didn't the one who made the outside also make the inside? Therefore, give to those in need from the core of who you are, and you will be clean all over." (Luke 11:39-41).

Keep in mind this was one of the more gentle things Jesus said to the Pharisees.

The act of generosity to the poor actually serves to cleanse our hearts and souls. When we do this we become Instruments of God. We deny ourselves and take up the cross.

Jesus later goes on to say: "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees—I mean, the mismatch between their hearts and lives" (Luke 12:1b). He says do not be afraid of those who can kill the body, but instead to fear the One who controls your eternal fate.

*From Luke Commentary:*

It is obvious that what Luke describes here took no longer place in the house of the Pharisee that had invited Jesus to dinner. And it is not necessary to assume that this scene followed immediately upon the previous one.

Jesus uses the term "yeast" here as an image of hypocrisy. At other times He used the same word in a positive context as in comparing the Kingdom of God to a woman who uses yeast to bake bread. We read: "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."<sup>440</sup>

In the celebration of the Passover, yeast was banned from the meal and from the house. For a whole week, following the Passover, the Israelites were commanded to eat bread without yeast.<sup>441</sup> Nothing baked with yeast could be brought as a sacrifice, except in the wave-offering on Pentecost.<sup>442</sup>

The yeast used in Biblical times was actually a lump of dough kept from previous baking, which had begun to decompose. The bacteria that had started to rot the dough would make a new batch of dough rise and produce the fluffy kind of bread such as we eat nowadays.

In the image used yeast stands for a form of moral corruption. In the case of the Pharisees, it was their hypocrisy Jesus talked about. The Apostle Paul uses the same image, not of personal corruption, but of the fellowship of a church that had turned sour. The church in Corinth had allowed a person, who openly lived

in sin, to remain as a member in their midst. Paul wrote to them: “Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast — as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.”

Jesus in his teaching on the Journey often, seems irritated, frustrated, and maybe put off by the way the people of the world are carrying themselves. In his teaching about possessions and money, he tells them to guard themselves of greed, because one’s life is not determined by ones possessions, even you are wealthy. So no matter the amount of wealth or the number of material possession that we have, our life is not determined on that. It is how we carry ourselves according to the plan of God, his plan of succession for us on the earth.

He tells them to sell their possessions and give what they do not need to the poor, create for yourselves a wallet that doesn’t wear out for treasure in heaven never runs out.

In Luke 13:10-17 Jesus was in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Pharisees and religious leaders set rules of what could or could not be done on the sabbath. Jesus saw a woman who was powerless and infirm there, feeble, and frail and bent over. When he saw her he called her to him, placed his hands on her and healed her. She straightened up at once and praise God. (Verses 12-13)

The synagogue leaders chastised the woman for needing to be healed on the Sabbath. They said you have six other days to come for healing, come be healed on those days. However, responded:

<sup>15</sup>The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water?<sup>16</sup> Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”

There is no indication where or when this miracle of healing took place. This is also the only instance we

read about when Jesus taught in a synagogue on His way to Jerusalem for His last journey. Luke, the physician, makes clear that the woman's problem was not merely physical. It was a demonic spirit that had kept her bent over. We are not told whether this woman had faith or not. Jesus takes the initiative in this healing. His reason for doing so was, obviously, not only to free the woman, but to prove a point about the meaning of the Sabbath. One of the unusual features of this healing is the fact that Jesus spoke to the woman, declaring her to be healed, and then laid hands on her. We do not read that Jesus addressed the demon and thus exorcised her, but, evidently, that was what happened.

It is interesting to observe that the synagogue ruler did not address Jesus, but the congregation, telling them that it was a sin for them to come and be healed on the Sabbath, as if that constituted "work." It was only Jesus who worked, not the woman. There may be a special intended insult in the fact that the ruler did not address Jesus personally, as if He was known to be an incorrigible Sabbath offender. In answering, Jesus, in turn does not address the ruler personally either. The word "hypocrites" is plural, indicating that this man was a member of a whole group of hypocritical people who corrupted the Sabbath concept.

Originally, the Sabbath was a commemoration of creation. We read: "By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."

The Sabbath was incorporated in the Decalogue as a commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."<sup>488</sup>

Yet, after sin entered God's creation, the Father broke the Sabbath Himself. We read in John's Gospel that Jesus answered His accusers: "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."<sup>489</sup> The Sabbath, from a day of rest, became a day of restoration. Jesus indicates that the Sabbath

was particularly suited for healings, such as these.

One of the most interesting features in the present story is the fact that Jesus calls the woman “a daughter of Abraham.” The fact that she was Abraham’s daughter gave her the right to be healed. It gave her the right to be free from satanic interference in her life. Jesus would use the same terminology at the salvation of Zacchaeus, saying: “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.”<sup>491</sup>

The Apostle Paul extends the concept of being Abraham’s daughter or son to all believers in Jesus Christ, saying: “Consider Abraham: ‘He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.’ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you.’ So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.”<sup>492</sup>

The important point here is that Jesus refused to let her suffer any longer. But yet he also still has not alienated the Pharisees quite yet.

Even though Jesus is on his journey to his death, he has not stopped lifting up the lowly. He continues to always seek out the lesser people in the world and help them. He does this because we all fall short of God’s will no matter how hard we try to stay on track. The God that we love and serve, who come to us in Jesus, has a heart like this for sinners and tax collectors, for the lost and broken, for the people who have wandered from him, in hopes that they will through his guidance and direction continue to follow him and carry out the ultimate plan that God has laid out for us.

### ***Lepers: The Ultimate Outsiders and Outcasts***

“Skin Disease” is the Greek word *lepra*, which means is usually translated “leprosy.” Leprosy proper, usually called Hansen’s disease, can cause lesions on the body and physical deformities. Biblical leprosy may have included other, less serious illnesses, if included this form of leprosy as well.

Lepers were instant outcasts, especially in the light of the biblical laws concerning skin disease.

*Read Leviticus 13:45-46*

*<sup>45</sup>“Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, <sup>[a]</sup>cover the lower part of their face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’<sup>46</sup> As long as they have the disease, they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.*

The “lepers” were literally outcasts, as skin disease in the first century forces people to live as outsiders. The most recent instant of this is during COVID-19 quarantine which is a minor case, compared to those who were outcast in Jesus’ time.

*Read Luke 5:12-13*

*<sup>12</sup>While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. <sup>[a]</sup>When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”*

*<sup>13</sup>Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” And immediately the leprosy left him.*

Luke does not give any indication where this healing of a leper took place. We don’t learn either how much time elapse between the previous story and this one. As a physician, Luke must have been particularly interested in the eye-witness reports of people being healed by Jesus.

“Leprosy in biblical times was the name given to a variety of diseases, some curable and some not. In its worst form it was a greatly dreaded and very dreadful disease. It was both disfiguring and fatal and the ancient world’s only defense against it was quarantine (Lev. 13:46). Sufferers were forbidden to approach other people, and to prevent accidental contact they were required to call out ‘Unclean’ (Lev. 13:45). They had no way of earning a living and had to depend on charity. The psychological effects of all this seem to have been as serious as the physical. People had (and often have) an attitude to leprosy different from that to any other disease. It was defiling. People were ashamed of it, though it was no fault of their own. Jesus healed lepers and saw in this one of the signs of his Messiah-ship (7:22).’

One of the things that really matters in life....is touch. We are told that “Jesus reached out and touched him....” This touch is something those who have been outcast may not have experienced in such a long time, that when it happens it is something that means the world.

### *The Samaritans*

There was bad blood between the Jews and the Samaritans. The animosity had existed for hundreds of years. 2 Kings 17 will give you a sense of how Jews in the time of 2 Kings was compiled viewed the Samaritans. This is very similar to the Jewish-Palestinian relationship of today. Samaritans were treated by many Jews as unclean and second class. They viewed the Samaritan faith as defective and their lives as impure. The Samaritans have developed their own response to the Jewish disdain. They said that the Jews were not true Jews. However, there were people among both the Jews and the Samaritans who did not embrace this conflict, and who sought out to treat one another as neighbors and friends.

However, there is the story of the Samaritan who stopped to help the leper, who gave him shelter, food, and cared for him as if nothing was wrong. We need to keep this in mind remember that we need to help others, to help others is truly what God requires of us. BE THE SAMARITAN. He sacrifices and demonstrates love and justice.

### *A Lesson from the Samaritan Leper*

*“Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee.<sup>12</sup> As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy<sup>[a]</sup> met him. They stood at a distance<sup>13</sup> and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”*

As we recall lepers were ostracized, in some ways the ultimate outcast. When Jesus encountered these ten men, he showed them mercy. Mercy is defined as undeserved kindness, compassion, or help. Jesus does not ignore anyone in need, because they are his primary focus. Although he showed these ten compassion and mercy, only one came back to thank Jesus, while the others were celebrating. The words “Thank You” are the essence of Christian Worship.



## *The Journey Nears Its End*

The final passages that the author brings up are Luke 18:15-17.

### *The Coming of the Kingdom of God*

<sup>20</sup>Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed,<sup>21</sup> nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Then he said to his disciples, “The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it.<sup>23</sup> People will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them.<sup>24</sup> For the Son of Man in his day<sup>[d]</sup> will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.<sup>25</sup> But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

<sup>26</sup>“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man.<sup>27</sup> People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

<sup>28</sup>“It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building.<sup>29</sup> But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

<sup>30</sup>“It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.<sup>31</sup> On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything.<sup>32</sup> Remember Lot’s wife!<sup>33</sup> Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.<sup>34</sup> I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left.<sup>35</sup> Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.”<sup>[b6][e]</sup>

<sup>37</sup>“Where, Lord?” they asked.

He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.”

The other passage *Luke 18:15-17*

### *The Little Children and Jesus*

<sup>15</sup>People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. <sup>16</sup>But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” <sup>17</sup>Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

The Parents in this passage want to bless their children. The disciples see these parents coming with their infants, and they think “Jesus is too busy and far too important to be troubled with blessing babies!

Jesus chastises his disciples earlier for wanting to call down fire on the Samaritan village that refused him; here they are trying to refuse babies. He corrects them for scolding these parents saying, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Matthew 19:14).

The new community, the new church embraces the little ones. It was said by Father Joseph Fitzmyer “To receive a little child is to accept and esteem even the lowliest of human society.”