



Luke 19

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Tape #8063
By Chuck Smith

Back in verse thirty-one of the previous chapter, “Then Jesus took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem and all of the things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished” (Luke 18:31). Jesus was thinking about His death. He was thinking about Isaiah 53. He was thinking about Psalm 22. He was thinking about Zechariah chapter nine. He was thinking of His being presented but being despised and rejected and crucified. Thinking of Daniel 9, “The Messiah will be cut off.”

The disciples were thinking, Wonderful, this is the hour. He’s going to throw over the Roman government. He’s going to establish now the kingdom of God and we’re going to see a world that is filled with peace and righteousness. We’re going to subdue all of the enemies of God. This is the hour of victory for God’s children. So as they journeyed towards Jerusalem, very contrasting thoughts in the mind of the Saviour with those that were going on in the minds of the disciples.

As they are now journeying towards Jerusalem. They pass through the lower city of Jericho. As they are leaving the lower city of Jericho and coming to the upper city. The upper city was the wealthy part of Jericho. It is there that Herod had built a winter palace. It was now being occupied by his son, Archelaus, who was a tetrarch of that area. Beautiful winter palace replete with gymnasium and swimming pools and all. The ruins of which you can still see today in upper Jericho.

And as they were passing from lower Jericho to upper Jericho, there was that blind man Bartimaeus who called out to Jesus. And when Jesus called him to come He said, What would you like? He said, Lord, I’d like to see. And so Jesus healed him and Bartimaeus followed.

That brings us now to chapter nineteen.

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich (19:1,2).

Publicans were tax collectors. If they were Jews, and Zacchaeus was, as Jesus identifies him as a son of Abraham, he was hated by his fellow Jews because he was considered a quisling. A collaborator with the enemy. He was taxing them and the money was going to Rome. In those days, Rome would lay out a certain specified tax for an area. The tax collectors with the power of the Roman government behind them would collect those taxes and would give to Rome the levy that they had made on the territory. Anything over what the Roman government had required belonged to the tax collector. He could keep anything that he could collect over what Rome had required as the taxes from that area.

So they were ruthless. They had the power of Rome behind them. They were known for their dishonesty, for their cheating. They were most of them rich, as was Zacchaeus.

And he sought to see Jesus who he was; but he could not because of the crowd, and because he was little of stature (19:3).

Already you can get the picture. Here’s a little Jew, hated by his neighbors, collecting taxes for Rome but filled with curiosity. Heard about Jesus. Wanted to see Him. And so we read that

He ran before and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus: for He was to pass that way (19:4).

He saw that Jesus is going down this road. He ran ahead of the crowd, climbed up in a sycamore tree: not a very dignified thing for sure, but he was so curious, he just wanted to see Jesus.

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and He saw him, and He said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at your house. And he made haste, and came down, and received Jesus joyfully. And when they saw it (19:5-7),

That is, the scribes and the Pharisees and probably a lot of the local people, that He had gone to be the

guest of a man that is a sinner, a crook, a thief.

they all murmured, and they said, He's gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold, And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:7-10).

I don't know if Jesus said this with sort of a smile, if He was making reference to the fact that Jews are usually pretty sharp with money matters and they're not apt to give much. And when this little Jew said, I'm going to give half of everything I have to the poor. If I've taken from any man by false accusation, going to restore it fourfold. Jesus said, You can be sure salvation has come to this house, because he is the son of Abraham. But then Jesus uttered these words, "For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

We note that in a way, this is almost an apology. This is in response to the fact that they were murmuring because He had gone to be the guest of a sinner. And in response to that murmuring about His keeping company with this sinner, He said, "I've come to seek and to save that which is lost." In another place, Jesus had said, "Those that are whole don't need the physician, but those that are sick. I didn't come, He said, to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:12,13).

And so we see Him at the house of a sinner but we see that when Jesus visits, salvation comes. "This day is salvation come to this house." Because that's His purpose, to seek and to save that which is lost. That was His mission, that's why God sent Him into the world. When Jesus was talking with Nicodemus, He said, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. And he that believeth is not condemned" (John 3:16-18).

Rejoice in that. He that believeth is not condemned. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). He came to seek and to save those who are lost. That's why we rejoice so much in Jesus Christ.

As they heard these things (19:11),

That is, as they heard Him making these declaration concerning Zacchaeus, salvation is come to his house, because I've come to seek and to save that which is lost.

he added and spoke this parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear (19:11).

I mentioned how that as they were going, they thought that this is it. He's going to set up the kingdom right now. This is the final journey up to Jerusalem. This is it. And thus, He is giving this parable to correct that mistaken notion. However, it's interesting when we get something so set in our minds, that we don't hear anything that's contrary to it. We only hear that which confirms. And somehow we just don't hear that which would be contrary to what we have set in our minds as going to happen. But He gave this parable because Jericho is only twenty miles or so from Jerusalem and they're going to make this final journey on up to Jerusalem. And so He gave them this parable.

He said, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and they sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us (19:12-14).

There is a bit of historic background here that makes this quite interesting. Zacchaeus, no doubt, lived in the upper part, he was very rich and so lived in the upper part of Jericho where the palace of Archelaus was. It is perhaps as He came out of the house of Zacchaeus, very rich, it could be that his house was adjacent to the palace of Archelaus. At least within view of it there in upper Jericho.

Archelaus was the tetrarch over this particular area. He had inherited it from his father, Herod the great. Archelaus wanted to be more than a tetrarch. He wanted the title of king. But he just couldn't take the title of king because he was under Rome and the Roman authority. So Archelaus went to Rome to appear before the Senate in order that they might bestow upon him the title of king. However, the Jews sent messages after Archelaus left to the emperor of Rome asking him not to give the title of king to Archelaus. They said we

don't want him to be our king. So when Archelaus got to Rome and made his presentation in order that he might be given the title of king, it was rejected by the Roman senate.

And so it could be that Jesus is picking up. It could be that Archelaus's palace is right there and so Jesus gives this parable that sort of relates to a bit of history that took place with Archelaus who had gone to Rome to get the title of king. So here is "a certain nobleman who went to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and he said unto them, Occupy till I come.

This is not to be confused with the parable of the talents that Matthew tells us about, in which it deals with one was given five talents, another four talents, another one talent. Those are dealing with abilities. This is just dealing, and notice everyone received the same, the one pound. And this is dealing with diligence with the things that are God's, with that which God has entrusted in your life. Using what God has entrusted unto you.

The command is, Occupy till I come. That is still the order of the Lord for us. Occupy till I come. We are not to try to guess the day and the hour that the Lord is going to return and then plan our lives accordingly. Go out and run up all of our credit cards to the limit thinking, I won't have to pay for these. The Lord is coming soon. But the command is to occupy until He comes. Stay busy about His work.

So the citizens, it says, hated him. He is, notice, He's not going to Jerusalem to be crowned as King. "He's going to go to a far country that He might receive the kingdom. But the citizens hated him and they said, We will not have this man to rule over us." Basically, that's the position that the nation of Israel took concerning Jesus Christ. We will not have Him to rule over us. But that is the position that the world still takes today.

I would say that that's the general position of the United States. We will not have this Man to rule over us. Generally speaking, people do not want a righteous ruler. They love, look what they voted for, I didn't say which election but I think you know.

So it came to pass (19:15),

He went to the far country to receive the kingdom and it came to pass,
that when he was returned, having received the kingdom (19:15),

When Jesus ascended into heaven, He received at that time the kingdom. He was crowned as King in heaven. The Father said, "Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Matthew 22:44). Jesus is there on the right hand of the Father waiting until the Father makes His enemies His footstool. God has given to Him the title of King. When He returns, He will return with the title, King of kings and Lord of lords. That's something that He already has received. He hasn't yet received the kingdom. He'll receive that when He returns. He'll then rule over the kingdom. But He is coming back as King to rule over the kingdom that the Father has given unto Him.

Unlike Archelaus who never did get the title. Jesus will have that title. "And He wore upon His thigh the words, King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:16). Having returned He received the kingdom, and
then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading (19:15).

A pound, of course, in England is an amount of money. It's around, it fluctuates between \$1.58 and \$2 or so, but here they're each one given and so he calls them. Paul the apostle speaks about that we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ in order that we might receive the rewards for the things that we have done in our bodies. This is not to be confused with the great white throne judgment of God where the sinners are going to appear to receive their sentence. But this is Christians, this is us. When Jesus returns, He will judge the earth in righteousness. We will appear before Him to be judged to receive the rewards that we've done according to our works. And so, here the king calls his servants to find out just what they've done with that which was entrusted to them.

Then came the first, saying, Lord, your pound has gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because you have been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities (19:16,17).

The Lord is apportioning the kingdom unto his servants. And that is speaking of the kingdom age when the Lord returns to establish God's kingdom upon the earth. And the amount of authority that the Lord gives to you then will be in ratio to what you have done with what God has given you now. You've been faithful; therefore, I'll make you ruler over ten cities. Because of your faithfulness in using that which God has given

to you to make gain for the kingdom of God.

And the second came, and said, Lord, your pound has gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is your pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because you are an austere man: you take up that you did not lay down, and you reap where you have not sown. And he said unto him, Out of your own mouth will I judge thee, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, taking up that I had not laid down, and reaping what I had not sown: Why then did you not give my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own at least with interest (19:18-23)?

The man did nothing. Didn't even take it to the bank and deposit it so that at least there would be something in return for what had been invested in him.

And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he has ten pounds.) [And Jesus said,] For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him (19:24-26).

What have you done or what are you doing with what God has entrusted into your keeping? One day you're going to have to give an answer to the Lord as you will be required to stand before Him and to give an accounting to Him of what He has entrusted into your keeping. Are you occupying? Are you using that which God has invested in you for the kingdom of God and for its expansion? You see, that's why when the kingdom of God does come, many people who have been very prominent in the worldly affairs and in worldly things will be heavenly paupers. And many people who have been earthly paupers will be rulers over large territories. It's your faithfulness in using what God has entrusted to you. Using it for Him and for His glory. And then He said,

But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me (19:27).

Coming to take vengeance upon the world, coming to judge the world and to set up His kingdom.

When he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem (19:28).

From Jericho to Jerusalem, it's all uphill. So He is ascending now, this is the final trek up to Jerusalem. Coming near, we're in the very last week of the life of Jesus as He leaves Jericho, comes on up to Jerusalem. Time of the Passover.

Josephus says that at the time of the Passover, there were some two million people that would gather in Jerusalem, above the normal inhabitants of the city. Overcrowded with pilgrims who had come to celebrate the feast of the Passover.

Came to pass, when he was come near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, And He said, Go into the village near you there; in which when you enter you will find a colt that is tied, whereupon yet never a man has sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do you loose him? You shall say unto him, Because the Lord has need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why are you loosing the colt? And they said, The Lord has need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come near, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives (19:29-37),

Bethany is actually on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. It is facing the Judaeen wilderness and you come from Bethany over the top of the Mount of Olives down into the Kidron valley and then back up into the city of Jerusalem. And so as He came over the top of the mount of olives, began the descent down the mountain,

the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all of the mighty works that they had seen (19:37);

This was it. There was tremendous excitement and rejoicing among the disciples. For He is making now His entry publicly into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. And they no doubt were thinking of the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9, where in prophesying the coming of the Messiah, he said "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King is coming unto thee: he is just, and having

salvation; he is lowly, riding upon a donkey, upon a colt, a foal of the donkey.” Riding in, the King, into Jerusalem, just as was prophesied. And the disciples were certain that this was the crowning hour. Jesus is now going to manifest Himself as the Messiah. Jesus is now going to set up the kingdom of God. And they were hilarious with joy and excitement as they were shouting, rejoicing, praising God with loud voices or shouting.

And they were saying, Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest (19:38).

They are beginning to quote from Psalm 118, which is noted as a Messianic psalm. Jesus made reference to it as referring to Himself. Have you not read the stone which the builders set at nought, the same has become the chief cornerstone? Peter also quotes it as a prophecy concerning Christ, and as you look at Psalm 118, this particular portion beginning with verse twenty-two, that begins with, “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:22-24).

Rejoice, O daughters of Zion. Shout for your King is coming. We will rejoice in it. And then, save now. Save now is the translation of the Hebrew word Hosanna. The other gospel writers tell us that the people were crying, Hosanna, Hosanna. Blessed be the King. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. So, “Hosanna, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, which hath showed us light.” [And then it's interesting, it goes right into] “bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar” (Psalm 118:25-27). A strange thing for the prophet to say when he's talking about the King coming, rejoicing and all. But bind now the sacrifice with cords unto the altar.

As Jesus is coming and this is the first time that Jesus allowed any public acclaim of Him as the Messiah. When He had fed the five thousand, they were going to try by force to acclaim Him as King and He left them and went into the mountain alone. When He would do marvellous miracles, He would say to them, Don't tell anybody. When He raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, He said, Now don't tell anybody. When He cleansed the leper, He said, Don't tell anybody, just go show yourself to the priest. But this day is different. This day, Jesus has set the stage deliberately. This day He is encouraging the disciples. He is encouraging their worship and their acclamation of Him as the King. And as they are shouting for joy, as they are rejoicing and praising God, as they are acclaiming Him as King, Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord,

Some of the Pharisees that were there among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke your disciples (19:39).

The word Master there is not in the sense of Lord, but Teacher, rebuke Your disciples. In other words, they interpreted that as it really was. That they were acclaiming Him as Messiah. They realized that's what they were doing and so they said, Rebuke them, stop them. You hear what they're saying?

And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out (19:40).

I love that. Somehow I wish that they would have held their peace. I'd love to have heard these stones crying out. *This is My Father's world, and to my listening ear, all nature sings and round me rings, the music of the spears.* If we could only hear it. If we were only in tune. Nature, created by Him. Innate nature, has enough intelligence to acknowledge Him as King and Lord.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, As He said, If you had only known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto your peace! but now they are hid from your eyes (19:41,42).

This is a special day. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that God has set for the revelation of the Messiah to the world. Dr. Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince*, has laid forth a very interesting thesis in which he seeks to correlate this day with the day that the commandment went forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, March 14, 445 B.C. If you are interested, he has done a lot of research, he has made some interesting computations and it is his thesis that this was exactly 483 years from the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem that Jesus made His entry into Jerusalem as King. As the prophet Daniel was told by Gabriel, that there are seventy sevens that are

determined upon the nation of Israel. And from the time that the commandment goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah the Prince will be seven sevens and sixty-two sevens or 483 years. And very interesting computations. If you're interested, the book *The Coming Prince*, Sir Robert Anderson.

Jesus said, "If you had only known at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto your peace! But they are hid from your eyes." He's weeping. He's weeping over their blindness. But He's weeping because He can see what the blindness is going to cause. And He begins to tell them what the blindness is going to cause.

The days shall come upon you, your enemies will cast a trench about you, and they will encircle you, and they will keep you in on every side (19:43),

The day is coming when your enemies are going to set a siege against the city of Jerusalem. Josephus describes this siege that took place under Titus, the Roman general. He describes the horror of the people within the city of Jerusalem who began to kill each other for food. The horrible starvation. According to Josephus in his book, *The Wars of the Jews*, more Jews were killed by their fellow Jews than by the Roman soldiers. Marauding bands began to go through the city raiding houses and killing people and taking the goods and the food. Anarchy broke out within the city. And the horrors of it are described by Josephus.

Jesus could see this. He could see the siege and the effects of the siege. He could see the starving people, the starving children, and as He could see this, He wept because this He knew was to be the price that they would have to pay for rejecting the Messiah.

They will lay you even with the ground (19:44),

That is, the city's going to be leveled.

your children within you; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another (19:44);

as He was making reference to the beautiful temple that Herod had built.

because [and this is the thing] you didn't know the day of your visitation (19:44).

How much it cost them. God visited. He kept His promise. He sent the Messiah. But because they did not know, they are going to pay a bitter, bitter price.

God expected them to know. God had given sufficient prophecies that they should have known. There was really no excuse for their blindness or for their ignorance. Even as there is no excuse for you if you reject Jesus as the Messiah. And even as the desolation came to them because of their rejection, so desolation will come to every man who rejects Jesus as his Messiah, as his Lord, as his Saviour.

As the book of Hebrews says, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation" (Hebrews 2:3); as been offered to us through Jesus Christ. The book of Hebrews also says, "He that despised Moses' law was put to death if there were two or three witnesses against him: [to testify that he had spoken evil of the law of Moses]. But of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, the person will be accounted worthy of, who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of His covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite to the Spirit of grace? For we know him who says, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. And again, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:28-31).

This was their day, their day of God's visitation. Their day when God was offering to them salvation. He was offering to them His promised Messiah. They rejected the Messiah to their own damage and hurt.

There is that day when God comes to you and God gives you the opportunity of eternal life. Opportunity to share in the kingdom of God. To become a citizen of God's kingdom. And if you reject, I'm certain that Jesus sheds a tear over you because He can see what's going to happen to all of those who have rejected Him as their Lord. "Certain fearful looking forward to the fiery indignation of the wrath of God whereby He will devour His adversaries" (Hebrews 10:27). A fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God.

And so he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that were selling therein, and them that were buying; And He said unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer (19:45,46):

Isaiah 56:7, He's quoting there where the Lord said, My house shall be called the house of prayer for all people. But then he quotes from Jeremiah, He said,

but you have made it a den of thieves (19:46).

Merchandising the things of God. Seeking to profit over the things of God. Making merchandise what

should be the house of prayer.

And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him (19:47),

The people were listening to Him gladly, gathering to hear Him. But the plot to put Him to death has already been hatched and they are now just looking for opportunity.

And they could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him (19:48).

They wanted to arrest Him. They wanted to get rid of Him. They were just looking for the way by which they might do it. They had determined it had to be done. So we move into the final hours now in the life of Christ as we continue on in Luke chapter twenty next week.

Father, we thank You for Your faithfulness in the keeping of Your word. What you have said, that You have done. What you have said, that will You do. We realize, Lord, that You're a faithful God Who keeps covenant. And Lord, we see the evidence of that throughout history. May we be wise and may we bow our knee and kiss the scepter of Jesus Christ and acknowledge and acclaim Him as our Lord and as our King. And may we humbly bow before Him receiving from Him those capacities. Being entrusted with His goods, may we go forth, Lord, that we might use that which You have given to us and multiply it so that when You come as King to receive the kingdom and to set up the kingdom, that we will be able to lay at Your feet that, Lord, which we've been able to gain through what was invested in us. Use us, Lord, to do Your work and to bring You glory. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.