

Study Guide to
Six Things You Need to Know About God's Kingdom

Luke 18:31-19:44

Introduction: This is the final section of the middle portion of Luke's Gospel in which Luke describes the things that occur while Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem ultimately to be crucified (cf. 9:51). This section reorients the reader's focus on that purpose and explains Jesus' mission with new and more detailed information than has been given up to this point.

I. God has a Kingdom and its King is Jesus Christ (18:35-43)

(Parallel passages: Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52)

This may seem elementary, but many people either don't know or don't consider that God actually does something besides just being God: he rules over his creation and over those whom he has redeemed. He is building a kingdom comprised of all those whom he has called out of the mass of sinful humanity (cf. Acts 15:14).

God rules over this kingdom through the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, to whom he has committed power and authority. This blind man in the story recognizes Jesus as the prophesied "Son of David" who is to rule over God's kingdom, which is centered in Israel but which will ultimately encompass all nations.

Read and Study the following passages: 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 2 (esp. v. 7); Psalm 89:20-29 (esp. vv. 26-27, 29).

The Psalm 2 passage indicates that (1) God does have a kingdom, (2) that this kingdom encompasses all nations, and (3) that those nations will rebel (and have rebelled) against him so that (3) he must raise up an Anointed One (4) to bring order and to exercise righteous judgment.

The 2 Samuel 7 and the Psalm 89 passages are centered around God's covenantal promise to David that he would cause David's sons to possess David's throne and rule his kingdom forever.

For further study: There are 17 verses in the New Testament that refer to Jesus as the Son of David. Using a concordance or Bible software can you find all 17? What do these verses say about Jesus as Son of David. Write a summary of each of these verses in your Bible Study notebook.

II. God's Kingdom is centered on the Cross of Christ (18:31-34)

(Parallel passages: Matt. 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34)

Verse 31 reminds us of the purpose of this middle section of Luke's Gospel (compare it to 9:51). These verses reveal the entire course of Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion and resurrection.

This is the seventh time Luke mentions or alludes to Jesus' suffering. The previous times are: 5:35; 9:22, 44; 12:50; 13:32; 17:25. Read each of these verses in the order they occur in Luke and see how some are explicit statements (9:22, 44) while the others are mere allusions or "foreshadowings."

Something to think about: Luke seems to imply that the disciples' lack of understanding is not the result of their ignorance (as in Mark's Gospel) but of a sovereign act of withholding their understanding (see also 24:16). God's truth must be revealed in his time and in his way.

III. Those who enter God's Kingdom are transformed (19:1-9)

(Parallel passages: none. This story is unique to Luke)

The familiar story of Zacchaeus contains all of the themes prominent in Luke's Gospel: the universal call of the gospel, the problem of wealth, the seeking and acceptance of outcasts, a sense of urgency, and of joy, the importance and necessity of restitution, the helping of the poor, and divine salvation.

Something to do: Verse 10 is often regarded as the "key verse" of the Gospel of Luke. Memorize this verse and ask the Lord to teach it to you as you meditate on it.

IV. God's Kingdom grows throughout the age (19:11-27)

(Parallel passage: Matt. 25:14-30)

Notice that this parable is connected to the story of (v. 11 "Now as they heard these things, He spoke..."). The outcome of this parable (vv. 24-26) seems unfair to us but was reasonable to the people of Jesus' day because in order to secure a future, one had to make the most of every opportunity. To fail to do so was to squander one's opportunity. Lord willing, we will look at this parable in more detail in a few weeks.

Compare this parable to the one in Matthew 25:14-30 and note the similarity and differences in preparation for the upcoming message from this parable.

V. God's Kingdom was revealed but people misunderstood the revelation (Luke 19:28-44)

(Parallel passages: Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; John 12:12-19)

Luke's account is different from that of the other Evangelists: he ends it not with Jesus entering the city, but with Jesus weeping over the city. Luke does this to emphasize that Jesus is not coming into his kingship, but to his rejection. This is not a contradiction (v. 45 indicates that he entered the city); Luke is simply making a point.

VI. God's kingdom embraces all nations (Luke 19:39-40)

The statement in v. 40 is unique to Luke and is fitting considering what Jesus says in vv. 41-45. The statement may come from Habakkuk 2:11. If so, then the stones may not only be crying out in rejoicing over the coming of the King, but also in judgment on those who refused to recognize him.

Read Hab. 2:6-20 and think about that passage in light of the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem pictured in Luke 21:5-28.