

BIBLE READING DAY 29, SUNDAY: MARCH 27

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19–31

“There was a certain rich man,” said Jesus, “who always dressed in the finest clothing and lived luxuriously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus who had been laid at his gate, covered with sores. He longed to be fed with the scraps from the rich man’s table, and the dogs used to come and lick his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus with him. And he cried, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame!’” But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus received bad things. But now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been placed, so that any who would pass from here to you cannot do so, nor can anyone cross from there to us.’

“Then I beg of you, Father,’ replied the rich man, ‘send Lazarus to my father’s house, for I have five brothers. Send him to warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them.’ ‘No, Father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But Abraham replied, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone should rise from the dead.’”

Forgiveness, Faith and Duty Luke 17:1-10

Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

And the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

So, the Lord said, “If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you. And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down to eat’? But will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink’? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, ‘We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

Healing of Ten Lepers Luke 17:11–19

Now it came to pass that on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus passed through the border of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a certain village, he was met by ten lepers who stood at a distance and shouted, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

When Jesus saw them, he said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.”

And it came to pass that as they went, they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and praised God with a loud voice and fell on his face before Jesus and thanked him. Now he was a Samaritan.

Then said Jesus, "Were there not ten who were cleansed? Where are the nine? Are none to be found returning to praise God except this foreigner?"

And he said to the man, "Rise, and go your way. Your faith has made you whole."

Jesus's Coming Requires Preparedness Luke 17:20–37

Now Jesus was asked by some Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, and he said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with great public display, neither will people say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'Look, there it is!' For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "The time will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man but will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Look, he is there!' or 'Look, he is here!' Do not go out to see, do not follow them. For as the lightning flashes across the sky from one end to the other, so shall the Son of Man be in his day. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying and being married, until the day Noah entered the ark, and then the flood came and destroyed them all. And as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, they were buying and selling, they were planting and building, but on the day Lot departed from Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all—so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

"In that day, let not the man who is on the housetop come down to carry away his possessions in the house, and let not the man who is out in the field return for the things he left behind. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to keep his life for himself will lose it, but whoever surrenders his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed; one will be taken, and the other left. Two women will be grinding together; one will be taken, and the other left."

"Where will all this take place, Lord?" they asked.

"Wherever the body is, there the vultures will be gathered together," replied Jesus.

The Right Kind of Praying Luke 18:1–14

Jesus then told them a parable to teach them that they ought always to pray and not to lose heart.

"In a certain city," he said, "there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded men. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Please see that I receive justice against my adversary.' For a long while, he refused. But later he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor regard men, yet because this widow is annoying me, I will secure justice for her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming.'"

Then the Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge said. And will not God secure justice for his elect who cry to him day and night, toward whom he is so patient? I tell you, he will secure justice for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find such persistent faith on the earth?"

Jesus also told this parable to some who were very sure that they themselves were righteous and who looked with disdain on everyone else:

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood erect in a conspicuous place and began to pray, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—greedy, deceitful, adulterers—or like this tax collector here. I fast twice a week, and I give tithes of all my income!'"

"But the tax collector, standing to one side, would not even look up toward heaven, but kept striking his breast and saying, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went home justified before God, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

Approximate Timeline of Jesus's Public Ministry

EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	1 st Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	1 st Feast of BOOTHS	WINTER	2 nd Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
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DEVOTIONAL DAY 29 (SUNDAY MARCH 27)

Are You Prepared?

Based on Luke 16:19–31, 17:1-37, Luke 18:1–14

Are you prepared for when lightning strikes? Do you wait for lightning to strike you or yours before you pay attention to a weather forecast? How often do you read or hear an imminent severe weather warning and do nothing? In the case of tornadoes or severe thunderstorms, do you wait until the tornado touches down at your house or the lightning strikes you or your house before you pay attention? Are you prepared?

Today, February 3, 2022 (the day I am writing this), Central Texans are hunkered down, closing offices, and staying home or inside as a two-day cold snap with freezing rain and snow passes through the area. The coverage by local news and weather channels leading up to today has been non-stop for about a week. Why? Because last year, February 2021, there was a severe ice and snowstorm event for which most Texans were totally unprepared. The temperatures dropped, it snowed, then rained, then froze and snowed a lot more. Roads became impassable, the electric power grid began to fail, and thousands of people were suddenly without heat, electricity and in some cases water. And it lasted for days! Because of last year's unprecedented weather event, this year Central Texans are prepared and have been preparing continuously throughout the past year. Many people suffered and incurred significant losses, but this year we all have been given a second chance.

Will the second coming of Christ come with a second chance for those who are not prepared? What does the Scriptures say? What did Jesus Himself say?

Luke 16:19-31 is the parable given by Jesus about the beggar Lazarus and the rich man. While it is not about the "second coming", it makes it clear what will happen at the time of our deaths. Both men died at the same time. The rich man went to Hell (Hades), where he was in torment (Luke 16:23-24). He looked up and saw Abraham, afar off with Lazarus who was being comforted. The rich man saw and spoke to Father Abraham requesting relief from his anguish. Abraham's response was, "*between us and you a great chasm has been placed, so that any who would pass from here to you cannot do so, nor can anyone cross from there to us*" (Luke 16:26). The rich man was not given a second chance once his earthly life ended. His eternal fate had been established because he was not prepared.

When it comes to the second coming of Christ or the end of our earthly lives, have we made preparation? Will there be warnings? What do we know from scripture and history? About the second coming, Jesus said, "*For as the lightning flashes across the sky from one end to the other, so shall the Son of Man come in his day*" (Luke 17:24). Scripture and prophecy continually teach us and give warning. Are we paying attention to this forecast and making preparations, or are we going to be surprised when this lightning bolt strikes us?

Lord, help me not to take things for granted and assume that what preparations I need to make in my Christian life today can be put off until another day. I want to be fully prepared today to see You face to face, because that date, time, hour, minute and second is really going to happen. That lightning bolt event has already been set by God, Our Father. I want to be ready.

--By Dan Jackson

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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