

## The Gospel of Luke - Chapter Nineteen

V. [Luke 9:51-19:27 - The Journey to Jerusalem \(continues/concludes\)](#)

V.c [Luke 17:11-19:27 - The third mention of the journey to Jerusalem \(continues/concludes\)](#)

### Summary of Chapter Nineteen

It was at this time that Jesus meets Zacchæus, a chief tax collector in Jericho. He was a very wealthy man, mostly because his trade was a dishonest one. Zacchæus wanted to see Jesus but he was a small man, so he climbed a tree that was on the route that Jesus would take. When Jesus got to the tree, he looked up and told Zacchæus to come down as he wanted to stay at Zacchæus' house that night. Zacchæus and his household became believers that very day.

The crowd that was following Jesus believed that, when they reached Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God would come. When Jesus heard this, he told them of the story of the rich man who went to a foreign country to become king; although there was a lot of opposition from those who remained behind, who didn't want him as king. Before leaving, he gave his servants each a sum of money to do business with. Two of the servants did well, saw a good return on their master's money, were blessed and given more responsibility. A third servant told his master that he had done nothing with the money and returned it to him without interest. He was chastised and cast out. God expects those who are followers of Jesus to use what they have been given to extend the Kingdom of God.

Jesus continued the journey to Jerusalem via Bethany and Bethphage. He instructs his disciples as to where they will find a donkey's colt for him to ride into the city to fulfil the scriptures. Jesus arrives in Jerusalem to a rapturous reception and he weeps over the city because of what he knows has become of it and what is still to transpire.

He goes straight to his Father's house, i.e. Herod's temple, where he clears out those selling livestock and changing money, saying they had made it a den of robbers. He returns there every day that week to continue his teaching.

V.c.ix [Luke 19:1-10 - Zacchæus the tax collector](#)

Jesus' encounter with Zacchæus is an example of the Kingdom of God bringing salvation to the outcasts. It also provides a lesson on the proper Kingdom use of money and possessions. It is the account of a rich man, who may have come by some of his wealth dishonestly but some through

pursuing his chosen career. Through an encounter with Jesus, he comes to faith and then chooses to use his wealth wisely. He enters the Kingdom yet remains comfortably well off.

Note that Jesus arrives in Jericho without pomp; not by chariot or horseback but on foot, jostled by the crowd; just an ordinary itinerant preacher but, in truth, far from it.

## <sup>1</sup> Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

### Luke 19:1

Jesus entered Jericho ties this account closely with the preceding passage: <<As Jesus approached Jericho>> (Luke 18:35a). As previously stated, Jericho in this period, was quite different from the OT city.

This was not the old Jericho that was destroyed by Joshua in Joshua Chapter 6. After its destruction we read that it should never be rebuilt: <<At that time Joshua pronounced this solemn oath: Cursed before the LORD is the man who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho: At the cost of his firstborn son will he lay its foundations; at the cost of his youngest will he set up its gates>> (Joshua 6:26). But it was rebuilt about 500 years later. In 1 Kings 16:34 we read: <<In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Joshua son of Nun>>. The gift of such detailed prophecy over such a long time period is quite amazing.

As previously mentioned, Herod the Great had obtained Jericho from Cæsar Augustus and proceeded to build aqueducts, a fortress, a monumental winter palace and a hippodrome in the vicinity of the more ancient town. Excavations have revealed much of the Herodian palace structures; they were built in stages by expanding on a previous Hasmonean palace. One striking feature of the palace site is its huge pools in one of which Herod probably had his own son drowned. Jericho boasted a tropical climate and excellent access to water for agriculture.

Since the work of Emil Schürer in 1896, most scholars have agreed that Herod died at the end of March or early April in 4BC. However, Schürer's consensus has not gone unchallenged in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with several scholars endorsing 1BC as the year of Herod's death.

Evidence for the 4BC date is provided by the fact that Herod's sons, between whom his kingdom was divided, dated their rule from 4BC and Archilaus apparently also exercised royal authority during Herod's lifetime. Josephus states that Philip the Tetrarch's death took place after a 37-year reign in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius, i.e. AD34. This would confirm his date of accession of 4BC.

Josephus tells us that Herod died after a lunar eclipse. He gives an account of events between this eclipse and his death, and between his death and Passover. A partial eclipse took place on the 13 March 4BC, about 29 days before Passover and this eclipse is usually taken to be the one referred to by Josephus. There were however three other total eclipses around this time and there are proponents of both 5BC, with two total eclipses, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1BC.

Josephus wrote that Herod's final illness, sometimes named as Herod's Evil, was excruciating. From Josephus' description some medical experts propose that Herod had chronic kidney disease complicated by Fournier's gangrene. Modern scholars agree he suffered throughout his lifetime from depression and paranoia. More recently, others report that the visible worms and putrefaction described in his final days are likely to have been

scabies; the disease might have accounted for both his death and psychiatric symptoms. This account of death should not be confused with that of his son Herod Antipas, who died probably in AD39: <<Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died>> (Acts 12:23).

<sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchæus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

### Luke 19:2

The title chief tax collector is found nowhere else in the NT. Jericho was a major toll collection point for goods passing east and west.

<sup>3</sup> He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, Zacchæus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.

### Luke 19:3-5

He was short in stature so climbed a tree to get a view of Jesus but Jesus already knew him, as he did with Nathaniel in John 1:48 <<How do you know me? Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, I saw you while you were still under the fig-tree before Philip called you>>. Under the fig-tree is symbolic for reading scripture.

Zacchæus I must stay at your house today shows the divine necessity of Jesus' bringing salvation to Zacchæus' home (vv.9-10).

<sup>6</sup> So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

### Luke 19:6

Gladly may imply that Zacchæus had clearly heard of Jesus and was interested in what he knew of his teaching. He not only welcomed him into his home but into his heart also.

<sup>7</sup> All the people saw this and began to mutter, He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.

### Luke 19:7

All began to mutter is in sharp contrast to the praise he usually received: <<He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him>> (Luke 4:15). Zacchæus symbolised the authority of a government that was taking the people's money and oppressing them. Again, the symbolism of Jesus' eating with tax collectors and sinners would antagonise the rulers and church leaders. Such table fellowship implies welcoming these people into extended interpersonal association, which the Pharisees thought would make a person unclean. But just as Jesus would cleanse lepers rather than being made unclean by them, so he will bring sinners to repentance and forgiveness rather than being defiled by association with them.

We have encountered this attitude before, such as in Luke 15:1-2 <<Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering round to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of

*the law muttered, This man welcomes sinners, and eats with them>>. Jesus response is typified by Luke 5:32 <<I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance>>.*

<sup>8</sup> But Zacchæus stood up and said to the Lord, Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.

### Luke 19:8

Half of my possessions includes Zacchæus' belongings, not just his salary: <<*Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys*>> (Luke 12:33).

I give to the poor. Giving alms to the poor was an accepted way of life for all Jews but Jesus says it must be more of a natural heart issue than an obligation or a routine action: <<*But give what is inside the dish to the poor, and everything will be clean for you*>> (Luke 11:41), and: <<*When Jesus heard this, he said to him, You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me*>> (Luke 18:22).

If I have cheated I will pay back four times the amount. The Law of Moses says: <<*If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox and four sheep for the sheep*>> (Exodus 22:1). And David says: <<*He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity*>> (2 Samuel 12:6), even though, unknown to David at the time, he was speaking about himself and he was condemning his own actions for sleeping with Bathsheba and subsequently, arranging for her husband Uriah to be killed in battle.

Zacchæus' actions reveal that his repentance and faith are genuine. The example of Zacchæus, who gave away half of his goods, underscores the kind of open-handed generosity that characterises those whose hearts have been transformed by the Gospel. His repentance and coming to faith had brought him to a place where he was honest, charitable and good. His salvation had also made him happy.

Such spontaneous giving has brought criticism against the church for money being a motivating force behind its existence, i.e. selling faith to make the leaders wealthy. There have been instances of such individual churches throughout history and certainly they exist in the modern era but it did not appear to be so during the early days. Although some people have referred to the Acts Chapter Two church model as being communism, this is clearly not the case, since:

1. The giving was voluntary and not compelled by the government.
2. People still had personal possessions because they still met in their homes and many other Christians afterwards still owned homes.

Further, Peter told Ananias and Sapphira that they did not have any obligation to sell their property and give away the money in Acts 5:4. In contrast to communist theory, the abolition of private property is not commanded or implied here. On the other hand, there is a voluntary generosity in sharing possessions that is seen as commendable. In fact, this is a model that many people would like to see brought back into the modern church.

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

## Luke 19:9

Jesus said to him. Although spoken to Zacchæus, Jesus' statement is directed to the grumbling 'all' in v.7.

Today salvation has come indicates that with God all things are possible and a rich man can be saved: <<*Those who heard this asked, Who then can be saved? Jesus replied, What is impossible with men is possible with God*>> (Luke 18:26-27). By his actions, Zacchæus reveals that he too is a true son of Abraham, that is, a son of the promise, as confirmed by Paul in Galatians 3:7 <<*Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham*>>, and not just a physical descendant, as we read in Luke 3:8 <<*Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'. For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham*>>.

He now brings hope rather than condemnation to his whole household: to become a good husband to his wife; a good father to his children; and a good employer to his servants; no doubt leading them all to repentance and into the Kingdom of God. He has gone from one from whom it is said: <<*Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin!*>> (Habakkuk 2:9), to one where: <<*They replied, Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household*>> (Acts 16:31), and: <<*Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures for ever*>> (Psalm 112:3).

<sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

## Luke 19:10

To seek and to save what was lost summarises Jesus' entire mission and purpose, including his teaching, death, resurrection and ascension.

### V.c.x Luke 19:11-27 - The parable of the ten minas

This parable concludes Luke's account of Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, which began in Luke 9:51.

It is distinct from 'The Parable of the Talents' in Matthew 25:14-30, since most of the key elements are different but there are some similarities in wording. Jesus would sometimes modify his teachings to fit different situations and to emphasise slightly different truths.

<sup>11</sup> While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the Kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

## Luke 19:11

The key to the meaning of this parable is once again given at the beginning. Jesus gave the parable in response to those who thought that the Kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

This was probably a concern, especially because he was near to Jerusalem, where expectations of a political Messiah may have been extra high. The parable will show that the Kingdom will not be seen in its fullness until Christ returns. It begins in a small way and grows gradually until then, which we encountered in Luke 13:18-21 <<*Then Jesus asked, What is the Kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man*

*took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air perched in its branches. Again he asked, 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>12</sup> He said: A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return.

### Luke 19:12

To have himself appointed king or receive for himself a kingdom means to receive authority over a kingdom. This would be confirmed by the Heavenly Father after Jesus' ascension. This was revealed to Daniel about six hundred years earlier: <<*In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed*>> (Daniel 7:13-14).

The kingdom that he is going to receive is not the distant country to which he is travelling, i.e. heaven; but the land from which he started out. In a far country implies that the return of the nobleman, i.e. the Second Coming of the Son of Man, will not take place immediately. Luke's readers should not be troubled over this delay because Jesus had already taught that he would not return immediately. There is a period of time where the Gospel must be preached and the Holy Spirit's work be fulfilled in both Jew and Gentile in setting up the church. From here to the end of the Gospel, Luke frequently emphasises the kingship of Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work', he said, 'until I come back'.

### Luke 19:13

The rounded number ten shows that Jesus' parable applies to all his disciples, not just the Twelve.

Minas were about three months' wages for a labourer, worth about 100 drachmas.

Until I come back refers to the time between Jesus' ascension and return at the end of the age.

Put this money to work or engage in business until I come is one of several examples where Jesus uses business activity in a positive way in his parables and teachings. However, the Greek word *pragmateuomai* 'do business, trade or be engaged in a business' occurs only here in the NT.

Although the main point of the parable is stewardship rather than business per se, the NT in general, as is the case here, views work and business activity in a positive way. See Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 10:7, Luke 19:13-23, Colossians 3:23-4:1 and James 4:13-15 for further teachings on this.

It is also an area where there are substantial temptations to sin. Further examples are: <<*Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*>> (Matthew 6:19-21), and: <<*People who want to*

*get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs>> (1 Timothy 6:9-10), and to exploit others, <<Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you>> (James 5:1-6).*

**<sup>14</sup> But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king’.**

#### Luke 19:14

His subjects represent the Jews who hated Jesus.

Sent a delegation gives an image that would be familiar to the Jews since they had sent delegations to Rome protesting against some of their local rulers.

**<sup>15</sup> He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.**

#### Luke 19:15

Then the king returned home represents the time of Jesus’ Second Coming.

**<sup>16</sup> The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more’.**

#### Luke 19:16

Your mina has earned ten more is an unusually high return in real life, indicating unusual wisdom and faithfulness on the part of the servant. We must remember that it is not our work but his mina, i.e. the Gospel, that will make the increase: <<*Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness*>> (Psalm 115:1), and Paul writes: <<*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them – yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me*>> (1 Corinthians 15:10).

**<sup>17</sup> ‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities’.**

#### Luke 19:17

Well done, my good servant! In the corresponding account in Matthew 25:20-23, the first two servants are highly praised. The master’s identical statements of praise to both servants show that what was important was not the total amount earned but faithfulness in utilising their gifts and potential. It is not our work but our obedience that is being rewarded and the choice is always ours, as we read in these words: <<*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?*>>

*But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it>> (Genesis 4:7), and not to boast or become prideful of our apparent successes: <<I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done>> (Romans 15:18).*

Trustworthy in a very small matter or faithful in very little, shows that faithful stewardship in this life will result in being given greater responsibility and stewardship in the life to come, that is take charge of ten cities. This is confirmed in Luke 16:10 <<*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much*>>.

Take charge of or have authority over ten cities. As already noted, faithfulness in carrying out stewardship responsibilities in this life will result in being given greater responsibility and stewardship in the life to come. This is one of a number of passages that teach degrees of reward and responsibility in heaven. One takes charge of ten cities and one of five. These are perhaps degrees of glory.

Laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven implies that people often have a choice between activities that lead to greater earthly reward in the present and those that store up greater future reward in heaven. Elsewhere in the Gospels, the consequences of making the wrong choice are shown to be eternally disastrous. God's blessing and reward in the lives of Christians varies according to their faithfulness to the tasks God entrusts to them.

Although those who have believed in Jesus have already been justified by faith and will not face condemnation on the final day, God will still judge their works and reward them accordingly. In 1 Corinthians Chapter 3, Paul's point applies not just to church leaders but to anyone who contributes in any way to building up the church.

The charge directed to rich believers provides a corrective to the wrong view of wealth seen in the false teachers. Furthermore, the downplaying of riches by stressing that they are merely for 'this present age' appropriately follows the moving description of appearing before God on the final day. The call for the wealthy to use their wealth to prepare for the future either means that, how they use their wealth demonstrates whether they are saved, or that they should seek for greater reward in heaven, or both.

<sup>18</sup> The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more'.

<sup>19</sup> His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities'.

<sup>20</sup> Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth.

#### Luke 19:18-20

Sir, here is your mina. The third servant has not laboured or conducted business with the mina but has hidden it, i.e. kept it laid away, where it did no good for anyone and did not gain additional value. Those who fail to do anything useful with the resources, talents and opportunities God has given them will fall under his displeasure and may, thereby, indicate that they are not even true believers, as confirmed in Matthew 25:30 <<*And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*>>.

We have the common and sad scenario of someone who doesn't utilise the gifts he has been given and then offers up lame excuses for not doing so.

**<sup>21</sup> I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow’.**

### Luke 19:21

**Hard** or **severe man** does not mean selfish or unfair but strict and holding to high standards or austere. The Greek word it comes from is *austēros* which means strict in requirements or exacting, as in Matthew 25:24 <<*Then the man who had received the one talent came. ‘Master’, he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed’>>. This is not intended as a description of Christ, for v.17 and v.19 show him to be abundantly generous and gracious. The servant does not know his master well or else he is simply making up an excuse for his own failure.*

**<sup>22</sup> His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup> Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’**

### Luke 19:22-23

The servant is condemned by his **own words** for if he believed what he said he would at least have put the **money on deposit** to earn **interest**. This would have required minimal effort by the servant and the money would have been useful to others as the bankers used it to make loans.

In the OT, Israelites were forbidden from charging interest to other Israelites but it was permissible to charge interest on money loaned to Gentiles. In any case, the central point of the parable concerns the importance of being a faithful servant of all that God has entrusted to one’s care.

**<sup>24</sup> Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas’.**

**<sup>25</sup> ‘Sir’, they said, ‘he already has ten!’**

**<sup>26</sup> He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away.**

### Luke 19:24-26

**Given taken away.** The paradox in this verse reinforces the point in the previous one: the person who welcomes God’s rule and presence will be given more of God’s intended fruit; the one who depends on his own resources without receiving the word, i.e. the one who has not, will lose even that which he has, i.e. it will be taken away.

**<sup>27</sup> But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be a king over them – bring them here and kill them in front of me’.**

### Luke 19:27

**But those enemies of mine** may allude to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 but it also forecasts the final judgment of those who reject Jesus.

Kill them in front of me may imply the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 or be referring to final judgement. But we note that NT judgement is as harsh as it was in the OT and it remains just and true. Jesus will again be present at the destruction of sinners, as we see in Revelation 20:15 <<*If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire*>>.

## **VI. Luke 19:28-21:38 - The Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem**

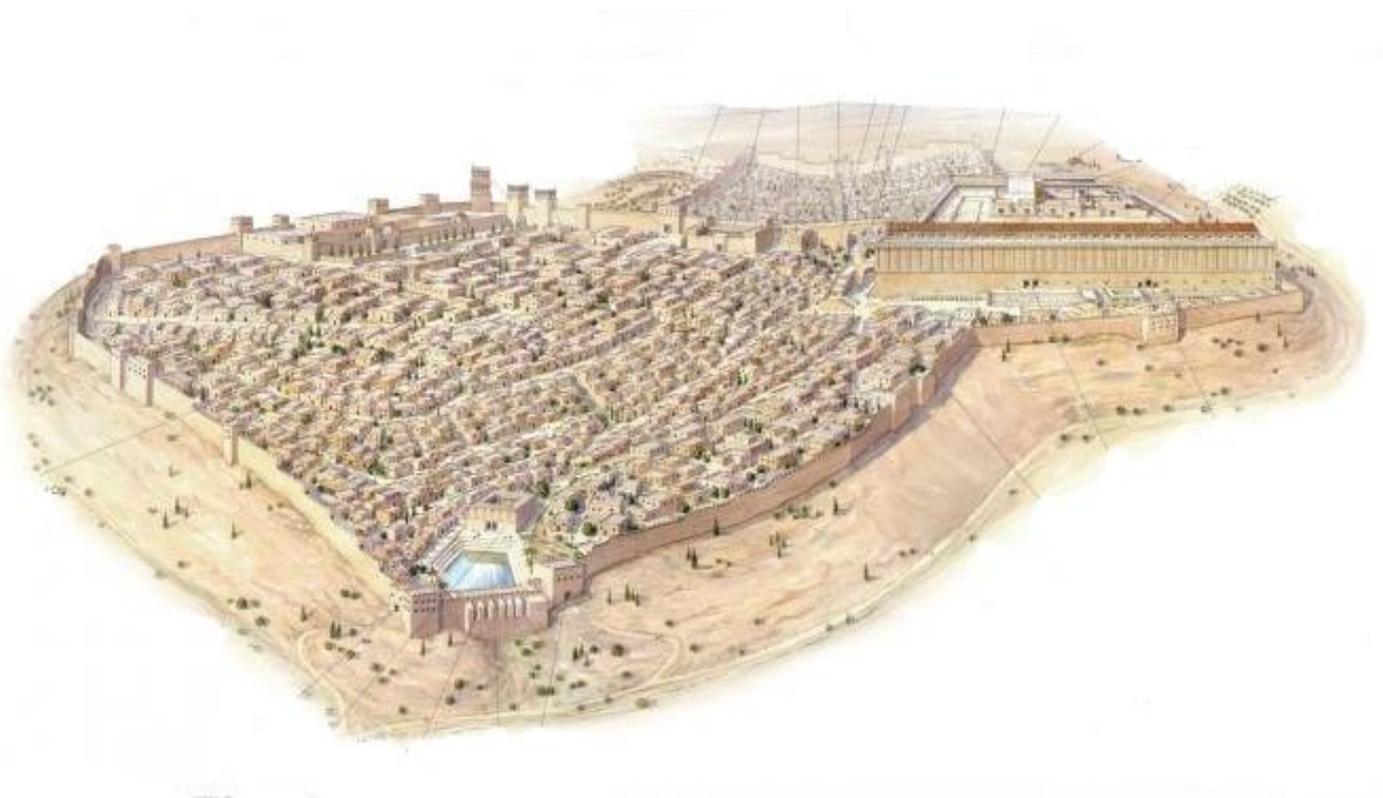
In this section, Luke's Gospel is closely parallel to Mark 11:1-13:37.

### **VI.a Luke 19:28-40 - The Triumphal Entry**

This account is told in all four Gospels: Matthew 21:1, Mark 11:1 and John 12:12. The Son of David enters Jerusalem riding on the colt of a donkey.

<sup>28</sup> After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

#### **Luke 19:28**



The heavily fortified city of Jerusalem lay atop adjacent hills in the mountainous region of Judæa. It therefore proved difficult even for the Romans to recapture during the Jewish revolt, although they eventually did so in AD70 after a bitter siege. The oldest portion of Jerusalem, called 'the city of David', and 'Mount Zion', lay to the south of the temple, but the city walls in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century also encompassed the newer Upper City to the west of the temple. To the east of the city and across the Kidron Valley, stood the Mount of Olives. To the south of Zion lay the Hinnom Valley. The reconstruction shown depicts Jerusalem around AD30 and the general direction of the drawing is looking north.

<sup>29</sup> As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

## Luke 19:29

The location of Bethany on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives is well established. Although the location of Bethphage has not been certainly identified, it was clearly farther along the road from Bethany.

As previously discussed, this is the Bethany identified in John 11:18 as being 2 miles or 3.2km from Jerusalem. This village is the Bethany most commonly mentioned in the Gospels but it is different from the Bethany mentioned in John 1:28, where John was baptising. This is almost certainly the modern village of El-Azariyeh, an Arabic place-name, which likely recalls the name of Lazarus and lies on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. A 4<sup>th</sup> Century chapel was built over a rock-cut tomb, traditionally thought to have



been the tomb of Lazarus. Other 1<sup>st</sup> Century tombs are found in the hillside around this chapel.

**<sup>30</sup> Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no-one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.**

## Luke 19:30

Go, enter it, you will find. Either an example of Jesus' foreknowledge or a prearrangement, and it is confirmed in Luke 22:13 <<*They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover*>>.

A colt tied there, which no-one has ever ridden implies a kind of purity that destines an animal for a sacred task. We see this confirmed in animals offered to the Lord in Numbers 19:2 <<*This is a requirement of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect or blemish and that has never been under the yoke*>>, and in Deuteronomy 21:3 <<*Then the elders of the town nearest the body shall take a heifer that has never been worked and has never worn a yoke*>>.

Matthew 21:2 <<*saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me"*>>, mentions that a donkey was with the colt but Luke mentions only the colt, which was most important because Jesus would ride on it. Matthew, alone, mentions two animals. Having the mother donkey move alongside her unbroken colt would be the best way to calm it during the noisy entrance into Jerusalem.

**<sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it'.**

**<sup>32</sup> Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.**

## Luke 19:31-32

They found it as Jesus had said. See v.30.

<sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, Why are you untying the colt?

<sup>34</sup> They replied, The Lord needs it.

<sup>35</sup> They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.

### Luke 19:33-35

Put Jesus on it. Jesus fulfils a prophecy about the Messiah in Zechariah 9:9 by riding on the donkey: <<*Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey*>>.

Matthew specifies that Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem upon a colt fulfils the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. Jesus' action is an open declaration that he is the righteous Davidic Messiah, for the prophecy says, 'your king comes to you'. Matthew could also be alluding to: <<*Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons will bow down to you. You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to rouse him? The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk*>> (Genesis 49:8-12), where Jacob prophesies about a kingly descendant of Judah whose rule will extend to the nations.

The first line of the OT quotation, however, is from Isaiah 62:11a <<*The LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your Saviour comes!'*>>, and uses the phrase 'daughter of Zion' to refer to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In Zechariah, it is an example of Hebrew poetic parallelism, where an idea is stated twice in successive lines using slightly different wording.

Jesus is depicted as the humble shepherd-king of Zechariah 9:9, who comes to the Holy City to take his rightful place. An early messianic prophecy speaks of a ruler from Judah who, riding on a donkey, will command the obedience of nations. Fear not and do not be afraid may be taken from Isaiah 40:9 <<*You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, Here is your God!*>>, where the reference is to the one who brings good tidings to Zion. This is confirmed by: <<*This is what the LORD says – he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen*>> (Isaiah 44:2).

Solomon's ride on David's mule marked him as David's favourite son and the divinely designated heir. More than this, the mule itself also would have been regarded as a symbol of kingship.

<sup>36</sup> As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

### Luke 19:36

Spread their cloaks on the road was an act of homage.

Cloaks on the road symbolised the crowd's submission to Jesus as king. For example: <<*They hurried and took their cloaks and spread them under him on the bare steps. Then they blew the trumpet and shouted, Jehu is king!*>> (2 Kings 9:13).

Branches or palms symbolised Jewish nationalism and victory. They were connected with prominent Jewish victories, e.g. 1 Maccabees 13:51 with the Festival of Tabernacles. Palm motifs were common on both Jewish coinage and synagogue decoration.

<sup>37</sup> When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

#### Luke 19:37

The Mount of Olives or Olivet, with its spectacular view of the Temple Mount, stands just east of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. Jesus and his disciples regularly crossed over Olivet on their way from Jerusalem through Bethphage to Bethany, which lay on the mountain's eastern slope.

The whole crowd of disciples, not just the twelve apostles, were with him for the monumental occasion.

Began joyfully to praise God was confirmed in Zechariah 9:9 earlier. This came primarily from Jesus' disciples. They are rejoicing as his earthly journey nears its conclusion just as they did when he first came to our attention: <<*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests*>> (Luke 2:13-14).

All the miracles or mighty works they had seen. The miracles they had seen recently, e.g. in Luke 9:51-19:27 and many more as well. John also makes note of this: <<*Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him*>> (John 12:17-18).

In Jewish Antiquities, historian Josephus wrote: 'About this time there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats'.

<sup>38</sup> Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!

#### Luke 19:38

Blessed in the name of the Lord! A blessing from Psalm 118:26 that pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem received.

Peace in heaven. The crowds proclaim this without realising that Jesus has now established the opportunity for this same peace to be experienced throughout the whole earth, if only all the people would understand the meaning of his prayer: <<*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*>> (Matthew 6:10).

Hosanna is a Hebrew word which means save or please save, see Psalm 118:25. Here, Hosanna points to the celebration of Jesus as a political Davidic Messiah. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord is from Psalm 118:25-26, a prayer of blessing for the coming Messianic Kingdom.

The Triumphal Entry takes place at the beginning of Passover week, which recalls the Jewish people's liberation from Egyptian slavery. The pilgrims now anticipate the messianic liberation from Rome's oppression. The claims of the disciples are ultimately true but it will not be Rome that will be defeated now but Satan, sin and death.

All enemies of righteousness will one day see the authority of Messiah. In Mark's Gospel, this is the only time where there is no evident tension between Jesus' messianic identity, the messianic expectations of his disciples and those of the people. Jesus tolerates this brief period of celebration in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, but with the certainty that nothing will obstruct the divinely ordained death of the Messiah.

<sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, Teacher, rebuke your disciples! <sup>40</sup> I tell you, he replied, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.

#### Luke 19:39-40

These verses illustrate v.14. The Pharisees' attempt to quash the joy of the occasion is rebuked, for if the disciples stopped expressing their praise, the stones will cry out. All creation was made to worship the king who is Lord of all.

#### VI.b Luke 19:41-44 - Jesus wept over Jerusalem

This account occurs only in Luke. Although there is a similar account of Jesus' lament over Jerusalem given later in his final week in Matthew 23:23 and we read Luke's version of probably the same event, but recorded for thematic purposes during his journey to Jerusalem in Luke 13:34.

<sup>41</sup> As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

#### Luke 19:41

He wept over it. This is the second part of the lament, the first part we read in Luke 13:34. In Matthew 23:23, we have Jesus lament: <<**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem**>>. Jesus bemoaned the fate of Jerusalem with its inhabitants at the time being around 25-30,000 people. His lament, however, also applied to all of Israel since Jerusalem was the religious and political centre of the nation. Matthew also uses the analogy: <<**As a hen gathers her brood under her wings**>> (Matthew 23:37 - ESV), which is a common metaphor for loving care. <<**Jesus wept**>> (John 11:35), showed his compassion for the people, who were grieving the loss of Lazarus, and his weeping here is similarly directed, not for his own impending death, but for the fate of the lost sheep of Israel.

The tears were genuine for the city also as he had placed his name in it: <<**I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name**>> (1 Kings 11:36), and it was here he knew that his final rejection would come so violently upon him.

Although the rejection of Jesus by many of the Jews was predicted in the OT, Jesus still feels great sorrow over their rejection, surely reflecting the heart of God as he contemplates the Jewish people rejecting his prophets and his Son. Especially as he knows the eternal consequences of their choices made quite freely in the face of such overwhelming evidence that Jesus was their long-awaited Messiah.

John 12:38 cites Isaiah 53:1 <<Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?>>, and John 12:40 refers to Isaiah 6:10 <<Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed>>, to indicate that the Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah was predicted by scripture and, thus serves to confirm rather than thwart God's sovereign plan. Isaiah 53:1 refers to the servant of the Lord who was rejected by the people but exalted by God; Isaiah 6:10 attributes people's hardening ultimately to God himself, similar to Pharaoh's.

As Paul puts it: <<For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden>> (Romans 9:17-18). The emphasis is on divine sovereignty and human responsibility rather than rejection. On the one hand, the people should have believed and are held guilty for disbelieving. On the other hand, God blinded their eyes so that they did not have the spiritual ability to believe.

One can only wonder how differently history could have been if the people of Jerusalem and Israel had listened to Moses, the prophets or to God: <<If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways>> (Psalm 81:13), and: <<If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea>> (Isaiah 48:18).

<sup>42</sup> and said, If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes.

#### Luke 19:42

This day is the day when the true Messiah and King came 'the time of your visitation' (v.44). Broadly speaking, this refers to the coming of the Kingdom; more narrowly, it means the coming of Jesus as Israel's king.

Would bring you peace are the things that would lead the Jewish people to salvation.

Once again the expression peace, Hebrew shalom, has a much richer connotation than the English word does since it conveys not merely the absence of conflict and turmoil but also the notion of positive blessing, especially in terms of a right relationship with God. It gives the overall impression and the idea that 'all is well' in one's life. This may be manifested most clearly amid persecution and tribulation.

But now it is the things that make for peace that are hidden. We commented on this in v.41, where God 'blinds' the eyes of some people so they cannot see.

<sup>43</sup> The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. <sup>44</sup> They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you.

## Luke 19:43-44

Days will come. Here Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple. Jesus corrects a number of misconceptions regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. The days will come refers not to the Second Coming but to a time in history before that, i.e. AD70.

Embankment against you or a barricade around you refers to the earthworks constructed by the Romans during the siege of Jerusalem.

The image depicts the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70 that was accomplished by the Roman General Titus, who would later become Cæsar after the death of his father Vespasian.



This event was prophesied by Jesus in Matthew Chapter 24 and in Mark Chapter 13, as well as in this Chapter. It came about during the final stages of the Jewish - Roman War (AD67-70), when Jewish zealots decided they'd had enough of Roman oppression.

Many believe it was God's retribution on his people for their rejection of Jesus and the subsequent role they played in his crucifixion.

Dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls, which came about as a result of the siege. King Hazael would lead the Syrians in victory over King Jehoram but before he even became king we have this prophecy from Elisha: <<***He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael felt ashamed. Then the man of God began to weep. Why is my lord weeping? asked Hazael. Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites, he answered. You will set fire to their fortified places, kill their young men with the sword, dash their little children to the ground, and rip open their pregnant women***>> (2 Kings 8:11-12). This was common barbarism of wars of that era and throughout history. Although Hazael appeared genuinely horrified at the suggestion, it came to pass just as Elisha had said because it was God's words he spoke.

Not leave one stone. Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of the temple was fulfilled in AD70 when the Roman army under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. Not leave one stone upon another may be intended as a metaphor for total destruction or it may be understood as something that was literally fulfilled in the destruction of the temple building itself, but not the entire Temple Mount, some of which remains to this day.

Similar examples of destructive intent is confirmed in 2 Samuel 17:13, when Absalom was seeking to destroy his father King David: <<***If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we will drag it down to the valley until not even a piece of it can be found***>>, and the lament of the Babylonian exiles in Psalm 137:7 <<***Remember, O LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. Tear it down, they cried, tear it down to its foundations!***>>, and when Micah was looking at the present Injustice and the future prospect of just rule in Jerusalem, he said: <<***Therefore because of you, Zion will be ploughed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets***>> (Micah 3:12).

Because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you explains the reason for this divine judgment.

## VI.c Luke 19:45-48 - Jesus at the temple

Jesus demonstrates his passion for being in his Father's house and shows that it should be used as a place of worship for all who would come there, but was not to be used as a market place.

<sup>45</sup> Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. <sup>46</sup> It is written, he said to them, 'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers'.

<sup>47</sup> Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. <sup>48</sup> Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

### Luke 19:45-48

Luke's account of this incident is greatly abbreviated. Matthew 21:12-16 records it as: <<Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves. It is written, he said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer', but you are making it a 'den of robbers'. The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were indignant. Do you hear what these children are saying? they asked him. Yes, replied Jesus, have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?>>, and Mark 11:15-18 as: <<On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it 'a den of robbers'. The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching>>.

In John 2:13-22 there is a similar account: <<When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market! His disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for your house will consume me. Then the Jews demanded of him, What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this? Jesus answered them, Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days. The Jews replied, It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days? But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken>>.

Mainly because this is recorded so early on in John's Gospel many commentators consider it to be a different event. However, it is stated that Jesus was there for the Passover and the timing seems too coincidental for them to be different events in my opinion. Let us look in more detail at other, more eminent suggestions:

He entered the temple. The Temple Actions: Jesus' Pronouncement on the Temple Establishment. As just noted, John's Gospel records a similar cleansing of the temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (John 2:13-17). Interpreters have proposed two explanations:

1. There was only one cleansing but John narrated the action at the beginning for thematic and theological purposes, while the Synoptic Gospels narrate the actual historical chronology.
2. There were indeed two similar but distinctly different temple cleansings.

The differences of detail seem to indicate the latter for, while the initial action is similar, Jesus' statement in Matthew 21:13 <<*It is written, he said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer', but you are making it a 'den of robbers'>>, and the challenge from the Jewish leaders in vv.15-16 <<*But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were indignant. Do you hear what these children are saying? they asked him. Yes, replied Jesus, have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise?'>>, are entirely different from what John records.**

In addition, John places the event so early in his Gospel that it would be difficult to think he wanted readers to take it as anything but an event that happened early in Jesus' ministry. Thus Jesus cleansed the temple at the beginning as a warning and at the end of his ministry as a statement of judgment on the leadership of Israel.

Jesus comes as Lord of the temple and he comes to purify it, for as it is written in Malachi 3:1-4 <<*See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come, says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years>>.*

On the Mount of Olives, as well as in the temple precincts, tables were set up to enable pilgrims to change their respective currencies into coins for the annual temple tax, i.e. half a shekel as stated in Exodus 30:13-16. They would also purchase pigeons, lambs, oil, salt, etc. for various sin and thanksgiving sacrifices, as required by the Law of Moses. The business activity turns the house of prayer into a den of robbers, that is taken from Jeremiah 7:11 <<*Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD>>. Gentiles in particular were hindered by the temple commerce in the outer court. The goal of Jesus' action is to restore the temple, at least temporarily, to its function. Namely, to serve as a house of prayer for all the nations, which is confirmed in Isaiah 56:6-7 <<*And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations>>.**

Driving out those who were selling probably occurred in the Royal Stoa, although it may have been in the Court of the Gentiles. Within the temple was a sort of market, where commercial

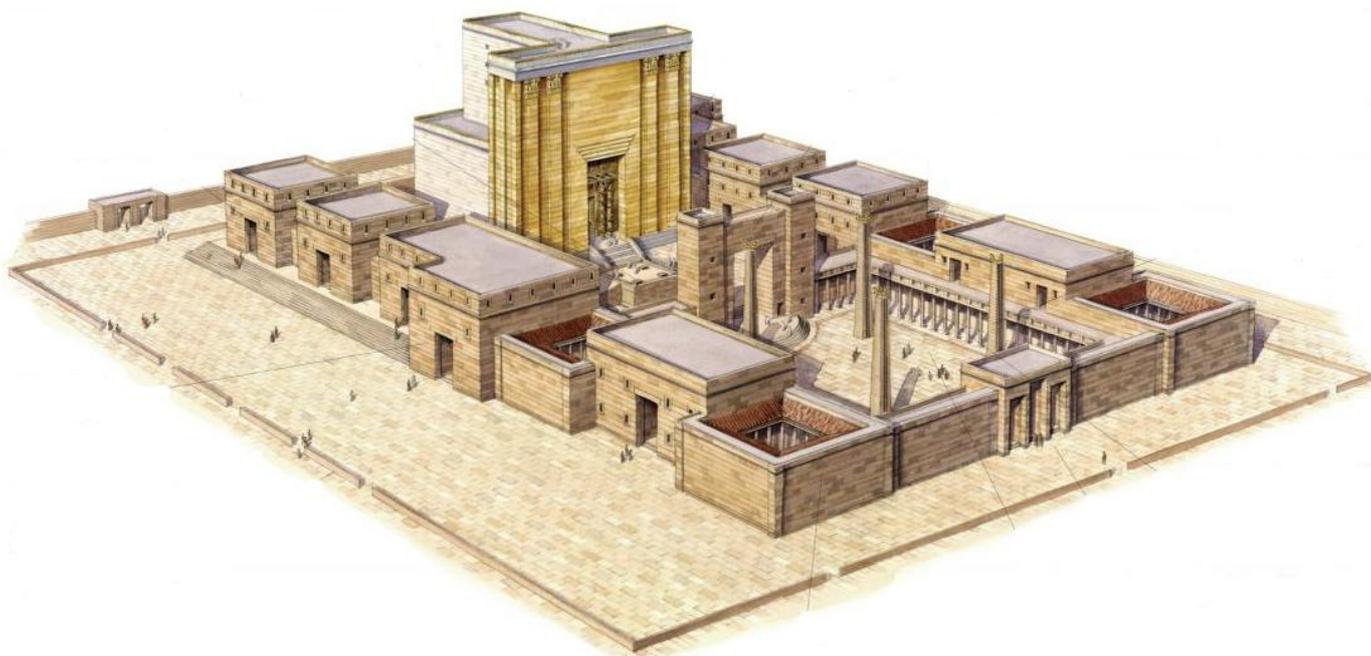
activity enabled pilgrims from throughout the Diaspora to participate in temple activities, exchange their own currency for temple currency, and purchase animals and other items for sacrifices.

Jesus compares the temple and its keepers to a **den of robbers**. Thieves often used caves to store their ill-gotten wealth and to plot future crimes. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 7:11, as noted earlier.

The **chief priests** are not the high priests but members of the most prominent priestly families.

**Teachers of the Law** is another name for the scribes, who are often associated with the Pharisees. Paradoxically, the chief priests and scribes, who are in favour of commerce in the temple, seek to destroy the Purifier rather than be purified themselves. Their actions are motivated by fear of Jesus' popularity, fear of losing power: social, economic and political; and fear of a public uprising, in which case the Romans would intervene. The Jewish leaders correctly saw Jesus' act as a challenge to their authority in the most sacred space in the world.

**Were continually trying to kill him** or **seeking to destroy him**. This is Luke's first explicit mention of a plot against Jesus' life.



**The Temple Complex:** When the Gospels and the Book of Acts refer to entering the temple or teaching in the temple, it is often not a reference to Herod's temple itself but rather to the temple complex, including a number of courts and chambers that surrounded the temple. These latter structures were the great and wonderful buildings referred to by the disciples.