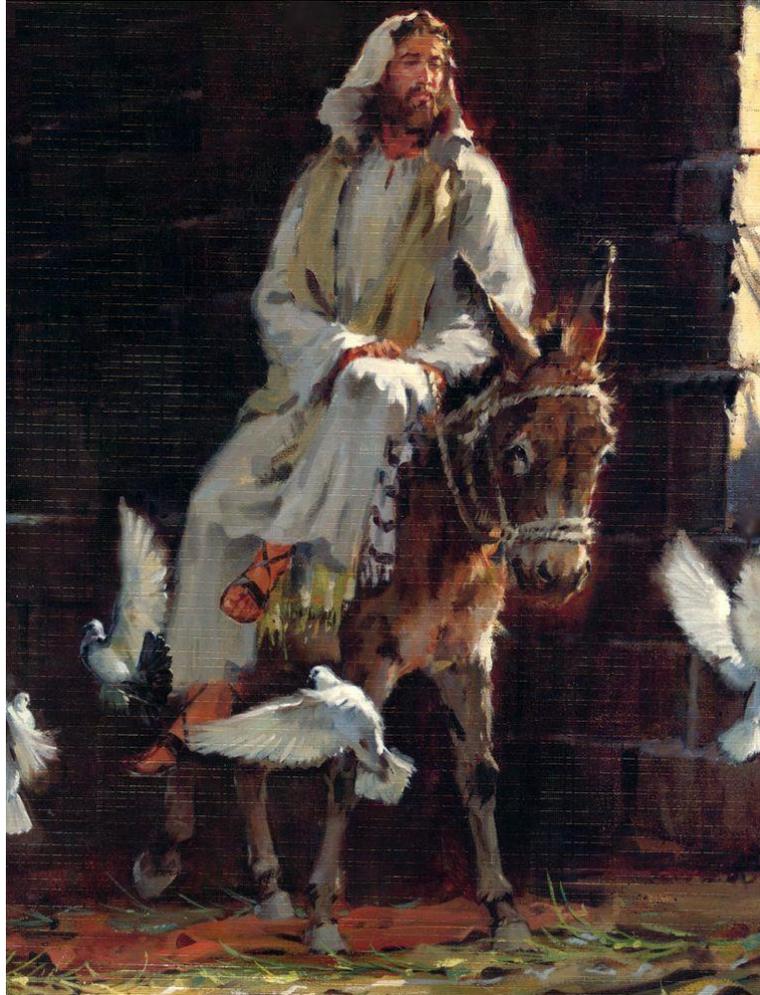


# Luke 18-19



Easter Stories Week 1

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1. Sell all, and you shall have treasure in heaven.

## Luke 18

18 And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 But Jesus said to him, Why callest thou Me good? None *is* good except one, God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments: Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honor thy father and thy mother.<sup>1</sup>

21 And he said, All these I have kept<sup>2</sup> from my youth.

22 And when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, One *thing* is still left for thee *to do*: sell all, as much as thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.

23 But on hearing these things he became very sorrowful, for he was exceedingly rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he had become very sorrowful, He said, With what difficulty shall they who have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich *man* to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And those who heard *it* said, Who then can be saved?

27 And He said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 And Peter said, Behold, we have left all things, and have followed Thee.

29 And He said to them, Amen I say to you, There is no one who has left house, or parents, or brothers, or wife, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

30 who shall not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come, eternal life.

AE 934:2. ...Works... done by man are not good, but only those done by the Lord with man. But for works to be done by the Lord, and not by man, two things are necessary: first, the Lord's Divine must be acknowledged, also that He is the God of heaven and earth even as to the Human, and that every good that is good is from Him; and secondly, that man must live according to the commandments of the Decalogue by abstaining from those evils that are forbidden there, that is, from worshiping other gods, from profaning the name of God, from thefts, from adulteries, from murders, from false witness, from coveting the possessions and property of others.

These two things are required, in order that the works done by man may be good. The reason is that every good comes from the Lord alone, and the Lord cannot enter into man and lead him so long as

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus 20:12-16

<sup>2</sup> Literally, guarded

these evils are not removed as sins; for they are infernal, and in fact are hell with man, and unless hell is removed the Lord cannot enter and open heaven. This is what is meant by the Lord's words to the rich man....

"To sell all that he had" signifies that he should relinquish the things of his religion, which were traditions, for he was a Jew, and also should relinquish the things that were his own [*proprium*], which were loving self and the world more than God, and thus leading himself. And "to follow the Lord" signifies to acknowledge Him only and to be led by Him. Therefore the Lord also said, "Why dost thou call Me good? None is good except God only." "To take up his cross" signifies to fight against evils and falsities, which are from what is one's own.

HH 365:3. In the natural sense the rich are those who have an abundance of riches and set their heart upon them. But in the spiritual sense they are those who have an abundance of knowledges and learning, which are spiritual riches, and who desire by means of these to introduce themselves into the things of heaven and the church from their own intelligence. And because this is contrary to Divine order, it is said to be "easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye," a "camel" signifying in general in the spiritual sense the knowing faculty and things known, and a "needle's eye" signifying spiritual truth.

#### Questions and Comments

1. The Lord came into the world to restore our freedom to inherit eternal life. What are the main things we have to do to receive a place in the kingdom of heaven?
2. Why did the Lord ask the man, "Why do you call Me good?"
3. Generally, New Church people do not believe that the Lord meant us to take it literally when He told the man to sell all that he had. What *does* the Lord mean? Why did He put it this way? Is giving to the poor an important part of the life of heaven?
4. As people who have access to the Heavenly Doctrine, we may become spiritually rich. How do we use such riches wisely? How might we use them disastrously?

2. The Lord foretells His resurrection; the blind man

31 And taking the twelve, He said to them, Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things must be finished which are written by the prophets respecting the Son of Man.

32 For He shall be delivered up to the nations, and shall be mocked, and insulted, and spit upon,

33 and they shall scourge *Him*, and shall kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things that were said.

35 And it came to pass as He drew near to Jericho, a certain blind *man* sat along the way begging.

36 And hearing the crowd go through, he inquired what it meant.

37 And they reported to him, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they who went before rebuked him, that he should be silent; but he cried out much more: Son of David, have mercy on me!

40 And Jesus, standing, ordered him to be brought to Him; and when he was near, He questioned him,

41 saying, What wilt thou that I shall do to thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive *my* sight.

42 And Jesus said to him, Receive thy sight; thy faith has saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight; and he followed Him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

AE 83. ...With those who are in love towards Him and faith in Him, the Lord lives, but with those who are not in love and in faith toward Him, He does not live.... The Lord, when He was in the world, was Divine truth itself, and as Divine truth was altogether rejected by the Jews, therefore the Lord, who was Divine truth, suffered Himself to be crucified.... Whenever, therefore, the Lord speaks of His passion He calls Himself the Son of man, that is, Divine truth.... That Divine truth was altogether rejected by the Jews is well known; for they accepted nothing that the Lord said, and not even that He was the Son of God.... "Jerusalem" here is the Jewish Church. "To be delivered to the Gentiles, to be mocked, to be shamefully entreated, to be spit upon, to be scourged, to be put to death," are the wicked ways in which the Jews treated Divine truth; and as the Lord was Divine truth itself, because He was the Word (John 1:14), and as it was foretold in the prophets that Divine truth would be so dealt with in the end of the church, therefore it is said, "that all things may be accomplished that have been foretold through the prophets concerning the Son of man."

AE 815:5. There were three reasons why faith in the Lord healed these [people]. The first was because they acknowledged His Divine omnipotence, and that He was God.

The second was because faith is acknowledgment, and from acknowledgment intuition; and all intuition from acknowledgment makes another to be present; this is a common thing in the spiritual world. So now, when a New Church was to be established by the Lord, it was this intuition from an acknowledgment of the Lord's omnipotence from which they were first to look to the Lord; and from this it is clear what is here meant by faith.

The third reason was, that all the diseases healed by the Lord represented and thus signified the spiritual diseases that correspond to these natural diseases; and spiritual diseases can be healed only by the Lord, and in fact by looking to His Divine omnipotence and by repentance of life. This is why He sometimes said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go and sin no more." This faith also was represented and signified by their faith in His miracles. But the faith by which spiritual diseases are healed by the Lord can be given only through truths from the Word and a life according to them; the truths themselves and the life itself according to them make the quality of the faith.

#### Questions and Comments

1. In what ways might we reject the Divine truth and treat it wickedly? How do we guard against doing so, and instead grow in love to the Lord and faith in Him?
2. How might we be as blind as the twelve disciples, not understanding what the Lord is saying?
3. Can you picture being one of the people rebuking the blind man, telling him to be quiet and not bother the Lord? How might we do this to one another?
4. How do we grow into a deeper and deeper faith in the Lord, with acknowledgment of His omnipotence and intuition of His presence?
5. Can you think of an example of someone coming to see the Lord, who before was ignorant or unbelieving, but now glorifies God for granting him sight?

### 3. Salvation comes to Zacchaeus.

#### Luke 19

1 And *He* entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, *there was* a man called by the name Zacchaeus; and he was the chief publican, and he was rich.

3 And he was seeking to see Jesus, who *He is*, and he could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran ahead and went up into a sycamore<sup>3</sup> to see Him, for *He* was about to pass that *way*.

5 And when Jesus came upon the place, looking up *He* saw him, and said to him, Zacchaeus, make haste, step down, for today I must stay at thy house.

6 And making haste, he stepped down, and received Him rejoicing.

7 And seeing, they all murmured, saying that *He* had come in to repose with a man *who was* a sinner.

8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my belongings I give to the poor, and if I have *taken* anything from anyone by extortion, I give it back to *him* fourfold.

9 And Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to pass for this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

AC 10227. *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, from the half of the shekel, to give an uplifting to Jehovah.* That this signifies that all, of whatever ability they may be, must ascribe all things of truth from good to the Lord, is evident from the signification of “one who is rich,” as being one who abounds in truths and goods and their knowledges... and from the signification of “one who is poor,” as being one who does not abound in these things....

[2] The case is this. All have the capacity to understand and to be wise; but the reason one person is wiser than another is that they do not in like manner ascribe to the Lord all things of intelligence and wisdom, which are all things of truth and good. They who ascribe all to the Lord are wiser than the rest, because all things of truth and good, which constitute wisdom, flow in from heaven, that is, from the Lord there. The ascription of all things to the Lord opens the interiors of man toward heaven, for thus it is acknowledged that nothing of truth and good is from himself; and in proportion as this is acknowledged, the love of self departs, and with the love of self the thick darkness from falsities and evils. In the same proportion also the man comes into innocence, and into love and faith to the Lord, from which comes conjunction with the Divine, influx thence, and enlightenment. From all this it is evident whence it is that one is more wise and another less; and also why the rich should not give more and the poor less—namely, that all alike have the capacity of

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<sup>3</sup> The Greek name for a type of fig tree

being wise; not indeed an equal capacity of being wise, but they are alike in having the capacity to be so, because both the one and the other can be wise.

[3] The ability to be wise should not be taken to mean an ability to use knowledge to engage in reasoning about truths and forms of good, and so an ability to prove anything you like. Rather, it is an ability to observe what is true and good, to choose what is appropriate, and to apply this to functions performed in life. They who ascribe all things to the Lord do thus discern, choose, and apply; while those who do not ascribe to the Lord, but to themselves, know merely how to reason about truths and goods; nor do they see anything except what is from others; and this not from reason, but from the activity of the memory....

#### Questions and Comments

1. We may compare Zacchaeus with the ruler whose story is told on page 3 above, since both of them were rich. One big difference is that the ruler had not yet acknowledged the Lord as God, but Zacchaeus appears to do so, since he confesses his sins and how he makes amends.
2. What is an example of a situation in which we might murmur wrongly against the acceptance of a sinner?
3. How important is making amends in the process of repentance? Consider the words, "First be reconciled with thy brother...." (Matt. 5:24)
4. Why does the Lord say that salvation has come to Zacchaeus' house *today*, if Zacchaeus has already been practicing repentance from his sins? What is new?
5. What are some barriers to ascribing all truth and good to the Lord and not to ourselves?

#### 4. The parable of the minas<sup>4</sup>

11 But as they heard these things, He added and told a parable, for He was near Jerusalem, and they thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a distant country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his own ten servants, and he gave them ten minas and said to them, Do business till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying, We will not have this *man* reign over us.

15 And it came to pass that when he had come back, having received the kingdom, he also said *that* these servants should be called to him, to whom he had given the silver, that he might know what everyone had gained by doing business.

16 And the first came, saying, Lord, thy mina has earned ten minas.

17 And he said to him, Well *done*, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in the least, have authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy mina has made five minas.

19 And he said to him also, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came saying, Lord, behold, thy mina, which I have held laid up in a handkerchief.

21 For I feared thee, for thou art an austere man; thou takest what thou didst not deposit, and reapest what thou didst not sow.

22 And he says to him, Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee, wicked servant. Thou didst know that I am an austere man, taking what I did not deposit, and reaping what I did not sow.

23 Why then didst thou not give my silver to the bank<sup>5</sup> so that at my coming I might have exacted it with interest?

24 And he said to those who stood by, Take the mina from him and give it to him who has ten minas.

25 And they said to him, Lord, he has ten minas.

26 For I say to you that to everyone who has shall be given; but from him who has not, even that which he has shall be taken away from him.

27 Nevertheless, those enemies of mine who were not willing that I should reign over them, bring *them* here and slay *them* in front of me.

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<sup>4</sup> A mina was a monetary weight worth about 100 days' wages for a laborer (100 drachma or denarii), or one sixtieth of a talent.

<sup>5</sup> "To the bank": literally, "on the table" (AE 193:10)

AE 675:7. Here the numbers “ten” and “five” are employed because “ten” signifies all people and all things, and “five” some people and some things. “The ten servants” whom the nobleman going into a far country called to him, mean all who are in the world, and in particular, all who are of the church; for the “nobleman” means the Lord, and “going into a far country” means the Lord’s departure out of the world and His then seeming to be absent. “The ten minas that he gave to the ten servants to trade with” signify all the knowledges of truth and good from the Word, with the ability to perceive them; for a “mina,” which was silver and was money, signifies the knowledges of truth and the ability to perceive; and “to trade” signifies to acquire intelligence and wisdom by means of them. Those who acquire much are meant by the servant who from a mina gained ten minas; and those who acquire some are meant by him who from a mina gained five minas. The “cities” which are said to be “given to them” signify the truths of doctrine, and “to possess them” signifies intelligence and wisdom, and life and happiness from them. From this it is clear what is signified by “ten cities” and by “five cities.”

Because those who acquire nothing of intelligence are like the “foolish virgins [in Matthew 25], and because these possess truths in the memory only and not in the life, after their departure from this world they are deprived of truths; while those who possess truths both in the memory and in the life enrich themselves in intelligence to eternity. So it is said that “they should take away the mina from him who gained nothing with it, and should give it to him who had ten minas.”

#### Questions and Comments

1. In what ways does the Lord call you and entrust His resources to you to use on His behalf while He is “away”?
2. What is a situation in which we might feel like God takes what He did not deposit and reaps what He did not sow, and be fearful of investing thought and energy in fleeing from evils and doing a good job?
3. In verse 25, they say, “Lord, he has ten minas,” as if complaining that he already has more than enough. Does life sometimes feel unfair and unequal? How does the Lord regard such inequalities?
4. Who do you think are meant by the nobleman’s enemies who were unwilling that he should rule over them?

## 5. Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

28 And when He had said these things, He went before, going up to Jerusalem.  
29 And it came to pass, as He was near to Bethphage<sup>6</sup> and Bethany, at the mountain called *the Mount of Olives*, He sent two of His disciples,  
30 saying, Go ye into the village opposite, in which on going in you shall find a colt tied, on which no man ever sat; loose him, and bring *him*.  
31 And if anyone asks you, Why do you loose *him*? thus you shall say to him, Because the Lord has need of him.  
32 And they who were sent went, and found *it* even as He had said to them.  
33 But as they were loosing the colt, his owners said to them, Why do you loose the colt?  
34 And they said, The Lord has need of him.  
35 And they brought him to Jesus; and throwing their own garments on the colt, they set Jesus on *him*.  
36 And as He went, they spread their garments in the way.  
37 And when He was already near to the descent of the Mount of Olives, all the multitude of the disciples rejoicing began to praise God with a great voice for all the *works of power* that they had seen,  
38 saying, Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord!<sup>7</sup> Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!  
39 And some of the Pharisees from among the crowd said to Him, Teacher, rebuke Thy disciples!  
40 And He answering told them, I say to you, If these should be silent, the stones would cry out.

AC 2781:8-9. To “ride upon a donkey” was a sign that the natural was made subordinate; and to “ride upon a colt the son of a female donkey” was a sign that the rational was made subordinate.... Because of this signification, and because it belonged to the highest judge and to a king to ride upon them, and at the same time so that the representatives of the church might be fulfilled, it pleased the Lord to do this.... The reason for the representation was that the natural man ought to serve the rational, and this the spiritual, this the celestial, and this the Lord: such is the order of subordination.

AE 31:7. One who does not know the signification of ... “a donkey’s colt,” in a representative sense, will suppose that the Lord’s riding upon a donkey’s colt was significative of misery and humiliation. But it signified royal magnificence; for this reason the people then proclaimed the Lord king, and strewed their garments upon the way. This was done when He went to Jerusalem, because by “Jerusalem” is signified the church... and “garments” signify truths clothing and serving good....

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<sup>6</sup> Pronounced BETH-fuh-gee, meaning house of young figs; Bethany means house of dates.

<sup>7</sup> Psalms 118:26; “Lord” means Jehovah.

AE 1210. “To praise God” signifies confession and worship, because the Lord has no wish to be praised and glorified from any love of Himself, but only from His love for man, for man cannot help but praise and glorify the Lord, that is, give praise and glory to Him, when he acknowledges in heart that there is nothing of good in himself, and that he can do nothing of himself, and on the other hand, that all good is from the Lord, and that the Lord can do all things. When man is in this acknowledgment, he puts aside what is his own [*proprium*], which belongs to the love of self, and opens all things of his mind, and thus gives room for the Divine to flow in with good and with power. This is why it is necessary for man to be in humility before the Lord, and why humility can be from no other source than self-acknowledgment and acknowledgment of the Lord. According to this acknowledgment, reception takes place.

#### Questions and Comments

1. Notice where the Lord was coming from in His triumphal entry: the Mount of Olives, which signifies His Divine Love. The story mentions olives, dates and figs, meaning love, wisdom and use.
2. What does the Lord need of us? How can we loan Him a donkey?
3. The Lord came to enable us to establish the right order of subordination in ourselves, from the natural to the rational, to the spiritual, to the celestial, and to Him. What might be an example of this subordination?
4. The theme of humility and subordination to the Lord continues, from the wealthy young ruler, to the story of Zacchaeus, to the multitude of disciples praising God. Learning to humble ourselves takes time. How do we cultivate genuine humility before the Lord, so that He can truly be our King?

6. Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

41 And when He was near, seeing the city, He wept over it,  
42 saying, O that thou hadst known, even thou, and, indeed, in this thy day, the things  
*that belong* to thy peace! But now they are hidden from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, and thine enemies shall cast a rampart around  
thee, and shall surround thee, and shall beset thee on every side;  
44 and they shall lay thee level with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they  
shall not leave in thee stone upon stone, because thou didst not know the time of thy  
visitation.

45 And He went into the temple, and began to cast out those who sold in it, and those  
who bought,  
46 saying to them, It is written, My house is a house of prayer<sup>8</sup>, but you have made it a  
cave of robbers<sup>9</sup>.

47 And He taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the first of  
the people sought to destroy Him,  
48 and could not find what they might do, for all the people hung upon Him to hear *Him*.

AE 365:9. Jesus wept over the city, saying, If thou hadst known, and indeed in this day, the things  
that belong to thy peace! But now it is hidden from thine eyes (Luke 19:41-42). Those who think of  
these words and those that follow immediately there only from the sense of the letter, because they  
see no other sense, believe that these words were spoken by the Lord respecting the destruction of  
Jerusalem. But all things that the Lord spoke, since they were from the Divine, did not relate to  
worldly and temporal things, but to heavenly and eternal things. Therefore “Jerusalem,” over which  
“the Lord wept,” signifies here as elsewhere the church, which was then entirely vastated, so that  
there was no longer any truth and consequently no good, and thus they were about to perish forever.  
Therefore He says, “if thou hadst known, and indeed in this day, the things that belong to thy  
peace,” that is, that belong to eternal life and happiness, which are from the Lord alone; for “peace”  
means heaven and heavenly joy through conjunction with the Lord.

AE 410:8. “A den of robbers” signifies the evil of life from the falsities of doctrine; and “the house  
upon which My name is named” [Jer. 7:11] signifies the church where there is worship from the  
goods of life by truths of doctrine; “house” meaning the church, and “the name of Jehovah”  
everything by which He is worshiped, thus good and truth, truth of doctrine and good of life. The  
church where there is evil of life from falsities of doctrine is called “a den of robbers” because “den”  
signifies that evil, and those are called “robbers” who steal truths from the Word and pervert them,

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<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 56:7

<sup>9</sup> Jeremiah 7:11

and apply them to falsities and evils, and thus extinguish them. All this makes clear what is meant by the Lord's words in the Gospels:

It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayers; but you have made it a den of robbers (Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46).

“House” here, in the universal sense, signifies the church; and because worship was performed in the temple at Jerusalem, it is called “a house of prayers.”

#### Questions and Comments

1. How does it affect your thought of the Lord, knowing that He wept over Jerusalem?  
We may remember the teaching, “Mercy is love grieving” (AC 5480).
2. How should we think of the fact that a church (and a civilization) can perish forever?  
How should we respond?
3. Does the Lord want us to watch out for people turning our church from a house of prayers into a den of robbers? Should we have zeal to protect the church from evil of life and falsities of doctrine? How might the Lord cast out those who sell and those who buy false teachings from our church?
4. The chief priests and scribes and the first of the people could not do anything against the Lord for a while because all the people “hung upon Him to hear Him.” Does this suggest ways that average laymen can help protect the Lord's presence in the church?