

Destiny is at Hand

Series: Encountering Jesus (through the Gospel of Luke)
Brad Bailey – January 19, 2020

Luke 19:28-44

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Series #54 / Luke 19:28 – 44

Intro

Let me begin by asking you to consider this question:

Which is ultimate... disorder or order? (Do you exist merely amidst a material world without transcendent order or purpose? Or do you exist as part of a world in which there is order and purpose that transcends the chaos... an ultimate direction and destiny that is bigger than you?)

Our inner worlds... are shaped by many things....one of those most underlying...and often unconscious... is **our sense of order and destiny.**

Some have begun to see that the disease of our current cultural soul in light of how human life has located itself in relationship to a higher order. It's notable that for an extended time, humanity was bound within the many forms of pagan views in which human life was just the pawn of capricious powers and gods. But then a people was called out...which claimed that the one true and living God...the creator of all... was revealing himself... and revealing that God had fashioned the world with order...and that He came in Christ announcing that it's destiny was what he called "the kingdom of God"... the ultimate reign and rule of God's order and goodness.

From such a **discovery of order and common good humanity... began to explore and discover and develop the modern world. But one thing that didn't go away... was the pride that of human nature. And so humanity began to believe it knew more than it did... controlled more than it did...** and it cultivated an independence that declared ourselves the center.

With such pride...we forget how little we actually know and control....and we **cast off anything that transcends us.**

As many explain **our recent modern state...**the very claim of being independent beings **casts us into isolation and meaninglessness.**

This is the **growing disease and malaise** of our current cultural state.

We **may try to find transcendence** in the mystery of the arts and music and pleasure... because something of meaning still haunts us... but we are still trapped by being cut off from anything outside the human world.

[1a]

Which is ultimate... disorder or order? Is the desire for order just a vain attempt to help us survive...or does a higher divine order transcend and ultimately lay claim to the disorder we see?

Today...**God speaks into these underlying questions.**

He reveals that there is a destiny at hand.

The idea of "destiny" can be used in many ways...but its core meaning is this:

Destiny - an event (or a course of events) that will inevitably happen in the future. An agency determining the future.

As we continue in our extended series of Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. ...we come to a **dynamic and defining scene. [1b].**

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying

to them, ³⁰ "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. ³¹ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"

At this point ... Luke begins his account of Christ entering Jerusalem... and the final week of his incarnate ministry culminating in his crucifixion and resurrection. Luke, like the other Gospel accounts, **dedicates a far greater proportion** of his Gospel account to this week. [2]

We do well to recognize the significance of this.

It means that **we begin a season journeying with Jesus** through the final week... in all its significance. **Never have we done so** as a community with so much time to really engage each encounter. We are **going to engage nearly every dramatic moment** week by week through Easter.

Not just Sundays. This also provides something so rich into this season of our **Encountering Jesus Groups...** as you **journey deeper together** into this journey with Jesus through what he says to us...and does for us.

It also reveals that this **indeed is the defining nature** of who he is and what he has done. **Jesus himself** had just reminded them again... **"The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost."**

"The Son of Man came." He came...the birth of Christ...that is event we celebrate at Christmas. The infinite has entered the world of the finite. The eternal has invaded time. But to fulfill something...**to seek and save what was lost...**and that includes us.

This is what Jesus always spoke of. **This is what each of Gospels dedicates nearly a third of themselves to sharing...a third to this final one week.**

As hard as **some may try to define Jesus** as a **great teacher**, a great **philosopher**, a great **humanitarian**, or a spiritually enlightened man ...but he came as a savior... as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The Great Shepherd has become the lamb of God!

In the weeks ahead we will see how Luke tells us how the powers of this world rise up to try and stop Jesus... but at the very start...**God wants us to see that what may appear to rise up and defeat God...** to remove such rule... **is the very unfolding of God's reign and rule.** [3]

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ **As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,** ³⁰ "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. ³¹ **If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"**

As Jesus approaches the city, he appoints two of his disciples to go to nearby a village to get the colt of a donkey for him to ride.

This **may sound strange.**

If someone told you to go across town...and you'll find a Lexus... a new one. Bring it here. And if anyone asks... tells them the Lord needs it.

In this context...it's not so strange. The people around Jerusalem had long waited for the Messiah... were likely to have heard that this Jesus was unlike anyone and believed to be the Messiah... and even that he was headed to Jerusalem. So **providing for his entry may have been a privilege.**

But what is clear is that God is at work...fulfilling what he had spoken long ago. What is unfolding is the fulfillment of what God had spoken through the prophets. In particular, God spoke through the prophet Zechariah stating...

Zechariah 9:9 (CEV)

Everyone in Jerusalem, celebrate and shout! Your king has won a victory, and he is coming to you. He is humble and rides on a donkey; he comes on the colt of a donkey.

Many may wonder... **Why would a king ride a donkey instead of a warhorse?** It seems an odd choice for royalty. We can only imagine kings ride grand stallions.

> In the ancient Middle Eastern world, **leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace.**

So the riding of the donkey was not demeaning... it wasn't a symbol of lacking power.... it was a symbol of their power to have brought peace.

Jesus' instructions are clear that the donkey must be one that has never been ridden. The reason is that reflects that it is set apart... consecrated for a specific use -- for the Master's use.

When Jesus indicates to his disciples that he should ride on a donkey that no one had ever ridden before, **he is initiating a public, kingly act.** He is revealing openly that he is the Messiah.

Now it **may still seem strange** that Jesus could speak of them finding a **donkey with colt** in a **particular spot** that **would be given.**

The point is that in the same way God spoke to the earthly prophet... it would appear that the Holy Spirit was revealing what the work of heaven to Jesus. **What the Bible refers to as prophetic** simply means **God reveals things that would otherwise not be known.**

The point is this: God had spoken of what was to come...**long before it came.**

It was **destined.**

Destiny is seen in the prophetic...what God has revealed about the events that are to unfold.

God is in control. Take that in.

Luke continues...

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They replied, "The Lord needs it." 35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

This is how the nature of Palm Sunday came together. The other Gospel accounts mention the use of waving branches as well (John specifies palm branches.) But **central was the laying down of outer garments.** It was a **symbolic of one** bowing themselves beneath the feet of the king. The idea is that they were **"in effect" placing themselves under His feet.** So instead of doing it physically people would throw their coats beneath His path.

Luke continues...

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

37 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: ³⁸ "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

This is more than a simple crowd or a crowded road.

Since it was **Passover**, one of the three Jewish feasts that every male was required to attend, Jerusalem was **filled with "pilgrims"** and there must have naturally been many from Galilee where they had witnessed His miracles many times.

To grasp this scene... we do well to know that **they came with lambs**. Jewish law **required that the Passover lamb** live with the family for at least three days before sacrifice (Exodus 12:3-6). Families would have chosen their lamb to be sacrificed. This yearly reminder served to help the Israelites never forget that it was the blood of the lamb that provided their deliverance (Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that one year a census was taken of the number of lambs slain for Passover and that figure was 256,500.) In other words, **when Jesus entered the city He must have done so surrounded by lambs, Himself being the greatest of lambs.**

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

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

There is **something so poignant in this exchange.**

The religious leaders are **outraged that Jesus accepts the crowds adulation** and acclamation of Him as Messiah and King! They considered this blasphemous. [4]

They may have also been afraid of what such public claims of a king may stir up from their oppressing Roman forces. The Sadducees, one group of religious leaders, had a tradition in which they believed the Messiah would show up four days before Passover. They took this so seriously that they kept the gates of the Temple open so He could walk in to his rightful place. Because of this, **nationalistic fervor** was at its peak and the Romans were on high alert

Jesus' response is so powerful.

"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

What does he mean?

Creation itself is rooted in its center. In their own way they declare the position and power of God. [5]

Psalms 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Such praise is destined. The true center and source of all good will ultimately be praised. Here we see that...

Destiny is seen in the created order... that which reflects a source and center of power and order and beauty.

The religious leaders think that they can simply turn off this worship of Jesus. They are sure who he is... but they don't want him to mess up their position.

The truth is that these religious leaders are giving orders to the one who is the very source of order. They are making demands ... on the source of destiny.

That may sound presumptuous...but it **has long been human nature.**

Humankind has sought to be the center of existence... to believe that we can define existence by what we understand... and control.

we know ultimate reality.

We think our opinion about God will change reality?

We worry if God is not popular?

How many think that if Jesus is not popular...or if others dismiss him... they will diminish who he is?

The center does not change.

It is more **like gravity**. Whether you like it... won't change the effect.

Jesus confirmed that the **worship of God** is an **unstoppable power**. [6]

We can easily think of worship as something that begins in us... a decision to go to church this morning... **but worship is simply giving worth to what is worthy and good...and that is what eternally exists in the very eternal nature of God.**

In the eternal realm, worship is the very air and atmosphere.

It is life centered in God and His glorious goodness. [7]

Worship then is **not something we conjure up...** it's **something we connect with.**

The worship and worth of God is the destiny.

Luke 19:28-44 (NIV)

41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 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. 43 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. 44 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 recognize the time of God's coming to you."

Jesus comes up over the mount... where the city lies before him.

And as he looks upon the city ...he weeps. [8]

Not simply for the city itself... but for the whole nation of people it represents.

The savior had come...but they were still bound to their political expectations ...and he knew it.

They wanted to be **saved from Rome ...more than from their sin.**

The people **wanted their own independence ...more than they wanted God himself...** and they **trusted in their own human force ...more than God.**

The result was destruction.

What Jesus declared actually came true shortly after these words were spoken and written of.

Within the same generation at hand... they began a revolt... a four-year **insurgency campaign** in Judaea ... and it **ended with the Romans surrounding the city... and destroying it's people and it's temple.** (In 70 AD... 37 years after Christ spoke these words in 33 AD.)

His feelings could be **likened to what parents might feel** if they saw their **child running into the street** as a truck was coming.... or running off with some con who would sell them into slavery.

Here we see the nature of destiny in the consequences of human independence itself.

Destiny is seen in the unique peace which Christ brings... settling what no trust in human force can accomplish.

They chose to seek peace that was simply to overcome one oppressive power... while Jesus came to break the ultimate powers of oppression which have ruled over all.
Peace begins with being reconciled with God... and then with others as children of God.
Jesus is quite clear... the peace he brings is the destiny that will come and define eternity.

Closing

In every aspects of these events...we see that as all forms of human power seem to rise up against the will of God... it is the will of God that prevails.

Despite how the hearts of the people may be fickle... the will of God prevails.

There is a destiny at work in the midst of the chaos of this world.

It is a destiny that Jesus connected himself to as he began this week.

It is that destiny that he calls his followers to connect to as they go forward.

John 16:33 (NIV)

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Today... God wants us to know that we WILL have troubles in this world... but we can have peace... in his own overcoming... **by taking hold of destiny.**

Jesus **never suggests** that **this world is operating the way God's wants it.**

He says **it WILL.**

This is what we are called to align ourselves with.

When various presidents have called our country to rise up to justice... they often speak of providence or destiny. What they mean is that it is the end to which all that lasts will move.

This is why Martin Luther King had a dream... it was a matter of seeing that there was an ultimate and unstoppable destiny.

As Solomon wrote...

Proverbs 19:21 (ISV)

Many plans occupy the mind of a man, but the LORD's purposes will prevail.

He is essentially saying...your existence is not rooted in disorder ...but in destiny.

Prayer / Ministry

Potential Responsive Songs:

[You Cannot Be Stopped - Phil Wickham and Chris Quilala](#)

Resources: John Hamby (A New Kind of King); J. Ligon Duncan III (Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord); [Precepts](#); Allan Quak (Our King Weeps At His Parade)

Notes:

1a. The dynamics of the modern secular culture were given deep insight by Charles Taylor in his work *A Secular Age*. James Smith refers to it as offering a "genealogy of the secular age and an archeology of our angst." (James Smith's "How (Not) to be Secular: A Reading of Charles Taylor).

1b. One may note that the text begins referring to "after he said this." What had Jesus just said... that Luke is referring to? He had called out Zacchaeus the tax collector... and then stated, "Today salvation has come to

this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (19:9-10) and then "as they were listening, he went on to tell them a parable" (19:11)... which is about faithful stewards and concludes:

"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. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them--bring them here and kill them in front of me.'" (19:26-27)

It is not hard to see that he now moves forward as the one "who came to seek and save"... and is rejected by those who had been entrusted but will lose what they had.

2. "What's amazing is how much the Gospels focus on the last week of Jesus' final week. A third of the Gospels is devoted to it. Here's the breakdown and statistics from chapter one of Andy Naselli's new book [How to Understand and Apply the New Testament](#):

The break down according to each of the Gospels:

- A third of Matthew, from Matthew 21-28
- A third of Mark, from Mark 11-16
- A quarter of Luke, from Luke 19-24
- Nearly half of John, from John 12-20

As one can see above the Gospel of John is the most concentrated upon the last week of Jesus. Furthermore, nearly a third of the Gospel of John is dedicated to one day, from John 13-19.

What about a breakdown according to the total chapters of the Gospel? There are a total of 89 chapters from all four Gospels. Of those chapters 29 is on the final week. Again we see that it is a third of the Gospels. These statistics led Andy Naselli to say "The Gospels are essentially passion narratives with extended introductions." He's right.

But what makes the passion narrative so important for Christians? It shows that at the heart of Jesus' life and ministry is the sacrificial work of Christ as both the priest and the sacrifice for our sins." From: Are You Aware of the 4 Gospels' Focus on the Last Week of Jesus' Life? April 9, 2017 by [SLIMJIM](#) found [here](#)

Another notes that over 37% of Mark is dedicated to the final week... his high use of "immediately" slows down and he begins to give more daily accounting. The essential thing about his life was that he came to die.

3. There are several messages that come from this text. I have chosen to follow the theme of destiny. Some other Scriptures which encourage understanding that there is a divine destiny in life.

Ecclesiastes 6:10 -

Whatever exists has already been named, and what humanity is has been known; no one can contend with someone who is stronger.

Habakkuk 2:3 -

For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

Isaiah 46:10 -

I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'

Isaiah 55:11 -

so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

1 Corinthians 2:7-9 -

7 No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived" — the things God has prepared for those who love him—

1 John 3:1-3

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Colossians 1:26-29

the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

As others have noted, there is something to learn from the donkey as a symbol of being used by God. There is the tragedy of the people's missing what was at hand that would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem. And Dr. Ralph F. Wilson lists several other points which are commonly seen:

1. Regarding Jesus' instructions about obtaining the donkey, we are to obey Jesus when he tells us to do something. Just because we don't understand how everything will work out is no reason to refuse to budge when it is time to obey.
2. We must be ready and willing for Jesus to claim use of our possessions and positions. Since he is our Master, they don't belong to us, but to him. When he sends a message, "The Lord has need of it," we must relinquish our control willingly and immediately.
3. Praise can be received with humility. Jesus did not crave the praise of men, but neither did he silence it. It was fitting. It was appropriate.
4. There is a time to be guarded about who we are in God, and there is a time to be fully open about it. We must not operate out of fear or self-absorption, but be sensitive to what God wants to do and then cooperate with that.
5. Rejoicing and pain can co-exist. They did in Jesus at the Triumphal Entry, and they often coexist in our lives, too. There will be no complete rejoicing until we rejoice fully in heaven, after God has wiped away every tear from our eyes (Revelation 21:4).
6. And, of course, one of the strongest lessons of this passage is that Jesus IS King! He IS the Messiah, the Son of David, and as such, it is fitting that we worship him.

4. John records their greatest fear

"Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. "If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." (John 11:47-48, cf reaction of the chief priests and the scribes in Lk 20:1-2)

5. Other Scriptures which speak of creation as praising God:

Isaiah 55:12 (ESV)

“For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Job 12:7-10 (ESV)

“But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 8:19-23

For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse. All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us. [NLT]

Consider many other Scriptures found [here](#)

6. Consider also Romans 14:11 (cf. Isaiah 45:23, Phil. 2:10)

For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God."

7. Within the very being of God lies the flow of worship....

‘In Jesus’ reflection on John 17 (esp. 1-5) we gain a glimpse of the internal worship life of the triune God. Father, Son and Spirit bring glory to each other, go out of themselves in love for each other and eternally delight in one another. During Christ’s earthly ministry we have a sacred hint of this in his spontaneous worship when “full of joy through the Holy Spirit” (Luke 10:21), Jesus thanked and blessed the Father. So for God’s people worship is not a desperate effort to cross the infinity of time and space and bring honor to God; it is being taken into the continuous worship that goes on within the Godhead. It is modeled and inspired from above, not created and worked up from below.’ - From The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity edited by R. Paul Stevens, Robert Banks, under “Worship.”

We are being invited back into fellowship with the goodness of God.

Lewis says that at he was beginning to believe in God, a great stumbling block was the presence of demands scattered through the Psalms that he should praise God. He did not see the point in all this; besides, it seemed to picture God as craving "for our worship like a vain woman who wants compliments." He goes on to show why he was wrong.

“(But) the most obvious fact about praise-whether of God or anything-strangely escaped me. I thought of it in terms of compliment, approval, or the giving of honor. I had never noticed that all enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise...The world rings with praise-lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game...

My whole, more general, difficulty about the praise of God depended on my absurdly denying to us, as regards the supremely Valuable, what we delight to do, what indeed we can't help doing, about everything else we value.

I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.”

If we enjoy talking about that which is good... how much more that which is perfect?

Worship flows naturally from experiencing anything good... how much more from God who is perfect... the source of all ultimate pleasure ?

8. Regarding the weeping, Spurgeon notes - "As he approached and saw the city, he wept for it." On three occasions we are told that Jesus wept. The first was when our Lord was about to raise Lazarus from the dead. He saw the sorrow of the sisters and meditated on the fruit of sin in the death and corruption of the body, and he groaned in spirit, and it is written that "Jesus wept" (Jn 11:35). The third occasion was in the Gethsemane agony when a shower of bitter tears was mingled with the bloody sweat (Heb 5:7). The second occasion was here at the sight of the beloved but rebellious city. Our Lord, in weeping over Jerusalem, showed his sympathy with national troubles and his distress at the evils which awaited his countrymen. He suffered a deep inward anguish and expressed it by signs of woe and by words that showed how bitter was his grief.