



CHAPTER 21: 1-38

The Gospel of Luke

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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Luke's gospel is a compilation of various interviews with eye-witnesses and close followers of Jesus (Luke 1:1-4). The author, Luke, probably did not become a Christian until several years after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He is first mentioned (implicitly) in Acts 16:10 (Acts is another book of the New Testament which Luke wrote). He did not, therefore, meet Jesus in the flesh and he himself was not an eye-witness.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Luke 21: 1-38

Douay Rheims Version

The widow's mites. The signs that should forerun the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

1. And looking on, he saw the rich men cast their gifts into the treasury.
2. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in two brass mites.
3. And he said: Verily, I say to you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.
4. For all these have of their abundance cast into the offerings of God: but she of her want hath cast in all the living that she had.
5. And some saying of the temple that it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said:

Ver. 34.—*And take heed to yourselves, lest “the cares of this life absorb the mind and sink the faculties,”* says Euthymius, “and do not allow men to think about their salvation.” “The cares of this life,” says Titus, “debauchery and ebriety, deprive men of their senses, obscure their faith, and cause forgetfulness of all that is useful and necessary. They distract the mind, seize hold of it, and absorb it in the cares of this world.”

Ver. 35.—*For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.* As careless birds are taken craftily by snares, so in the day of judgment shall the men of pleasure be. 2 “As the snare strangles the birds, so shall the day of judgment choke sinners.” 3. “As the snare always keeps hold,” says the Interlinear, “of that which it has once caught, so shall the sentence, given by one Christian judge, be perpetual; and either for ever glorify him who is judged, in heaven, or consume him with fire in hell.”

Ver. 36.—*Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.* The Arabic has, “That you may be strengthened in flight.”

Stand before the Son of Man. So Wisdom v. i: “They shall stand with great constancy.” “To those therefore who give themselves up to vigils, prayers, and good works, that day shall not be a snare, but a festival,” says Theophylact.

Ver. 37.—*And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple; and at night He went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.* Because olives abounded in it. Christ gave the day to preaching and to His neighbour, but the night to prayer, to Himself, and to God. Thus He gave very little time to repose and slumber. The same did S. Paul, Dominic, F. Xavier, and others like them. “He went by night,” says Theophylact, “into the mountain, to show us that we ought to hold communion with God in quiet at night. By day we should be gentle, and do good.” So Bede: “What He commanded in words, He confirmed by His own example; for when the time of His Passion drew near, He was instant in teaching, in watching, and in prayers, either urging those, for whom He was to suffer, to faith by His words, or commending them to His Father by His prayers.”

Ver. 38.—*And all the people came early in the morning to Him.* The senses are in their vigour in the morning, and the morning therefore, as the best part of the day, is to be given to God.

6. These things which you see, the days will come in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down.

7. And they asked him, saying: Master, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when they shall begin to come to pass?

8. Who said: Take heed you be not seduced: for many will come in my name, saying: I am he and the time is at hand. Go ye not therefore after them.

9. And when you shall hear of wars and seditions, be not terrified. These things must first come to pass: but the end is not yet presently.

10. Then he said to them: Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

11. And there shall be great earthquakes in divers places and pestilences and famines and terrors from heaven: and there shall be great signs.

12. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, dragging you before kings and governors, for my name's sake.

13. And it shall happen unto you for a testimony.

14. Lay it up therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before how you shall answer:

15. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay.

16. And you shall be betrayed by your parents and brethren and kinsmen and friends: and some of you they will put to death.

17. And you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake.

18. But a hair of your head shall not perish.

19. In your patience you shall possess your souls.

20. And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed about with an army, then know that the desolation thereof is at hand.

21. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains: and those who are in the midst thereof depart out: and those who are in the countries not enter into it.

22. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled, that are written.

23. But woe to them that are with child and give suck in those days: for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

24. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword and shall be led away captives into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the times of the nations be fulfilled.

25. And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea, and of the waves:

26. Men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the powers of heaven shall be moved.

27. And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with great power and majesty.

28. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand.

29. And he spoke to them a similitude. See the fig tree and all the trees:
 30. When they now shoot forth their fruit, you know that summer is nigh;
 31. So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand.
 32. Amen, I say to you, this generation shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled.
 33. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.
 34. And take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life: and that day come upon you suddenly.
 35. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth.
 36. Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come and to stand before the Son of man.
 37. And in the daytime, he was teaching in the temple: but at night going out, he abode in the mount that is called Olivet.
 38. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.

Ver. 18.—*But there shall not an hair of your head perish.* “Because,” says S. Gregory, “what was said about death was hard, comfort is added at once, from the joy of the resurrection, when it is said, ‘a hair of your head shall not perish.’ For we know that the flesh when wounded, causes pain, but the hair when cut does not. Our Lord therefore said to His martyrs, ‘A hair of your head shall not perish.’” From these words of Christ, we may conclude that we shall rise again with our actual bodies. S. Augustine (*De Civitate, chap. 19, 20.*) So S. Bonaventure, S. Thomas, the master of the sentences, Soto, and others. Their proof is from Matt. x. 30: “The very hairs of your head are all numbered;” and from this of S. Luke, “Not a hair of your head shall perish.” “Not in length,” says S. Augustine, “but in number.”

2. We may collect this from reason, for our bodies will rise without deformity, with their natural adornments and comeliness; the adornment of the head is the hair, the beard, the nails. If any one has not these he is a deformed.

Ver. 19.—*In your patience possess ye your souls.* Patience, therefore, is the possession of our souls. Firstly, because patience rules the soul and directs it in peace, and bends and influences it as it pleases. Secondly, because no one can keep the hope of a future life, as S. Augustine says, unless he have patience in the labours of the present one. Thirdly, S. Gregory (*Homily xxxv. in Evangel.*): “The possession of the soul consists of the virtue of patience, because patience is the root and guardian of all virtues. Through patience, we possess our souls, because, while we learn to govern ourselves, we begin to possess the knowledge that we are (quod sumus, quod adverb). It is patience to endure calmly the evils we suffer from others, and to be affected with no painful feeling against him who inflicts them upon us. For whoever so takes the oppressions of others, as to grieve in silence, but to look out for a time of retribution, does not possess this virtue, but only makes a show of it. Again, Solomon says, Prov. xvi. 32: ‘The patient man is better than the valiant, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh cities.’ The taking of a city is therefore a less victory,

because the conquest is outside ourselves. That which is subdued by patience is greater, because the mind is subdued by itself, and subjects itself to itself when patience subdues it to the humility of endurance.” S. Gregory adds the example of the Abbot Stephen, who returned contumelies with thanks, and thought a gain, loss, and considered his adversaries his helpers. Hence, at his death, angels were seen taking his soul to heaven.

The impatient do not possess their souls, but are possessed by the vices of wrath and vindictiveness, and consequently by Satan. They, only, who have ardent love can gain true patience, as those fervent martyrs—SS. Ignatius, Laurence, Sebastian, Vincent, and others. Trajan the Emperor, consequently, said when he conferred, by his sentence, martyrdom on S. Ignatius, “No people suffer so much for their God as the Christians.” S. Gregory (*book v. Moral. chap. 13*), “What is it to possess our souls, but to live perfectly in all things, and to govern all the emotions of our minds by the art of virtue? Whoever therefore possesses patience, possesses his soul, because he is thus made strong against all adversities, so that he rules even by subduing himself. By whatever he masters himself, he clearly shows himself unmastered, for when he masters himself in his pleasures, he prepares himself to be unmastered by their opposites.” In his 39th Epistle to Theoclistus; “In your patience possess your souls. Consider a moment where patience would be if there were nothing to be endured. I suspect that he would not be an Abel who had no Cain. For if the good were without misfortunes, they could not be perfectly good, for they would have no purgation. Their very society with evil is the purification of the good.” Hence, says Theodore Studita in his 19th Catechetical Lecture, “Endurance is the highest perfection of virtue;” and Lucan (*lib. ix.*):

<p>—Serpens, sitis, ardor, arenæ Dulcia Virtutis, gaudet Patientia duris.</p>	<p>The sandy desert’s burning heat; the pangs Of raging thirst; its serpent’s cruel fangs, Are Virtue’s sweets; for Patience joys in these, And welcomes hardships more than softest case.</p>
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Lastly, the whole band of virtues flows into patience, so that it appears to be the complex of all virtues. Seneca (*Ep. 69. and following*): “There is a fortitude of which the brands are patience, endurance, and toleration. There is prudence, without which no undertaking is entered upon, and which persuades us to endure bravely what we cannot escape. There is constancy which cannot be cast down from its pedestal, and the determination of which no force can overthrow. Here is that indivisible society of virtues.” And see the words of S. James. i. 4.