

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Gospel of Luke, Session 27, Parables on Prayer (Luke 17:20-18:17) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Darko, Luke, Session 27, Parables on Prayer (Luke 17:20-18:17), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Daniel K. Darko's Session 27 lecture on the **Gospel of Luke (17:20-18:17)** focuses on **parables about prayer**. The session analyzes **Jesus' teachings** on the coming Kingdom of God, contrasting Pharisaic expectations with the present reality of God's reign. Darko highlights **two parables specific to Luke**—the persistent widow and the Pharisee and the tax collector—emphasizing the importance of **persistence and humility in prayer**. The lecture concludes by examining Jesus' interaction with children, underscoring the value of the marginalized in God's kingdom.

**2. 23 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Darko, Luke, Session 27 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament →
Gospels → Luke).**



**Darko_Luke_Session
n27.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Darko, Luke, Session 27, Parables on Prayer (Luke 17:20-18:17)

Briefing Document: Dr. Daniel K. Darko on Luke 17:20-18:17 - Parables on Prayer

Overview:

This briefing document summarizes the key themes and ideas presented by Dr. Daniel K. Darko in his lecture (Session 27) on Luke 17:20-18:17, focusing on the parables of prayer. Dr. Darko emphasizes the shift in Luke's narrative as Jesus journeys towards Jerusalem, highlighting the emerging theme of the Kingdom of God and the piety required of its followers. The lecture analyzes Jesus' responses to the Pharisees about the timing of the Kingdom, his subsequent teachings to his disciples about the coming of the Son of Man, and the two parables on prayer (the unjust judge and the widow, and the Pharisee and the tax collector). Finally, it examines the passage about bringing infants to Jesus.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. The Coming of the Kingdom of God (Luke 17:20-21):

- Jesus clarifies to the Pharisees that the Kingdom of God is not a visible, territorial restoration as they expect ("The Kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed. Nor will they say, look here it is, or there, for behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you.").
- Dr. Darko explains that Jesus presents the Kingdom as the "reign of God over the hearts and minds of people," which manifests through listening to the Messiah's teachings, liberation, and the restoration of hope.
- He connects this to Jesus' "Nazarene Manifesto," where the Spirit of God anoints him to bring the Kingdom's work.
- Jesus indicates that the Kingdom is already present in his ministry, suggesting the Pharisees are asking the wrong question.

2. The Coming of the Son of Man (Luke 17:22-37):

- Jesus shifts his attention to the disciples, speaking about a future time when they will long for "one of the days of the Son of Man" but will not see it immediately.
- The coming of the Son of Man will be sudden and unexpected, likened to lightning flashing across the sky. ("For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.").

- Dr. Darko highlights that the Son of Man must first suffer and be rejected ("But first, he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."). This contrasts with the disciples' likely expectations of a triumphant, restoring king.
- He uses the examples of Noah's flood and the destruction of Sodom in Lot's time to illustrate the suddenness and unpreparedness of people before judgment. ("just as it was in Noah's days. So will it be in the days of the Son of Man... Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot.").
- The passage emphasizes the need for constant readiness and not clinging to earthly possessions when the Son of Man is revealed. ("let the one who is in the house stocked with his goods in his house not come down to take them away.").
- Dr. Darko notes that "the Son of Man is a figure in Jewish apocalyptic literature who would come to bring restoration," aligning with the disciples' later question about the kingdom of Israel in Acts 1.

3. Parables on Proper Posture for Prayer (Luke 18:1-14):

- Dr. Darko introduces two parables unique to Luke, focusing on the essential postures for prayer: persistence and humility ("Parables for proper posture for prayer. PPPP, if you like.").
- He emphasizes that these parables appear after Luke's ongoing emphasis on the outcast, with a widow and a tax collector as central figures.
- He notes the contrasting settings: one in daily life seeking justice and the other in the temple, the center of piety.
- **The Parable of the Unjust Judge and the Widow (Luke 18:1-8):**
- The parable teaches that believers "ought always to pray and not lose heart."
- It contrasts an unrighteous judge who "neither feared God nor respected man" with a persistent widow seeking justice.
- The judge eventually grants her request simply to stop her from bothering him ("yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice so that she will not bear me, she will not beat me down.").
- Jesus uses this to illustrate that if even an unjust judge responds to persistence, how much more will a just God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him ("And will not God give justice to his elect who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.").

- However, Jesus ends with the poignant question, "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" raising the issue of whether believers will maintain their trust and persistence until his return.
- Dr. Darko emphasizes that the focus is not on the unjust judge but on the contrast with a just and willing God, encouraging believers to adopt the posture of persistence in prayer, trusting that God hears and will act in his own time and way.
- **The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14):**
 - This parable is told to "some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and treated others with contempt."
 - It contrasts the self-righteous prayer of the Pharisee, who boasts about his piety and looks down on others ("God, I thank you that I am not like the other men, a sinner, unjust, adulterous, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I have..."), with the humble prayer of the tax collector, who acknowledges his sinfulness and pleads for mercy ("God, be merciful to me, a sinner.").
 - Jesus declares that the tax collector went home justified, not the Pharisee ("I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other.").
 - The parable concludes with the principle: "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."
 - Dr. Darko highlights the Pharisee's self-obsession and inappropriate posture in the temple, contrasting it with the tax collector's humility, shame, and remorse, culturally expressed by standing far off and not looking up.
 - He quotes Luke Timothy Johnson, stating that "for Luke, prayer is faith in action. Prayer is not an optional exercise in piety... It is the relationship with God. The way one prays, therefore, reveals that relationship."

4. Jesus and the Children (Luke 18:15-17):

- People were bringing even infants to Jesus to touch them, but the disciples rebuked them.
- Jesus, however, welcomed the children, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."
- He further emphasizes the need for a childlike reception of the Kingdom: "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."
- Dr. Darko explains the socio-cultural context where children were often seen as vulnerable and having minimal value. He notes the tradition of bringing children to elders for blessings.
- He points out that the gospel in Luke is for all, including the seemingly insignificant, and children are not excluded.
- While Luke specifically mentions "infants," Dr. Darko cautions against interpreting this passage as direct support for infant baptism, stating that this is not the conveyed point.
- He emphasizes that children, despite being deemed unworthy by the disciples, become models for receiving the Kingdom.

Conclusion:

Dr. Darko concludes by emphasizing that the lecture highlights three key figures as models for Kingdom participation: a persistent widow (an outcast), a humble tax collector (a sinner), and a child (an insignificant being by social standards). He stresses that in God's eyes, these individuals are worthy and encourages listeners to see beyond societal judgments, embrace those deemed unworthy, and cultivate the attitudes of persistence, humility, and childlike faith as they follow Jesus on his journey towards Jerusalem and the unfolding of the Kingdom of God. He reiterates God's love for the world, encompassing all, regardless of their social standing.

4. Study Guide: Darko, Luke, Session 27, Parables on Prayer (Luke 17:20-18:17)

Luke 17:20-18:17: Parables on Prayer Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to Jesus' response to the Pharisees, how will the Kingdom of God *not* come, and what does he say about its presence?
2. What are some of the expectations the Pharisees held regarding the coming Kingdom of God?
3. What are the two key parables about prayer that Jesus tells in this section of Luke's Gospel, and what is a central theme of each?
4. Describe the character of the judge in the parable of the unjust judge and the widow. What motivates him to finally grant the widow's request?
5. What is the primary message Jesus conveys through the parable of the unjust judge and the widow regarding prayer?
6. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, what are the contrasting postures and prayers of the two men in the temple?
7. According to Jesus, which of the two men in the temple went home justified, and what principle does Jesus state at the end of this parable?
8. What was the cultural context surrounding children in the society described in the passage, and how did the disciples react to people bringing children to Jesus?
9. How does Jesus respond to the disciples' attempt to prevent children from coming to him, and what does he say about receiving the Kingdom of God?
10. What three seemingly "unworthy" figures are highlighted in this lecture as models related to the Kingdom of God?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Jesus tells the Pharisees that the Kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will people point to specific locations. Instead, he declares that "behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you," suggesting its present and internal reality.

2. The Pharisees anticipated the coming of the Kingdom as the restoration of Israel's territory under the Davidic dynasty, a time of peace where God's people would govern themselves free from foreign rule, led by the Messiah.
3. The two parables are the parable of the unjust judge and the widow, focusing on the theme of persistence in prayer, and the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, highlighting the theme of humility in prayer.
4. The judge is described as someone who neither feared God nor respected man, indicating a lack of piety and social conscience. He ultimately grants the widow justice not out of a sense of duty, but because he is bothered by her constant nagging and fears she will wear him out.
5. The parable of the unjust judge and the widow teaches that if even an unrighteous judge will eventually grant the persistent request of a helpless widow, then a just and loving God will certainly grant justice to his elect who cry out to him.
6. The Pharisee stands by himself, offering a prayer of self-congratulation, listing his righteous deeds and contrasting himself negatively with others, especially the tax collector. The tax collector, standing far off and humbled, beats his breast and prays for God's mercy as a sinner.
7. Jesus declares that the tax collector went home justified, not the Pharisee. He concludes the parable with the principle: "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted."
8. In that society, children were often seen as vulnerable and having minimal social or economic value. The disciples rebuked those who were bringing children to Jesus, likely considering them insignificant and unworthy of his attention.
9. Jesus calls the children to him, telling the disciples not to hinder them because "to such belongs the kingdom of God." He then states that whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it, emphasizing the need for childlike humility and receptivity.
10. The three figures highlighted as models are the persistent widow, the humble tax collector, and the seemingly insignificant child (or infant), all demonstrating qualities valued in the Kingdom of God despite their marginalized social status.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the significance of the timing of Jesus' parables on prayer in Luke's narrative, considering his impending journey to Jerusalem and the overarching theme of the coming Kingdom.
2. Compare and contrast the two parables on prayer in Luke 18, discussing what each parable reveals about the proper "posture" or attitude towards God in prayer.
3. Discuss the social and cultural context of the figures in the parables (the widow, the unjust judge, the Pharisee, and the tax collector) and how this context enriches our understanding of Jesus' teachings on prayer and the Kingdom of God.
4. Explore the connection between the concept of the "Son of Man" presented in Luke 17 and the themes of faith and readiness emphasized in the parables on prayer that follow.
5. Examine how Luke's portrayal of marginalized individuals (the widow, the tax collector, and children) challenges prevailing social norms and illustrates the inclusive nature of God's Kingdom as presented in this section of the Gospel.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Kingdom of God (or Heaven):** The reign and rule of God, both present in the ministry of Jesus and future in its पूर्ण realization. It encompasses God's authority, will, and blessings extending to those who accept Jesus as Messiah.
- **Parable:** A short, illustrative story used by Jesus to teach a spiritual truth or principle, often drawing from everyday life.
- **Pharisees:** A Jewish religious and social group known for their strict adherence to the Law and their concern for ritual purity. In the Gospels, they are often portrayed as critical of Jesus.
- **Tax Collector:** Individuals employed by the Roman authorities to collect taxes from the Jewish people. They were generally despised by the Jewish population and considered social outcasts.
- **Son of Man:** A title Jesus frequently used for himself, rooted in Old Testament prophecy (Daniel 7:13-14). It emphasizes both his humanity and his divine authority and role in the coming judgment and establishment of God's Kingdom.
- **Nazarene Manifesto:** A term referring to Jesus' declaration in Luke 4:16-21 in his hometown synagogue, where he reads from Isaiah and proclaims the fulfillment of prophecy in his ministry, outlining the nature of the Kingdom he is bringing.
- **Eschaton:** The final events in the history of the world, including the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment.
- **Justification:** The act by which God declares a sinner righteous through faith in Jesus Christ, resulting in forgiveness and reconciliation with God.
- **Humility:** A modest or low view of one's own importance; a lack of pride or arrogance. In a religious context, it involves recognizing one's dependence on God.
- **Persistence (in prayer):** The quality of continuing to pray earnestly and consistently, even when answers are not immediately apparent, demonstrating faith and dependence on God.

5. FAQs on Darko, Luke, Session 27, Parables on Prayer (Luke 17:20-18:17), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on Luke 17:20-18:17

1. What was the Pharisees' understanding of the coming Kingdom of God, and how did Jesus correct their view? The Pharisees anticipated the Kingdom of God as a visible, political restoration of the Davidic dynasty, where Israel would govern itself free from foreign rule under the Messiah. Jesus countered this by stating that the Kingdom of God does not come in observable ways, nor can it be pointed to in a specific location. Instead, he declared, "the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you," indicating that the reign of God is present through his own ministry and the transformation of hearts and minds as people accept his teachings and experience liberation and hope.

2. What did Jesus tell his disciples about the coming of the Son of Man, and what key themes did he emphasize? Jesus informed his disciples that the days would come when they would long to see even one day of the Son of Man, but they would not. He cautioned them against following false claims of his arrival. He emphasized that the coming of the Son of Man would be sudden and unexpected, like lightning flashing across the sky, drawing parallels to the unpreparedness during the times of Noah and Lot when judgment arrived unexpectedly amidst normal life. He also stressed that the Son of Man must first suffer and be rejected. The key themes were the suddenness of his coming, the necessity of suffering and rejection beforehand, and the need for constant readiness.

3. Why did Jesus tell the parable of the unjust judge and the widow, and what is the main point about prayer? Jesus told this parable to illustrate that his followers "ought always to pray and not lose heart." The unjust judge, who neither feared God nor respected man, eventually granted the persistent widow's request for justice simply to be rid of her. By contrast, God is just and willing to hear the cries of his elect day and night and will not delay in bringing them justice. The parable emphasizes the importance of persistence as a proper posture in prayer, assuring believers that God will ultimately hear and act on their behalf, even if there seems to be a delay.

4. What is significant about the widow in the parable of the unjust judge, and how does she serve as a model for prayer? The widow in the parable represents the vulnerable and marginalized who are often denied justice in society. She is portrayed as persistently seeking justice from a callous judge, highlighting her determination despite her powerlessness. She serves as a model for prayer by demonstrating unwavering persistence. Jesus uses her example to contrast the reluctance of the unjust judge with the willingness of a just God to respond to the persistent cries of those who trust in Him.

5. What is the main contrast in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, and what does it teach about the proper attitude in prayer? The central contrast lies between the self-righteousness of the Pharisee and the humility of the tax collector. The Pharisee boasts about his religious practices and looks down on others, including the tax collector, while the tax collector humbly acknowledges his sinfulness and pleads for God's mercy. This parable teaches that the proper attitude in prayer is one of humility and recognition of one's own need for God's grace. Those who exalt themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be exalted.

6. Why is it significant that the tax collector would not even lift his eyes to heaven when praying? In the cultural context of the time, particularly in Middle Eastern cultures, avoiding eye contact, especially looking down, was a sign of humility, shame, and remorse. The tax collector's refusal to lift his eyes to heaven and his beating of his breast were physical manifestations of his deep sorrow for his sin and his unworthiness to stand before God. This contrasts sharply with the Pharisee's confident and outward posture.

7. What was the disciples' reaction to people bringing infants to Jesus, and why did Jesus correct them? The disciples rebuked those who were bringing infants to Jesus, possibly because they considered children insignificant or an interruption. Jesus corrected them by saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." He further stated that whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it. This highlights the value of the seemingly insignificant in God's kingdom and emphasizes the childlike qualities of receptivity and humility needed to enter it.

8. What do the figures of the widow, the tax collector, and the child have in common in the context of Jesus' teachings in this passage? The widow, the tax collector, and the child are all presented as figures who were often considered outcasts, marginalized, or insignificant in their society. Yet, Jesus uses them as models to illustrate key aspects of relating to God and entering His kingdom. The widow exemplifies persistence in prayer, the tax collector embodies humility and repentance, and the child represents the necessary posture of humble receptivity towards God's kingdom. This emphasizes that God's grace and the Kingdom of God are not limited to the socially powerful or outwardly pious but are available to all, regardless of their status, who approach God with the right heart attitude.