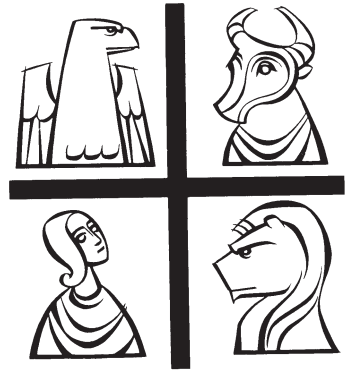


# Reading Luke in Lent

## Gospel of Luke 17:20 - 18:8



### The Coming of the Kingdom

20 Being asked by the Pharisees  
when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them,  
‘The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,  
21 nor will they say,  
“Look, here it is!” or “There!”  
for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.’  
22 And he said to the disciples,  
‘The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man,  
and you will not see it.  
23 And they will say to you,  
“Look, there!” or “Look, here!”  
Do not go out or follow them.  
24 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.  
25 But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.  
26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man.  
27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage,  
until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.  
28 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot  
—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building,  
29 but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom,  
fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—  
30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.  
31 On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house,  
not come down to take them away,  
and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back.  
32 Remember Lot’s wife.  
33 Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.  
34 I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left.  
35 There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.’  
37 And they said to him, ‘Where, Lord?’  
He said to them, ‘Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.’

### The Parable of the Persistent Widow

1 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.  
2 He said,  
‘In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man.  
3 And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying,  
“Give me justice against my adversary.”  
4 For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself,  
“Though I neither fear God nor respect man,

- 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice,  
so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.”
- 6 And the Lord said,  
‘Hear what the unrighteous judge says.
- 7 And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night?  
Will he delay long over them?
- 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes,  
will he find faith on earth?’

## Reflection

In Jesus the kingdom is present but it will not be fulfilled until the end of time when Jesus will come like lightning or dazzling white as experienced at the Transfiguration (Luke 9:29). The disciples will be ready and not look back.

When Jesus was first asked to teach his disciples to pray he taught them to say ‘Your kingdom come’. Now he teaches the disciples to pray continually and not lose heart. To help them understand he gives a parable about a patient and persistent widow. The first widow we met in Luke’s Gospel was Anna who prayed night and day. She was ready when the Son of Man came and was presented in the temple and recognised that through him redemption would come. To seek the kingdom and to pray for its coming are part of what it means to be a disciple.

- Where do you see signs of the kingdom of God?
- What cries out for justice?

## Prayer

Lord, tireless guardian of your people,  
always ready to hear the cries of your chosen ones,  
teach us to rely, day and night, on your care.

Support our prayer lest we grow weary.  
Impel us to seek your enduring justice  
and your ever-present help.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

Amen.

