

• Travelling towards Jerusalem

Jesus' ministry in phases

Early Judea

Galilee phases 1, 2 and 3 (recorded by both Mark and Luke)

On the move to avoid capture (recorded by Mark only)

• Turning point at Caesarea Philippi (Mark and Luke)

Luke's travel narrative

• Rejection by Samaritans  
• Seventy preachers commissioned  
• Parables  
• Teaching on prayer  
• Warnings against Pharisaic religion

• A lot of wandering around as he heads in the direction of Jerusalem

• Thousands of followers

When we turn to the middle pages of Luke's Gospel and start reading we find that Jesus is travelling towards Jerusalem.

The ministry of Jesus had various phases in it. After Jesus' baptism and a visit to Capernaum, there was **His early Judean ministry**, perhaps during April–December AD 30 (or possibly the dates I mention might all be three years earlier). At the end of this period, John the Baptist was arrested and this led Jesus to make Galilee the centre of His work. It must have begun in early AD 31. A **first phase of Galilean ministry** is related in the events of Luke 4:14–6:11 (the period is more clearly defined in Mark 1:14–3:6). Then in summer AD 31 there was a **second phase of Galilean ministry**. Jesus withdrew to the seaside area of Galilee for a while and then resumed His work from His borrowed home in Capernaum (Mark 3:7–6:6a; Luke 6:12–8:56). A **third phase** of His work in Galilee took place from about early AD 32 to Passover AD 32. It is covered by Mark 6:5b–7:23 and Luke 9:1–17. After this time, Mark tells us of a **period of evading Herod and the Pharisees**. Jesus was constantly on the move so as to elude capture by His enemies. Mark 7:24–8:26 tells the story though Luke says little about it.

Then there came a turning point at Caesarea Philippi<sup>□1□2</sup> when the disciples spoke of their faith in Jesus' Messiahship. At that time Jesus began to give special teaching to His disciples. Mark 8:31–9:50 and Luke 9:22–50 run parallel to each other.

At Luke 9:51 **Luke's travel narrative** begins with Jesus' decision to go to Jerusalem<sup>□1</sup>. He starts travelling towards the city where He knows He will die. On the way He enters a Samaritan village but they reject Him because they hear He is going to Jerusalem<sup>□2</sup>. He talks about what it means to follow Him; Luke tells the story of the eager follower and the reluctant follower<sup>□3</sup>. The seventy preachers are commissioned<sup>□4</sup>. Judgement is pronounced on the Galilean cities<sup>□5</sup>. The seventy return<sup>□6</sup>. Jesus gives thanks to the Father<sup>□7</sup>, answers a scribe's question<sup>□8</sup>, tells the parable of the good Samaritan<sup>□9</sup>, enters the home of Mary and Martha<sup>□10</sup>, gives teaching about prayer<sup>□11</sup>, replies to the accusation that His ministry is demonic<sup>□12</sup>, tells of true blessedness<sup>□13</sup> and of the 'sign of Jonah'<sup>□14</sup>, gives a parable about lighting a lamp<sup>□15</sup> and the healthy eye<sup>□16</sup>. He speaks about Pharisaic inconsistency<sup>□17</sup>, and warns against the leaven of the Pharisees<sup>□18</sup>.

This is the point we have reached as we open the pages of the Bible at Luke 12:1. Jesus is on a journey to Jerusalem. At one moment He is clearly in Bethany near Jerusalem. At another moment He seems far from Jerusalem. Evidently there was a lot of wandering around (and Luke may have some stories out of order, rearranging them for his own reasons). Yet the goal in view is Jerusalem.

It is less than a year until the time when Jesus will be crucified. Thousands of people are now following Jesus eagerly, wanting to hear from Him and experience His miracles<sup>□1</sup>. The current religion of the day is largely hypocritical<sup>□2</sup>. The Pharisees and their followers make a great display of religion but within they have no knowledge of God.

□1 Mark 8:27-30  
□2 Luke 9:18-21

□1 9:51  
□2 9:52-56  
□3 9:57-62  
□4 10:1-12  
□5 10:13-16  
□6 10:17-20  
□7 10:21-24  
□8 10:25-28  
□9 10:29-37  
□10 10:38-42  
□11 11:1-13  
□12 11:14-26  
□13 11:27-28  
□14 11:29-32  
□15 11:33  
□16 11:34-36  
□17 11:37-54  
□18 12:1

□1 12:1a  
□2 12:1b

**1. Secret things will soon be made known**

1. **The secrets of the heart will soon be made known**<sup>□1</sup>. Everything hidden will soon be revealed<sup>□2</sup>. Our secret talk will soon be made known<sup>□3</sup>. Every word we have said is recorded and will one day be publicised widely. The Pharisees were secretly plotting against Jesus, but in God's judgement, it will all be revealed<sup>□4</sup>.

- 1 12:2-3
- 2 12:2
- 3 12:3
- 4 12:3

**2. Fear God and nothing else**

2. **The disciples must be fearless**<sup>□1</sup>. The Pharisees had a lot of power, and people tended to be afraid of them. But men can only kill the body<sup>□2</sup>. The anger of God is greater. The body will be raised and there is a resurrection to condemnation and a second death.

- 1 12:4-5
- 2 12:4

• *It is the anger of God against sin that must be feared*

It is the anger of God against sin that must be feared and nothing else. There is such a thing as the anger of God against sin. There is the chastening in this life of God's children who displease Him. Zechariah was rebuked for unbelief, and lost some of the joy at the prospect of having a son<sup>□1</sup>. There is judgement that falls upon the judgmental<sup>□2</sup>. Those who do not respond to the kingdom shall be chastened by a lessening of their experience of the kingdom<sup>□3</sup>. Even what they think they have will be taken away.

- 1 1:20
- 2 6:37
- 3 8:18

• *Chastening in this life of God's children who displease Him*

There is also the experience of God's wrath by the unsaved in this life. In Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus predicts misery for the arrogant rich<sup>□1</sup>, the well fed<sup>□2</sup>, the person who has no worldly cares<sup>□3</sup>, the person who is careful to please everyone<sup>□4</sup>. Jesus predicts that the spiritually blind will 'stumble into a ditch'<sup>□5</sup>. Jesus may allow sin to punish itself as when the Gerasenes lost their pigs<sup>□6</sup> and lost His presence as well<sup>□7</sup>, or when villages lose the Word of God because of their unresponsiveness<sup>□8□9</sup>. Self-centred protection of one's life leads to its loss, said Jesus<sup>□10</sup>. Refusal to have Jesus in one's life leads to the last state of the sinner being worse than the first<sup>□11</sup>. Persecutors will suffer God's retribution in this world, even before the final day of judgement<sup>□12</sup>.

- 1 6:24
- 2 6:25a
- 3 6:25b
- 4 6:26
- 5 6:39
- 6 8:32-33
- 7 8:37
- 8 9:5
- 9 10:11
- 10 9:24
- 11 11:26
- 12 11:50

• *The experience of God's wrath by the unsaved in this life*

Here in Luke 12:5 Jesus speaks also of a future experience of the wrath of God against sin. If the disciples know of the judgement that is coming upon the lost and are conscious of the seriousness of the day when they will have to give an account of how they have lived – then they will fear God and will fear nothing else.

• *A future experience of the wrath of God against sin*

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