



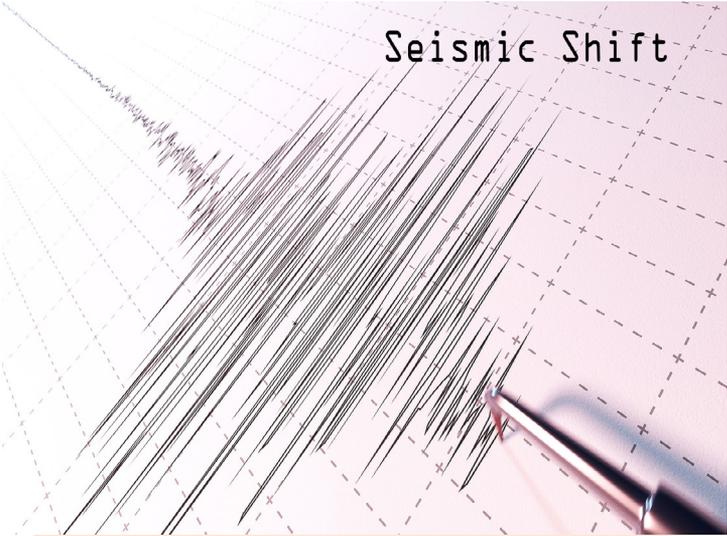
Smith Rock  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community  
Group  
study guide

LUKE

J E S U S F O R E V E R Y O N E

**For the week of  
22nd of March 2020**



## Seismic Shift

Earthquakes happen when one plate of rock which has been hung up on another plate suddenly breaks free and the energy released causes the surrounding area to buckle and move under the pressure.

Seismic shifts come without warning, but they have building for some time before they actually happen.

Seismic shifts don't just take place in the ground, they can take place in every area of life when there is a sudden movement from the reality we are all familiar with to one which we have never known.

Jesus coming to earth was a seismic shift, suddenly there God is in person before us. But Jesus' coming had been a long time in the making, in fact since before the beginning of time. As Jesus taught and ministered to people there was a seismic shift wherever He went, and some were happy about this shift and others not so much.

In this text this morning Jesus announces another seismic shift, at least from our perspective, although this has been God's reality all along.

SERMON ON THE  
PLAIN  
LUKE 6:17-26



*7 And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, 18 who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. 19 And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.*

*20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:*

*“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*

*21 “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.*

*“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.*

*22 “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! 23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.*

*24 “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.*

25 *“Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.*

*“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.*

26 *“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.*

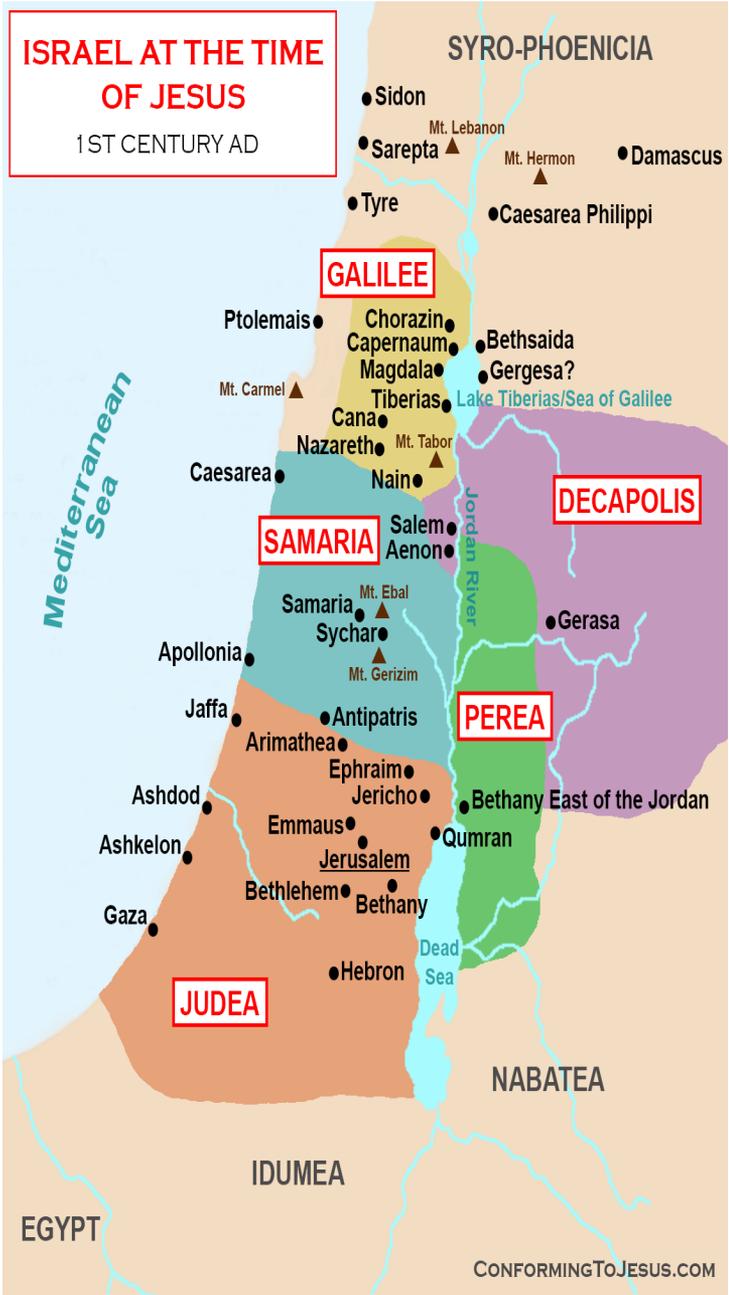
*Luke 6:17–26 (ESV)*

### **Commentary**

Jesus had been up a mountain all night praying, in the lead up to Him making the decision about choosing His disciples, but also in the day of ministry teaching and healing that is going to follow. Jesus chooses His twelve Apostles from the crowd of disciples made up of men and women who He has called to Himself, and after naming them Jesus comes down the mountain to “a level place.” Luke wants us to be reminded of Moses coming down Mt Sinai after receiving the Ten Commandments written on two tablets of stone, although as Moses approached the camp he was confronted with a very different situation. The people had decided Moses was dead after he had been gone for forty days and they had “persuaded” Aaron to make them a golden calf which they were worshipping and carrying on. They could not wrap their heads around following a God who could not be seen, and a God who wanted life done very differently. Jesus and His disciples are met by another crowd, a “multitude,” although actually they are two groups; one has come from Judea and Jerusalem and they are Jewish, and another group from Tyre and Sidon who are not. We have a foretaste of the coming kingdom of God which will be made up of every tribe and nation

# ISRAEL AT THE TIME OF JESUS

1ST CENTURY AD



from around the world. This multitude had come to Jesus to “hear” Him, to be “healed” by Him of their diseases, and to have spirits which were “troubling” them to be cast out. In order to have these things happen to them the crowd was trying to touch Jesus as if He was some lucky charm. We see the same thing today where people go to various “holy” places to touch an icon to be healed. Jesus heals all of them because power came out from Jesus. No wonder Jesus had been in prayer all night for what lay in front of Him! Again in this section we see Jesus’ ministry combines both word and deed, He heals the people and then He speaks. The healings point to who Jesus is and what God’s kingdom looks like, and what His people can look forwards to. Jesus “lifted up His eyes on His disciples” after He has finished healing the multitude, and while what He is about to say is of significance to His disciples about how to live their lives, it also speaks to the multitude who also surely must have heard Him. Jesus talks about four states of “blessing” and four states of “woe;” there is a woe for every blessing. There are four pairs:

*20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:  
“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*

*“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.*

*“Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.*

*“Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.*

*“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.*

*“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.*

*“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.*

*“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.*

Jesus is announcing a reversal of fortune, and those who think that they have it made here on earth need to think again because at the end of the age things are going to look very different. The things which are prized and sought after now will count for nothing, and divine judgement is made on an entirely different criteria.

When Jesus talks about the “poor” he is talking about those who marginalised by society for whatever reason, and the rich are the proud, mighty and self sufficient who are well able to fend for themselves, but in their desire to have the world they loose their souls by not considering their fellow human beings.

“What is significant is that it is Jesus who has the authority to declare that the kingdom of God is near and to state who will enjoy its blessings—the poor and they alone.”

(Jeremias, Theology, I, 116).

## Group Study

Open the group with prayer and discuss how you have used your application from last week's study in your life, and what you have learned from it.

With the restrictions COVID - 19 has brought, what are you missing right now?

What has been most surprising to you about the way events have unfolded over the last few weeks?

Do you hope things will get back to "normal?"

What should the new normal look like?

What will be "normal" when Christ returns and establishes His kingdom?

How will it be different from today?

*For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him*

*you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."*

1 Corinthians 1:26–31 (ESV)

*Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?*

James 2:5–7 (ESV)

How is poverty both an entry point and discipleship lifestyle?

Read Psalm 126

Discuss the hope this psalm gives you. Have you ever had a time in your life where you have sown in tears and reaped in joy? What got you past the tears?

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19

What is the difference between disliked for the right reasons and the wrong reasons? How can we tell?

If we took all four of these "beatitudes" seriously, how different would our lives look today in anticipation of tomorrow?

**Personal study time**

Read the following passage and use the REAP method to consider it in light of Luke 6:17-26

*19 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ 27 And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— 28 for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will re*



## **REAP Method of studying Scripture**

### **READ**

Find the passages for today's reading in the Bible Reading Plan. Read the passages with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction, and correction (2 Timothy 3:16). Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

### **EXAMINE**

Spend some time reflecting and writing about what you've read. Write down one or two of the key verses that stuck out to you. Ask yourself these questions and write down your thoughts:

- \* What is going on in the passage?
- \* Who is writing and whom is he writing to?
- \* When was the author writing?
- \* What are the circumstances that the author is addressing?
- \* Does the writer mention anything that might indicate his purpose or intent?
- \* How do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

### **APPLY**

After examining the passage, apply the text to your own life. Ask yourself these questions:

- \* What is God's word for me from this passage?
- \* How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

# KIDS CORNER



## **Seeing Things Backwards.**

### **1.What are some really fun things you like to do?**

Sometimes, there are things that seem really good at first, but they're actually not what's best. Let's say you were playing with one of your friends, and you had a bag of candy while they didn't. Getting to eat all of the delicious treats yourself would seem super awesome to you. But, even though that might give you the most fun, it would not be the best outcome. Sharing the candy with your friend, even though it's harder, is much, much better. That's because being kind to another person is more important than getting the most enjoyment from the candy. There are always things that are more important than the simple, fun things that seem good at first. If we look more closely, we discover that kindness, friendship,

honesty, and humility are more important than the fun, enjoyable, or even happy things we might want.

Jesus knew about the better, more important things of life as He was teaching the crowds of people that day. To them, it may have seemed completely backwards when Jesus said it was better to be poor than rich, to be sad than to have fun, and so on. But He wanted them to see that we all can have the best things, and those things aren't always easy, nice, or enjoyable. The best things come from a relationship with God, and although they can be hard, or even unpleasant, they give us true joy and hope and salvation. That beats any fun we could ever have!

## **2. How can you choose the best things in your life?**

