

## Special Lesson - Great Lent

### Lesson 5. Sunday of the Judge – Where is the Kingdom?

#### Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

**Scripture References:** Luke 17:20-37 and 18:1-14

\*Student can take turns reading this parable

**Video:** [Choices: Kingdom Come](#) (duration 4:38)

**Classroom Activity:** Consider reenacting the two parables and discuss. Encourage them to find similarities in both parables and similarities between people in the parable and people in our time. After, ask the students to pray like the Pharisee prayed, loudly and obnoxiously, then have them humbly bow down their heads, hold hands in a circle and pray (they can all together say the Lord's prayer, then every one of them can say something from their heart). ***Discuss how they felt during each prayer.***

**Craft Activity:** "Never Give Up" Heart Craft

#### MORAL CHARACTER FOCUS:

Honesty, persistence in prayer, and preparing for the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### Words of the week:

արքայութիւն – ar-kay-oo-tyoon – kingdom

մեղաւոր – megh-a-vor – sinner

դատաւոր – ta-da-vor – judge

#### Memory Verse:

**“The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”**

**Luke 17:20-21**

# Lesson

## Lesson Opening & Creating Interest:

*\*Wisdom Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

### Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տու՛ր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց եւ ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos yev paneets yen kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

## Lesson Body:

Twenty-four days after the Great Lent begins, we mark the Median Day of Lent (meecheenk). This means we are halfway in our journey to the celebration of the Feast of the Holy Resurrection. We have another 24 days, and we must stay faithful to our journey of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The Sunday that follows is the fifth Sunday of Great Lent and it is the Sunday of the Judge. The Gospel reading for this day is from the Gospel of Luke 17:20-18:14. The Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God was coming. He answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed...for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” (Luke 17:20-21)

**Q:** *What do you think Jesus meant by this?*

The reality of God’s kingdom is that it is already present to be accepted by people in their hearts. The Pharisees had in mind a kingdom bringing material benefits with geographical boundaries. Jesus invites his followers to live a life of readiness for the fulfillment of God’s kingdom. Humbling ourselves in prayer is one of the steps to that readiness.

In Luke 18:1-8 Jesus tells the Parable of the Unjust Judge. This parable describes what we come face to face with what happens frequently in our society. Those who are in positions of power choose to favor the wealthy or people of influence to the total disregard of the poor and powerless. The judge in this parable was one of the paid magistrates appointed by either Herod or the Romans. These judges were well known for their dishonorable practice of accepting bribes from plaintiffs to settle their cases. They ignored the poor and the lowly who had no influence. The widow was able to have her case heard because she was persistent.



## **READ FROM THE BIBLE: LUKE 18:1-14**

### ***The Parable of the Persistent Widow***

<sup>1</sup> And he told them a parable, to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man; <sup>3</sup> and there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Vindicate me against my adversary.’ <sup>4</sup> For a while he refused; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor regard man, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow bothers me, I will vindicate her, or she will wear me out by her continual coming.’” <sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? <sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

### ***The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector***

<sup>9</sup> To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup> “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ <sup>13</sup> “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ <sup>14</sup> “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

**Q:** *What similarities do you observe in both parables?*

**Q:** *How would you describe the Pharisee’s attitude towards himself, towards others and towards God?*

Remember, tax collectors were despised characters in Judaea because they would collect taxes for the Roman Empire from their fellow Jews. They often collected more than the required amount and kept extra for themselves.

**Q:** *Who do you think was truly repenting, the Pharisee or the tax collector?*

*(It was the tax collector and that is why God accepted His prayers and forgave him and the Pharisee did not please the lord)*

The eighth prayer from St. Nersess the Graceful’s Personal Prayer of Every Christian Believer is a beautiful way to connect with God not only during Great Lenten, but thereafter.

**O Searcher of secrets, I have sinned against you, willingly and inadvertently, knowingly, and unknowingly. Grant forgiveness unto me a sinner; since from my birth through the holy baptism, until this day, I have sinned before you Lord, with all my senses and in all the members of my body. Have mercy upon your creatures, and on me, a manifold sinner.**

### Memory Verse:

“The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Luke 17:20-21

### Words of the Week:

արքայութիւն – arkayootyoon – kingdom  
մեղաւոր – meghavor – sinner  
դատաւոր – tadavor – judge

Video: [Choices: Kingdom Come](#) (duration 4:38)

**Classroom Activity:** Consider reenacting the two parables and discuss. Encourage them to find similarities in both parables and similarities between people in the parable and people in our time. After, ask the students to pray like the Pharisee prayed, loudly and obnoxiously, then have them humbly bow down their heads, hold hands in a circle and pray (they can all together say the Lord’s prayer, then every one of them can say something from their heart). *Discuss how they felt during each prayer.*

### Craft Activity: “Never Give Up” Heart Craft

#### Materials Needed:

- Red and pink construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue
- Hole punch & yarn (optional)

#### Instructions:

1. Cut out hearts from red or pink paper.
2. On each heart, write words like “Faith,” “Prayer,” “Trust,” “God Loves Me”.
3. Glue or string them together to create a heart garland or mobile.
4. Hand the garland in the classroom as a reminder of persistence prayer.



# Review

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## Memory Verse Review:

*“The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:20-21)*

## Lesson Review:

### Questions:

1. What are two things you cannot serve at the same time? (God and mammon (worldly things))
2. What did the steward do? (He went and gave discounts to those who owed the master money)
3. Why did he give discounts to those owing money to the master? (He was making friends with these people so when he had no job, they would help him)
4. How did the master react to this? (He was impressed that even the steward was able to think about his future and prepare for it)
5. What is a steward? (someone who takes care of things, someone who is trusted with certain responsibilities)

## Words of the Week:

արքայութիւն – arkayootyoon – kingdom

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## Life Application:

We must learn to prepare for the future, especially prepare for heaven. We prepare for heaven by living a good, faithful life in Christ, praying often, helping others in need, and being active members in the life of the Church.

*\* Departing Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

### Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesher-ee, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sa-sanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyyhees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.