

**Supplemental Notes:**

*The Book  
of  
Luke*

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## Audio Listing

### Luke Chapter 1

Introduction. Birth of John the Baptist. Annunciation of Messiah.

### Luke Chapter 2

The Child and the Mosaic Law. The Years of Growth.

### Luke Chapter 3

Ministry of John the Baptist. Baptism of Jesus. Genealogy of Christ.

### Luke Chapter 4

The Temptation of Christ. The Demonic.

### Luke Chapter 5

Jesus' Mandate. Jesus' Fame Spreads.

### Luke Chapter 6

Jesus Challenges Sabbath "Law." Choosing the Twelve.

### Luke Chapter 7

Jesus' Ministry in Capernaum. Jesus' Responses to Faith, Despair, Doubt, Love.

### Luke Chapter 8

Why Parables? The Significance of Hems.

## Audio Listing

### Luke Chapter 9

The Twelve Disciples Sent. The Feeding of the 5,000. Jesus' Identity and Mission. The Transfiguration.

### Luke Chapter 10

The Good Samaritan. The Visit in Bethany.

### Luke Chapter 11

Jesus Instructs on: Prayer; Satan; Spiritual Opportunity; Hypocrisy. The Call to Obedience.

### Luke Chapter 12

The Tyranny of Worry. The Call to Diligence.

### Luke Chapter 13

Paradox Resolution. The Way of the Righteous is Narrow.

### Luke Chapter 14

Jesus Exposes Falsehoods: Popularity, Hospitality, Security. The Distinctions Between Salvation and Discipleship.

### Luke Chapter 15

The Lost Sheep. The Lost Coin. The Prodigal Son

### Luke Chapter 16

Stewardship. The Rich Man and Lazarus. Contrasting Hades, Sheol, Gehenna, Tartarus, Abouso.

## Audio Listing

### Luke Chapter 17

Predestination or Free Will. Revisit Paradox Resolution.

### Luke Chapter 18

Persistence in Prayer. The Dangers in Self-Esteem. The Hindrance of Wealth. The Coming Climax.

### Luke Chapter 19

Zacchaeus' Response. The Triumphal Entry.

### Luke Chapter 20

Jesus Approaches His Climax in Jerusalem. Citizenship Obligations.

### Luke Chapter 21

Olivet Discourse. The Future of the Nation Israel. The Destruction of the Temple. Responsibilities of Believers.

### Luke Chapter 22

Judas Betrays Jesus. The Final Passover. Jesus' Plea in the Garden. Legal Irregularities.

### Luke Chapter 23

Jesus and Pilate. The Crucifixion. A New Testament Acrostic? Jesus and the Father. Jesus' Burial. The Cities of Refuge.

### Luke Chapter 24

The Resurrection! The Road to Emmaus.

## Luke 1

### General Background

Who was Luke? Generally assumed to be a Gentile (Cf. Col 4:11 and 14). The date and circumstances of his conversion are unknown.

He is named only three times in the N.T. According to his own statement (Luke 1:2) he was not an "eye-witness and minister of the word from the beginning."

He was the "beloved physician" of Col 4:14; he used more medical terms than Hippocrates, the father of medicine.

It is probable that he was a physician in Troas, and was there converted by Paul, to whom he attached himself. He accompanied him to Philippi, but did not there share his imprisonment, nor did he accompany him further after his release in his missionary journey at this time (Acts 17:1).

On Paul's third visit to Philippi (Acts 20:5,6) we again meet with Luke, who probably had spent all the intervening time in that city, a period of seven or eight years. From this time Luke was Paul's constant companion during his journey to Jerusalem (Acts 20:6-38, 21:1-18). He again disappears from view during Paul's imprisonment at Jerusalem and Caesarea, and only reappears when Paul sets out for Rome (Acts 27:1) where he accompanies him (Acts 28:2,12-16), and where he remains with him till the close of his first imprisonment (Phm 1:24 Col 4:14).

The last notice of the "beloved physician" is in (2Tim 4:11). There are many passages in Paul's epistles, as well as in the writings of Luke, which show the extent and accuracy of his medical knowledge.

There are no "accidents" in Scripture; he was chosen by the Holy Spirit. He and Paul were on a very high intellectual level. He wrote the best Greek of any of the New Testament writers. His writings are regarded as one of the finest pieces of historical writing in all of ancient literature. He was a poet; he alone records the lovely songs of Christmas and some of the marvelous parables.

Sir William Ramsay, a skeptical archaeologist, went into Asia Minor to disprove Luke as an historian. After careful investigation he concluded

that Luke had not made one historical inaccuracy. Sir William Ramsay became a believer.

Luke's is the most complete historical narrative.  
 "Quadraphonic" Design of the Gospels:  
 The Son of Man (vs. Lion of the Tribe of Judah, et al.)

[See chart on next page.]

Luke gives us many features omitted by Matthew and Mark:  
 An obstetrical account of the virgin birth;  
 20 miracles, six of which are in no other Gospel;  
 23 parables, 18 of which are nowhere else;  
 The Emmaus Road and other details of the resurrection.

H.A. Ironside points out:  
*The religion of Israel could only produce a Pharisee;*  
*The power of Rome could only produce a Caesar;*  
*The philosophy of Greece could only produce an Alexander, an infant at heart;*  
*It was to this Greek mind that Luke wrote: he presents Jesus Christ as the Perfect Man, the Universal Man, the very person the Greeks were looking for.*

## Luke 1

### Prologue

- 1] Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

Other gospels in circulation?  
 [Jerusalem School, et al.]

Luke identified himself as a believer. He apparently joined Paul in Acts ("we" passages).

- 2] Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

"They" were eyewitnesses, in contrast to Luke.

## Design Structure of the Four Gospels

|                     | Matthew            | Mark                 | Synoptic Gospels | Luke                      | John                            |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Presents as:</b> | Messiah            | Servant              |                  | Son of Man                | Son of God                      |
| <b>Face:</b>        | <b>Lion</b>        | <b>Ox</b>            |                  | <b>Man</b>                | <b>Eagle</b>                    |
| <b>Ensign:</b>      | Judah              | Ephraim              |                  | Reuben                    | Dan                             |
| <b>Camp Site:</b>   | East               | West                 |                  | South                     | North                           |
| <b>Genealogy:</b>   | Abraham<br>(Legal) | --                   |                  | Adam<br>(Bloodline)       | Eternity<br>(Preexistence)      |
| <b>What Jesus:</b>  | Said               | Did                  |                  | Felt                      | Was                             |
| <b>To the:</b>      | Jew                | Roman                |                  | Greek                     | Church                          |
| <b>1st Miracle:</b> | Leper cleansed     | Demon expelled       |                  | Demon expelled            | Water into Wine                 |
| <b>Ends with:</b>   | Resurrection       | Ascension            |                  | Promise: Spirit<br>(Acts) | Promise: Return<br>(Revelation) |
| <b>Style:</b>       | Groupings          | Snapshot             |                  | Narrative                 | Supernatural Review             |
| <b>Key Word:</b>    | Fulfilled (38X)    | <i>Euthoos</i> (42X) |                  | It came to pass (40X)     | Verily, Verily (24X)            |
| <b>Jesus:</b>       | 151X               | 13X                  |                  | 88X                       | 247X                            |
| <b>Facts:</b>       | Whole Camp (Outer) | Outer Court (Outer)  |                  | Holy Place (Outer)        | Holy of Holies (Outer)          |
| <b>Aspects:</b>     | Human              | Human                |                  | Human                     | Divine                          |
| <b>Ministry:</b>    | Galilean           | Galilean             |                  | Galilean                  | Judean                          |

“Eyewitness” *αὐτοπῆς* *autoptes* “to see for yourself”; a medical term, “to make an autopsy.”

“Ministers” *ὑποῤῃς* *hyperates*, “under-rower”; also a term for clerical assistant who knew shorthand.

- 3] It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

As an investigator, rather than an eyewitness. He demonstrates diligence and thoroughness throughout his writings.

Who is Theophilus?

“Theophilus” = “lover of God,” was a common name during the first century. He was probably the direct recipient of Luke’s Gospel who then gave it wide circulation in the early church.

“Most excellent”: apparently he was an official of some kind. (Cf. Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25, which use the same term, *κρατίστος* *kratistos*).

- 4] That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

The long sentence in verses 1-4 are regarded as the best-styled sentence in the entire New Testament.<sup>1</sup> Ostensibly, Theophilus was a Christian.

Trial documents? Some have suggested that both Luke and Acts (“Luke volume 2”) were the required documentation of the facts pertaining to Paul’s appeal to Caesar, which the law required to precede Paul in his appearance. Such an undertaking was expensive and Theophilus may have been Paul’s sponsor. (It is interesting to note that in all of Luke’s writing, centurions are always good guys; the various uprisings were always clearly attributed to Paul’s Jewish adversaries, etc. The primary Roman administrative anxieties were focused on civil unrest.)

## Birth of John the Baptist

Luke arranged the following material in a form which compared John’s birth and maturation with Jesus’ birth and maturation. In both cases the parents were introduced (vv.5-7 and vv.26-27), an angel appeared (vv.8-23 and vv.28-30), a sign was given (vv.18-20 and vv.34-38), and a woman who had no children became pregnant ( vv.24-25 and 42).

- 5] There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

John was, therefore, by lineage one who was to become a priest. His parents lived when Herod the Great ruled as king of Judea (from 37 to 4 B.C.).

The eighth of 24 “courses” (groups) of priests, drawn up in David’s time (1 Chron. 24:7-18). The priests in each division were on duty twice a year for a week at a time. Zacharias was of the course (division) of Abijah.

There were about 8,000 priests in the land at that time; about 300 in each course; 56 were chosen by lot to participate each day.<sup>2</sup>

- 6] And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

Zacharias means “God Remembers.”

Elisabeth means “His oath.”

They are one flesh: “God remembers His Oath.” Which oath? Psalm 89:34-37.

The nation of Israel had no prophetic word for 400 years; not since Malachi promised the coming of Elijah (Mal 4:5-6). It was soon to see the birth of one who came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) and who closed the OT period (Matt 11:13; Luke 16:16).

- 7] And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

Her barrenness was a constant embarrassment to Elisabeth as is evident from her statement later on (v. 25). God’s allowing a barren woman to have children occurred several times in the Old Testament (e.g., the mothers of Isaac, Samson, and Samuel).

- 8] And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest’s office before God in the order of his course,

- 9] According to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

Zacharias was chosen by lot (*elache*) to be the priest who offered the incense. Because of the large number of priests this would be the only time in Zacharias' life when he was allowed to perform this task. As elsewhere in Scripture (Esther 3:7), the sovereignty of God is stressed even in matters of "chance," as in the casting of a lot (Prov 16:33).

["Coincidence is not a kosher word."]

- 10] And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Some have assumed Zacharias' duties took place inside the Holy of Holies, and that Zacharias was, therefore, the High Priest, and that this was on Yom Kippur. However, the Golden Altar (the Altar of Incense), while associated with the Ark of the Covenant, was placed just *outside* the veil separating the Holy of Holies to permit this very tending of the incense. (The Ark of the Covenant was not in this temple; it disappeared from history after the Babylonian Captivity six centuries earlier. See *The Mystery of the Lost Ark*).

While Zacharias was inside the Holy Place, a crowd gathered to pray.

The incense for which Zacharias was responsible symbolized the prayers of the entire nation. At that particular moment Zacharias was thus the focal point of the entire Jewish nation.

- 11] And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Luke mentions angels 24 times in his Gospel.

- 12] And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

Zacharias was gripped with fear. This the usual reaction: fear or awe (*phobos*) when confronted with mighty acts of God (1:30, 65; 2:9-10; 5:10, 26; 7:16; 8:25, 37, 50; 9:34, 45; 12:4-5, 32; 21:26; 23:40).

- 13] But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

"Fear not" occurs seven times in this Gospel. Because of the angel's response, it may be inferred that Zacharias was praying for a son, or possibly even for the coming of the Messiah. The angel told Zacharias

what to name his son. This was also the case when the angel appeared to Mary (1:31).

John = "YHWH is gracious."

The angel not only gave the name of the son, but also detailed **seven aspects** of John's character.

- 14] And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

[1 (of 7).] **He will be a joy and delight to you:** Luke frequently used the word "joy" in his accounts in Luke and Acts, often linking it closely with salvation. An illustration of this is in Luke 15, where three times joy and rejoicing came because something lost had been found, a picture of salvation. And John the Baptist's ministry brought joy to the Israelites who believed his message of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (3:3).

- 15] For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

[2.] **He will be great in the sight of the Lord:** The expression "in the sight of" is characteristic of Luke. Though it appears 35 times in Luke and Acts, it is used only one other time in the other Gospels (John 20:30). Jesus will say of him, "I tell you the truth: among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist." (Matt 11:11; cf. Luke 7:28).

[3.] **He is never to take wine or other fermented drink.** Later John voluntarily took on himself a Nazarite vow, refusing to drink anything fermented (Num. 6:1-21). Luke did not specifically state that John would fulfill all aspects of the Nazarite vow. Instead, John would avoid taking any wine perhaps to support his contention that his message was urgent.

[4.] **He will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he is in the womb.** (v.41)

- 16] And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

[5.] **Many of the people of Israel would he bring back to . . . God:** Crowds of Israelites did turn to the Lord through John's ministry (Matt. 3:5-6; Mark 1:4-5).

- 17] And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

[6.] **He would adopt the manner and dress of Elijah:** Another way he emphasized the urgency of his message was to dress, act, and eat like Elijah the prophet (Matt. 3:4; 2 Kings 1:8).

[Legend of Elijah's Mantle - see addenda.]

[7.] **He would be the Messiah's Forerunner.** (Isaiah 40:3; Matt 3:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23)

- 18] And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

He was a priest, not an atheist; he was an upright man; he was offering prayer in the Temple; he knew the messenger was supernatural; yet still his disbelief resulted in a confirming sign. . .

- 19] And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

Gabriel is always on a Messianic announcement mission; when Gabriel appeared twice to Daniel (Dan. 8:16; 9:21), both times he also gave Daniel instruction and understanding. He did the same here with Zacharias, as can be inferred from the song of praise and trust which Zacharias uttered later (Luke 1:67-79).

- 20] And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

Zacharias' inability to speak (and hear, cf. v. 62) till the fulfillment of Gabriel's message was, to some degree, a punishment for his unbelief, but it was also a sign. A sign in the Old Testament was often associated with a confirming observable phenomenon which accompanied a word of prophecy. For the next nine months Zacharias' attempts to speak (and hear) would prove the reality of Gabriel's message.

Unbelief is always dumb; it never has a message.

*"One without faith should be silent."* -Elisabeth Barrett Browning

- 21] And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

- 22] And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.  
23] And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

## Elisabeth's Pregnancy (1:24-25)

- 24] And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

She remained in seclusion. Most likely, this was because of the excitement of the neighbors to her pregnancy (v.25). Mary may have been the first person (other than Zacharias and Elisabeth) to know the news which the angel had delivered (v.36).

- 25] Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

Luke did not say if Elisabeth knew about the destiny of her son at this time; however, because she knew that his name was to be John (v.60) even before Zacharias was able to speak, he probably had communicated his entire vision in writing. Of course, Elisabeth was overjoyed that she was finally able to have a baby.

## Annunciation of the Messiah

- 26] And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

Nazareth was a town with an undesirable reputation (John 1:46). Nazareth was not considered "kosher." (Matthew makes the note that Jesus' subsequent association with Nazareth was also prophetic: Matt 2:23.)

- 27] To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

A nobody in a nothing town in the middle of nowhere...(both were of the House of David; the Book of Ruth links them with Bethlehem . . .)

## The Virgin Birth

Dr. Luke gives us the most extensive account of the Virgin Birth.

Mary had not yet had sexual contact with a man, for Luke called her a virgin (παρθένη *parthenon*, 1:34) and noted that she was pledged to be married to Joseph (2:5). In the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14, the Greek translation three centuries earlier also uses παρθένη, an unambiguous term.

In the Jewish culture a man and woman were betrothed or pledged to each other for a period of time before the actual consummation of their marriage. This betrothal was much stronger than an engagement period today, for the two were considered husband and wife except that they did not live together till after the wedding.

[The ancient Jewish ritual must be understood to fully appreciate the relationship between the Bridegroom and His Bride, the Marriage Supper, et al . . .]

[More on the necessity for the virgin birth when we get to Chapter 3!]

[Nazareth was near a new capital being built, Sephoris(?); some believe Joseph may have been a “builder” or architect from Mark 6:3: τέκτων *tekton*, which can mean a worker in wood, a carpenter, joiner, *builder*; or any craftsman, or workman; but also, the art of poetry, maker of songs; a planner, contriver, plotter, or an author. The term can also include a developer or builder in our modern sense. Even so, in a Greek-dominated culture, non-Greeks would obtain only modest roles.]

28] And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

“highly favored”: κεχαριτωμένη a participle related to the noun *charis*, “grace”; she was certainly a special recipient of His grace.

29] And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30] And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

Gabriel’s admonition was the same as to Zacharias: “Do not be afraid, for you will have a Son.” (v.13). As with John, the naming was by the angel.

31] And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

The Greek for *Yeshua*, “YHWH is Salvation.” Cf. Matt 1:21.

32] He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33] And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

### Five Key Predictions:

1. **He will be great.**

2. **He will be called the Son of the Most High.** The Septuagint often used the term “Most High” (ὕψιστος *hypsistos*) to translate the Hebrew *ʾElyon* (Gen 14:18-22, et al). Mary could not have missed the significance of that terminology. The fact that her Baby was to be called the “Son of the Most High” pointed to His equality with YHWH. [In Semitic thought a son was a “carbon copy” of his father, and the phrase “son of” was often used to refer to one who possessed his “father’s” qualities (e.g. the “son of wickedness” in Ps. 89:22 means a wicked person).]

3. **He will be given the throne of His father David.** Jesus, as David’s descendant, will sit on David’s throne when He reigns in the Millennium (2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:3-4, 28-29; Isaiah 9:1-7; 11-12; 61; 66; Jer 33). This is profoundly significant: the Throne of David did not exist during His earthly ministry and has yet to be fulfilled literally. Today He is on His Father’s throne in heaven (Acts 2:29-36), not on David’s throne. Many churches attempt to dodge the implications of this—and the myriad of Old Testament prophecies regarding a literal earthly rule—a view known as “Amillennialism.”

4. **He will reign over the house of Jacob forever.** Jesus’ reign over the nation Israel as her King will begin in the Millennium and continue on into the eternal state.

5. **His kingdom will never end.** These promises must have immediately reminded Mary of the promise of YHWH to David (2 Sam. 7:13-16). David understood the prophecy as referring not only to his immediate son (Solomon) who would build the temple, but also to the future Son who would rule forever. David stated that YHWH had spoken of the distant future (2 Sam. 7:19).

The virgin birth was literal; David’s Throne is literal. The resurrection of Christ proves His virgin birth. His taking David’s Throne will usher in a new reality.



Mary would have understood that the angel was speaking to her of the Messiah who had been promised for so long. The emphasis is on the greatness of the son (1:15), not the greatness of the mother.

34] Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Her question was not an indication of doubt, but an inquiry into *how* such a thing would be accomplished. Cf. 1:18.

35] And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

The answer was that the Holy Spirit would creatively bring about the physical conception of Jesus. This miraculous conception and Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ was necessary because of His deity and preexistence (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-17; Gal. 4:4), and this would also avoid the blood curse which had been pronounced on Jehoichin's line (also called Coniah: Jer 22:30). More on this in Chapter 3.

“Overshadow” = as applied to the presence of God in the Holy of Holies (Ex 40:35). Mary's womb became a “holy of holies” for the Son of God. [Cf. current murders in the wombs of inconvenience of today. . .]

Jesus would be legally identified as son of Joseph (Luke 3:23; 4:22; John 1:45; 6:42) and would be accused as illegitimate (John 8:41).

36] And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

Mary is also given a confirming sign: her cousin's barrenness being relieved.

37] For with God nothing shall be impossible.

If only we could really grasp this! If we simply embrace Genesis 1:1, all the rest easily follows.

38] And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Mary affirmed her part in her Son's subsequent birth by assenting to the

plan of God, calling herself *δουλή* *h doule*, a female bonds slave (Cf. Luke 1:48).

39] And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judea;

After learning of the sign, Mary hurried to see Elisabeth. (The hill country in Judea may have been near Jerusalem, about 20 miles from Nazareth.)

40] And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41] And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

The prebirth personhood of John the Baptist: about nine inches long and weighed about 1 ½ pounds; translucent skin; with fingerprints and footprints; he would open his eyes for brief periods and gaze into the liquid darkness of the womb. As a fetus of 6 months he was an emotional being. He had the capacity to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Believers are filled with the Holy Spirit for specific tasks. As Mary arrived, Elisabeth's baby leaped in her womb for joy, and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Zacharias also was later filled with the Holy Spirit (v.67).

42] And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

Mary is the most honored of all women. [Note: “among,” not “above.”]

(The Protestant backlash against the deification of Mary by the Roman Catholic Church is also tragic.)

43] And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Elisabeth called her “the mother of my Lord” who was only a few days old as a zygote in Mary's womb.

In Luke the term “Lord” (*kyrios*) often describes Jesus. “Lord” would be more important for a Greek reader than would the term “Christ” (meaning “Messiah”), for the Gentiles had not been anxiously awaiting the Messiah. On the other hand the Septuagint often used the word “Lord” (*kyrios*) to translate YHWH. (Cf. v.45.)

- 44] For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.
- 45] And blessed *is* she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

Elisabeth said Mary was blessed (*makaria*, “happy”) because she believed what God had told her. Mary visited Elisabeth, not with a skeptical attitude, but rather, joyously, to confirm what had been announced to her.

## The Magnificat

- 46] And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord...

(From the Latin Vulgate for Luke 1:46: *et ait Maria magnificat anima mea Dominum.*)

megal ἤνω *megaluno*: to make great, magnify; to deem or declare great; to esteem highly, to extol, laud, celebrate; to declare glory and praise.

“The Magnificat” consists almost entirely of Old Testament allusions and quotations. The same is true of the songs of Zacharias and Simeon (1:68-79; 2:29-32). Mary’s recital has similarities to Hannah’s song (1 Sam. 2:1-10).

First, Mary praised God for His special favor on her (Luke 1:46-50). Mary saw herself as part of the godly remnant that had served Yahweh.

- 47] And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

She called God “my Savior” showing an intimate acquaintance with Him.

- 48] For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

It contains eight “*He haths.*” She spoke of His faithfulness (48), power (49), holiness (49), and mercy (50).

- 49] For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name.
- 50] And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation.
- 51] He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Second, Mary praised God for His special favor on Israel (v.51-55).

Through the Child that she was to bear, God was being merciful to Abraham and his descendants. Mary was aware that the birth of her Child was a fulfillment of the covenant promises to Abraham and his people. It is extremely important to recognize the linkages to Abraham: the Title used by Gabriel (v.32 note) from Gen. 14 was from an episode *before* Abraham was promised the land of Israel (Gen. 15) and was circumcised (Gen. 17).

All of our blessings and opportunities as Gentiles derive from the Abrahamic Covenant—through our relationship with Son of David.

- 52] He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.
- 53] He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.
- 54] He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy;
- 55] As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.
- 56] And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

Mary stayed with Elisabeth until John was born (v.36). The Greek words for “her own home” indicates that she was still a virgin and was not yet married to Joseph. But by now, the tongues would have begun to wag...but by now God had given the good news to Joseph and instructed him what to do (Matt. 1:18-25).

## The Birth of John the Baptist

- 57] Now Elisabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

The record of John’s birth is given in a single verse, with friends sharing in the joy. The birth of Jesus will occupy an entire chapter (2).

- 58] And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.
- 59] And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

Several verses then focus on and emphasize the obedience of Zacharias and Elisabeth. The old couple was careful to follow the Law in the circumcision of the boy.

- 60] And his mother answered and said, Not *so*; but he shall be called John.
- 61] And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.
- 62] And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

He was apparently deaf as well as dumb.

- 63] And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.  
64] And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God.

The fact that Zacharias immediately was able to speak amazed the crowd.

As was true of each person in the account, Zacharias was praising God.

- 65] And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.  
66] And all they that heard *them* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

Word then spread through the whole hill country (probably including the Jerusalem area) that this was an unusual child. The people continued to note that the Lord's hand was with him. Years later, when John began his preaching ministry, many went out from this district who no doubt remembered the amazing events surrounding his birth (Matt. 3:5).

## The Benedictus

This psalm is filled with Old Testament quotations and allusions:

- 67] And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,  
68] Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,  
69] And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

He would be a Jew (Gen 12:1-30);  
from tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10);  
from the family of David (2 Sam 7:12-16);  
born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Ruth ...)

- 70] As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:  
71] That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;  
72] To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;  
73] The oath which he swore to our father Abraham,  
74] That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

- 75] In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.  
76] And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;  
77] To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,  
78] Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,  
79] To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Zacharias' "Benedictus" expounded four ideas:

1. Zacharias gave an exhortation to **praise God** (v.68a).

2. Zacharias noted the reason God should be praised—**He has come and has redeemed His people** (v.68b).

3. Zacharias described the deliverance for Israel through the Messiah (v.69-75). The Messiah was to be Israel's **horn of salvation** (v.69). (The horns of an animal symbolized its power and is a common idiom in ancient languages.) Thus the Messiah would be strong and would deliver the nations from her enemies (v.74). Again, of special import in these verses is the mention of His holy covenant, the oath God swore to our father Abraham (v.72-73; Cf. Gen. 22:16-18, on the very site of the crucifixion).

4. Zacharias prophetically described the ministry John would have (Luke 1:76-79). Zacharias had understood the message of the angel, so he foretold that John would be the one to "go on before the Lord to prepare the way for Him" (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1). He would be a prophet of the Most High (Luke 1:76; v.32). (Verse 77 may refer to the Lord rather than to John. However, John did preach the same message of **forgiveness of . . . sins** (Luke 3:3).)

- 80] And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

His living in the desert till the time of his public appearance was not normal for a young person, but because of the special mission which John knew from an early age he would perform, he chose to follow the role of Elijah (17) by living in a desolate area. As a son of a priest, he (and also Christ) would begin his ministry at the age of 30 (Num 4).

## Addenda:

### Legend of Elijah's Mantle

There is a legend that when Elisha died (having inherited Elijah's mantle (1 Kings 19:19; 2 Kings 2:14; 13:14-19)) his mantle was placed inside the Golden Altar (the Altar of Incense). When Zacharias received the visit of the angel that he was told to take the mantle with him (cf. Luke 1:17), and that this was the very mantle that John the Baptist was wearing 30 years later (Cf. Mark 9:13).

[There seems to be evidence that this original Golden Altar *was* in the second Temple, although the Ark of the Covenant was not.]

#### Next Chapter:

The records of the announcements and births of John and Jesus were arranged by Luke in a parallel fashion. However, the emphasis is on the birth of Jesus, which will be described in greater detail than the birth of John. (Col 1:18).

1. John Holland, *Luke 1-9:20*, Word Publishing, Dallas, TX 1989, p.14.
2. *Mishna, Yoma 2:1-5*; Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, PA

\* \* \*

## Luke 2

- 1] And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

Octavian, Caesar Augustus, was the great nephew of Julius Caesar, and was named chief heir and ruled in a triumvirate with Mark Antony and Lepidus. Lepidus fell from power in 36 B.C. and Antony's involvement with Cleopatra of Egypt brought him into conflict with Octavian. In 31 B.C. Octavian won a decisive victory over Antony at Actium and was finally acknowledged as Augustus Caesar by the Senate in 27 B.C. when they gave him the honored Greek name *Sebastos* (Latin, *Augustus*). His reign was known for its peaceful character as his accession ended a long period of civil strife. He died in 14 A.D. and was succeeded by Tiberius, the ruler of Rome during Jesus' ministry.

[Caesar was ruling but God was in charge: He used Caesar's edict to get Mary and Joseph to move 80 miles to fulfill the prophetic plan of God.]

Mary said, "Be it unto me according to Thy word" (Luke 1:38). From then on her life would be a fulfillment of divine prophecy:

The Messiah would be human, not an angel (Gen 3:15; Heb 2:16);  
A Jew, not a Gentile (Gen 12:1-2; Num 24:17);  
Of the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:10);  
Of the family of David (2 Sam 7:1-17);  
Born of a virgin (Isa 7:14), in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

All history is "His Story": Jer. 1:12, "I am watching over My word to perform it..." (NASB).

- 2] (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

Cyrenius = the Grecized form of Quirinus. His full name was Publius Sulpicius Quirinus. He had a noteworthy career as an able administrator and soldier, was appointed counsel in 12 B.C., was victorious over the Homonadensians in south Galatia.

Recent historical investigation has proved that Quirinus was governor of Cilicia as early as 4 B.C., which was annexed to Syria at the time of our Lord's birth. Cilicia, which he ruled, being a province of Syria, resulted in his being called the governor, which he was *de jure*, of Syria. A decade later he was appointed as legate over Syria for a *second* time in 6-9 A.D. after Herod's son Archelaus was deposed.

During his initial tenure of office, at the time of our Lord's birth, a "taxing" (a registration or census for taxing) of the people was "first made"; i.e., was made for the first time under his administration.

- 3] And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

Rome took a census every 14 years for military and tax purposes.

[Not in winter: no Roman administrator would require this at a time when much of the empire was impassable (Matt 24:20).]

- 4] And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Why Bethlehem? “House of Bread”: the Bread of Life (John 6:35).  
(Heritage included the death of Rachel, the birth of Benjamin [“the son of my right hand”](Gen 35:16-20), and the marriage of Ruth.

## Ruth (Summary)

Some ostensible paradoxes:

Judah was the Royal Tribe: (Gen 49:10);

How could Samuel anoint Saul from the tribe of Benjamin? (1 Sam 15:1);

David wasn't ready yet. Prophesied in the days of the Judges: Ruth 4:12.

How could Boaz marry a Moabitess?

Law legally forbade intermarriage Deut 7:2,3

Esp. to a Moabite Deut 23:3

Law shut her out; grace took her in Rom 8:3,4

4:11] famous in Bethlehem Micah 5:2!  
“House of Bread” (of Life!)

4:12] House like Perez?! Gen 38:6-29  
Bastard...tenth generation Deut 23:2

(Rabbinical interpretation: royal line ineligible...)

Explanation:

18: Now these *are* the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,

19: And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

20: And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

21: And Salmon [who married Rahab] begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

22: And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

5] To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6] And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7] And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

The fact that Jesus was called Mary's firstborn implies that later she had other children. (Cf. Matt 13:55-56; Luke 8:19-21; John 7:1-10.)

Infants were often wrapped in strips of cloth to keep their limbs straight and unharmed. This was also the way the shepherds would recognize the infant.

Let us recognize the stench of manure and acrid straw as trembling hands grasped the infant, slippery with blood, and placed it in a feeding trough...

“Manger,” *faṭnh, phatne*, is translated “stall” in Luke 13:15; it can mean crib, stall, or feeding trough. The traditional stone feeding trough in a cave is supported by common practice in the region.

He was born of a woman so that we could be “born again.” He that is born once, dies twice; he that is born twice dies but once (Cf. 2 Cor 8:9).

8] And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Why shepherds? They were the outcasts in Israel; their work made them ceremonially unclean; they were kept away from the temple weeks at a time (1 Cor 1:26-29; Luke 1:51-53).

The flocks were in open fields: thus, probably not later than October, according to some authorities.

[Could these have been the very fields of Boaz and Ruth?]

9] And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

The Greek (*foβon megan*, “they feared a great fear”) stresses the intensity of this fear.

10] And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“All people”: Luke, a Gentile, emphasizes that the Savior would be for all mankind.

11] For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12] And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13] And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14] Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

The whole purpose of the plan of salvation is “glory to God.” (Eph 1:6, 12, 14).

God's glory had dwelt in the tabernacle (Ex 40:34) and in the Temple (2 Chron 7:1-3), but had departed because of the nation's sin (1 Sam 4:21; Ezek 8:4; 9:3; 10:4, 18; 11:22-23).

[The traditional translation is not accurate!]

"..and on earth peace to men of good will." or "on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests" is preferred; God's peace is not given to those who have good will, but to those who are recipients of God's good will or favor.

*Pax Romana* had been in effect since 27 B.C., but the absence of war doesn't guarantee the presence of peace.

The Stoic philosopher Epictetus said,  
*"While the emperor may give peace from war on land and sea, he is unable to give peace from passion, grief, and envy. He cannot give peace of heart for which man yearns more than even for outward peace."*

15] And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

Their attitude contrasts sharply with that of the religious leaders who knew where the Baby was to be born but did not take the time or the effort to confirm it for themselves (Matt. 2:5).

16] And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

"Found," *aneuriskw aneurisko*, "found after a search."

The theme of amazement at the proclamation of the Messiah runs throughout the Book of Luke. (The verb *qaumazw thaumazo*, "to be amazed, to wonder, to be astonished," occurs in Luke 1:21, 63; 2:18, 33; 4:22; 8:25; 9:43; 11:14, 38; 20:26; 24:12, 41.)

17] And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18] And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19] But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

20] And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

## The Child and Mosaic Law

The Law is used five times in verses 21-40 (Gal 4:1-7).

21] And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Both Joseph and Mary had been told separately to name the child "Jesus" (Matt 1:21; Luke 1:31).

The name Jesus is very fitting for it is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Yeshua* (Joshua) which means "Yahweh is salvation" (Matt. 1:21).

Circumcision required by the Law (Lev 12:3).

Why on the eighth day? [S.I. McMillen, MD, *None of These Diseases*, Fleming H. Revell Co., Old Tappan NJ, 1958.]

The newborn infant has peculiar susceptibility to bleeding between the second and fifth days of life.

Clotting element, Vitamin K, is not formed in the normal amount until the fifth to the seventh day. First safe day: eighth day.

Also necessary: prothrombin. 3rd day: only 30% of normal. Peaks at a 110% on eighth day; then levels off to 100% of normal.

How did Moses know? Trial and error? Gen 17:12.

Circumcision removes excess of foreskin, facilitating proper cleansing: virulent bacteria, including the cancer-producing *Smegma bacillus*.

Deposits in the cervix of the uterus, if the mucous membrane is not intact, (lacerations, as after childbirth) can cause irritations, and susceptibility to cancer.

## 4000 Years Earlier: Gen 17:10-12

It is unfortunate that circumcision became an empty ritual for it pro-

claimed an important spiritual truth (Deut 10:15-20; Rom 2:28-29).

His circumcision was His first suffering for us (Col 2:10-11; Phil 3:1-3).

- 22] And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord;  
23] (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

The couple was also required by the Law to present their firstborn to God (Ex. 13:2, 12) 33 days later and to bring an offering for Mary's purification after childbirth (Lev. 12:1-8).

- 24] And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

The offering which they presented for her purification showed that they were a poor couple. They could not afford a lamb, so they bought a pair of doves or pigeons, which were all they could afford (Lev 12:8). [Yet *He* was the lamb!]

## The Blessing of Simeon

- 25] And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

Like Anna, Zechariah, and Elisabeth, Simeon was part of the faithful Jewish remnant; unlike the religious leaders, he was waiting for the consolation of Israel, that is, the Messiah, the One who would bring consolation to the nation.

- 26] And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.  
27] And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,  
28] Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

## Nunc Dimitis

[Fifth of the "Christmas Songs" in Luke]:

Elisabeth, 1:42-45;  
Mary, 1:46-56;

Zacharias, 1:67-79;  
Angels, 2:13-14.

- 29] Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

"Now dismiss [*nunc dimitis*, as the Latin has it...]

Depart, *apol uw apoluo*:

to release a prisoner or debtor;  
to untie a ship and set sail;  
to take down a tent (cf 2 Cor 5:1-8!);  
to unyoke a beast of burden (cf Matt 11:28-30).

- 30] For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
31] Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

In all three of the hymns of thanksgiving and praise recorded by Luke in these first two chapters (1:46-55, 68-79; 2:29-32) lie the deep significance of the births of John and Jesus for the salvation of Israel and the world.

- 32] A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Simeon noted that the Messiah was to be for the Gentiles as well as for Israel. The idea of salvation for the Gentiles is set forth many times in the Gospel of Luke.

- 33] And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.  
34] And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;  
35] (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

A stone, a sign, and a sword:

**Stone:** (Gen 49:24; Psa 18:2; 71:3; Deut 32:31). A rejected cornerstone (Psa 118:22; Luke 20:17-18; Acts 4:11); the nation would stumble over Him (Isa 8:14; Rom 9:32). Even today, they stumble over the cross (1 Cor. 1:23) and do not recognize their Rock (1 Pet. 2:1-6).

**Sign:** yet slandered; the sign of His birth (John 8:41f); attributed to Satan (Matt 12:22-24); His death slandered (Psa 22:6-8; Matt 27:39-44); and His resurrection (Matt 27:62-66). And today, His return (2 Pet 3).

**Sword:** suffering for Mary alone (John 19:25-27). (Joseph dead when Jesus began His ministry 30 years later?)

## Anna the Prophetess

36] And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

[Other prophetesses in Scripture: Miriam (Ex 15:20); Deborah (Jud 4:4); Huldah, (2 Kings 22:14); Noadiah (Neh 6:14); the wife of Isaiah (Isa 8:3); and the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8-9).]

37] And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

(Some scholars believe she was 103 to 105 years old, depending upon what age she was when married.)

38] And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

## The Years of Growth

39] And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

Jesus would be known as the Nazarene (Acts 2:22); it would even be on His cross (Matt 21:11).

Nazareth is 65 miles north of Jerusalem; it overlooks the Plain of Esdraelon (the Greek form of the Hebrew “Jezreel”), which stretches across Central Palestine from the Jordan to the Mediterranean, separating the mountain ranges of Carmel and Samaria from those of Galilee, extending about 14 miles from north to south, and nine miles from east to west. It is drained by the ancient river Kishon, which flows westward to the Mediterranean.

This plain has been well called the “battlefield of Palestine.” It has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar, until the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Crusaders, Frenchmen, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs,

warriors out of every nation which is under heaven, have pitched their tents on this plain.

Here Gideon gained his great victory over the Midianites (Jud 7:1-25); Barak defeated Sisera; Saul’s army was defeated by the Philistines; and king Josiah, while fighting in disguise against Necho, king of Egypt, was slain (2Ch. 35:20-27; 2Ki. 23-29).

It is interesting that the young Jesus grew up on the hillside which overlooks the scene of the final world battle: Armageddon (Rev 16:16).

40] And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

The wisdom and favor from God were evident before He reached the age of 12.

[There were no “childhood miracles.” The Wedding at Cana was the first miracle (John 2:11).]

41] Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

Three obligatory feasts for all males 13 years and older: Feast of Unleavened Bread (thus, including Passover), Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Ex 23:14-17; 34:23; Deut 16:16).

The one-day Passover was followed by the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 23:15; Lev. 23:4-8; Deut. 16:1-8) and the Feast of Firstfruits (Lev 23:5, 6, 10, 12). The entire eight-day festival was sometimes called the Passover (Luke 22:1, 7; John 19:14; Acts 12:3-4).

42] And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

This would be precedent to, as a 13-year-old, officially becoming a “son of the commandment,” a full member of the synagogue (*Mishna*, Niddah 5:6), similar to the modern custom of the *bar mitzvah*.

43] And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*.

44] But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45] And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.



- 46] And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.  
 47] And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

“Astonished:” *ἐξίσθημι existemi*: to throw out of position, displace; thus, to amaze, to astonish, throw into wonderment; to be amazed, astounded; to be out of one’s mind, besides one’s self.

- 48] And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

“Amazed”: *ἐκπλήσσω ekplesso*: expel by a blow, drive out or away; commonly, to strike with panic, shock, astonish; to be struck with amazement, astonished, amazed.

- 49] And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?

Jesus’ very first recorded words in all of Scripture.

“Father”: Radical concept! In the 39 Old Testament books, God is referred to as “Father” only 14 times, and then rather impersonally; never as “my Father.” Jesus never used *any other* term, except as He hung in our place on the cross: “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Psa 22:1; Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34.)

By the time Jesus was 12 years old, He understood His mission on earth.

- 50] And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.  
 51] And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.  
 52] And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

\* \* \*

## Addenda:

### The Dating of Jesus’ Birth

There are many scholastic debates offering many contrasting views of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the following exploration reviews but a few.

The year of Jesus’ birth is broadly accepted as 4 B.C., primarily from erroneous conclusions derived from Josephus’ recording of an eclipse, assumed to be one on March 13, 4 B.C., “shortly before Herod died.”

There are a number of problems with this in addition to the fact that it was more likely the eclipse on December 29, 1 B.C. Considerable time elapsed between Jesus’ birth and Herod’s death since the family fled to Egypt to escape Herod’s edict and they didn’t return until after Herod’s death. Furthermore, it appears that Herod died on January 14, 1 B.C.

Tertullian (born about 160 A.D.) stated that Augustus began to rule 41 years before the birth of Jesus and died 15 years after that event.

Augustus died on August 19, 14 A.D., placing Jesus’ birth at 2 B.C.

Tertullian also notes that Jesus was born 28 years after the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C., which is consistent with a date of 2 B.C.

Irenaeus, born about a century after Jesus, also notes that the Lord was born in the 41st year of the reign of Augustus. Since Augustus began his reign in the autumn of 43 B.C., this also appears to substantiate the birth in 2 B.C.

Eusebius (264-340 A.D.), the “Father of Church History,” ascribes it to the 42nd year of the reign of Augustus and the 28th from the subjection of Egypt on the death of Antony and Cleopatra. The 42nd year of Augustus ran from the autumn of 2 B.C. to the autumn of 1 B.C. The subjugation of Egypt into the Roman Empire occurred in the autumn of 30 B.C. The 28th year extended from the autumn of 3 B.C. to the autumn of 2 B.C. The only date that would meet both of these constraints would be the autumn of 2 B.C.

Another approach to determining the date of Jesus’ birth is from information about John the Baptist. Elisabeth, John’s mother, was a cousin of Mary and the wife of a priest named Zacharias who was of the “course” of Abijah.

(Priests were divided into 24 courses and each course officiated in the Temple for one week, from sabbath to sabbath.)

When the Temple was destroyed by Titus on August 5, 70 A.D., the first course of priests had just taken office. Since the course of Abijah was the eighth course, we can track backwards and determine that Zacharias

would have ended his duties on July 13, 3 B.C. If the birth of John took place 280 days later, it would have been on April 19-20, 2 B.C. (precisely on Passover of that year.)

John began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. The minimum age for the ministry was 30. As Augustus died on August 19, 14 A.D., that was the accession year for Tiberius. If John was born on April 19-20, 2 B.C., his 30th birthday would have been April 19-20, 29 A.D., or the 15th year of Tiberius. This seems to confirm the 2 B.C. date and, since John was 5 months older, this also confirms the autumn birthdate for Jesus.

(John's repeated introduction of Jesus as "The Lamb of God" is interesting if John was indeed born on Passover.)

## The Date of Jesus' Birth

Elisabeth hid herself for five months and then the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary both Elisabeth's condition and that Mary also would bear a son who would be called Jesus. Mary went "with haste" to visit Elisabeth, who was then in the first week of her 6th month, or the 4th week of December, 3 B.C. If Jesus was born 280 days later it would place the date of his birth on September 29, 2 B.C.

If Jesus was born on September 29, 2 B.C., it is interesting to note that in that year this was also the 1st of Tishri, the day of the Feast of Trumpets.

\* \* \*

## Luke 3

### General Background

This chapter focuses on the preparation for the main message of Luke's Gospel: Jesus' ministry in Galilee and His ministry on the way to Jerusalem.

With the exception of the brief glimpse of Jesus' visit to the Temple at the age of 12, we know relatively little about the first 30 years of the lives of both Jesus and John. We do know that John the Baptist's prophetic

ministry began three months before his birth when he leaped at the sound of the virgin's voice while still in the womb! We can assume that the Holy Spirit continued to guide and grow over the next three decades.

- 1] Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

### Seven Dating Factors

- 1) 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, that is, A.D. 29. Tiberius ruled over the Roman Empire from A.D. 14 to A.D. 37. He was a clever but cruel, licentious, evil man.
- 2) Pontius Pilate was appointed governor of Judea in A.D. 26 and ruled to A.D. 36. He was generally opposed to the Jewish people over whom he ruled. (His name has been found in a plaque at Caesarea.)
- 3) The Herod here is Herod Antipas who ruled over Galilee from the city of Tiberius from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. He was the one who would imprison John the Baptist.
- 4) His brother Philip ruled to the east of the Jordan from 4 B.C. to A.D. 34. His capital was at Caesarea Philippi.
- 5) Little is known about Lysanias who ruled in Abilene, northwest of Damascus.

(Calendar errors?...)

Jesus: "about 30 years"

### Ministry of John the Baptist

- 2] Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto [*epi*, upon] John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Two high priests?

6) **Annas**: older; was the high priest from A.D. 6 to A.D. 15 but was deposed by the Roman authorities; angered the Roman government; replaced by a sequence of four of his sons... finally his son-in-law:

7) **Caiaphas**: (A.D. 18-36); a political appointee of Rome; not accepted by the Jewish people. The Jews continued to recognize Annas as the rightful high priest though Caiaphas functioned in that role.

Although born into a priestly family, John spent about 12 years in the wilderness rather than in the Temple.

“Unto,” rather, Greek *epi*, upon.

Three prepositional distinctives:

|        |                   |                   |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------|
| “With” | <i>para, para</i> | John 14:17        |
| “In”   | <i>en en</i>      | John 14:17; 20:22 |
| “Upon” | <i>epi epi</i>    | Acts 1:8          |

- 3] And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

Luke noted that John’s baptizing work was in the country around the Jordan: John was visibly taking on himself the role of Elijah; it is possible that he picked this area on the lower Jordan (*Bethabara*, the House of Passage) because that was where Elijah spent his last days (2 Kings 2:1-13).

Since John’s function was to be Christ’s forerunner, so also his baptism prefigured a different baptism (Luke 3:16).

John’s baptism was associated with *repentance*: it outwardly pictured an inner change of heart. The word “for” (*ei j eis*: unto, to, towards, for) refers back to the whole “baptism of repentance.” Repentance was “unto” (a better rendering of *eis*); a prelude to sins being forgiven. The baptism did not save anyone, as is clear from what follows (vv.7-14).

Neither can any amount of repentance alone ever merit the forgiveness in the sight of God: it is only by grace and mercy. . .

- 4] As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

All three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) quote Isaiah 40:3-5.

[An example of “meta-context”: Isaiah was writing of God’s smoothing the way for the return of the exiles from Babylon to Judah. But all three Synoptic Gospel writers applied Isaiah 40:3-5 to John the Baptist. Isaiah wrote, “A voice of one calling: In the desert, prepare the way for the Lord.” But Matthew, Mark, and Luke each wrote, “A voice of one calling

in the desert”, the words “in the desert” going with the “voice” rather than with “the preparing of the way.” Why? Because they quoted from the Septuagint. Of course both are true: the voice (of John the Baptist) was in the desert, and the desert was to be smoothed.]

- 5] Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth;

When a king traveled the desert, workmen preceded him to clear debris and smooth out the roads to make his trip easier. The leveling of the land was a figurative expression denoting that the way of the Messiah would be made smooth because through John a large number of people were ready to receive Jesus’ message ( Luke 1:17).

Is it time to straighten out your life, too...?

- 6] And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

“All,” not just Israel . . .

- 7] Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Tact and diplomacy was not John’s focus . . .  
His message was stridently *eschatological!*

- 8] Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Which were “these stones”? He was at *Bethabara*, the House of Passage, the place where Joshua crossed the Jordan. They may have been the very 12 stones that represented the 12 Tribes (Joshua 4).

John was clear that being a member of the nation of Israel would not save anyone (John 8:33-39; Rom. 2:28-29). Many are depending upon their lineage, or church membership, or whatever. They are destined for eternal disappointment!

[...i.e., Aaron Burr was the grandson of Jonathan Edwards. . .]

- 9] And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

One must face the fact that wrath is coming.  
("So you're an atheist? What's your *backup* plan?")

10] And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

The crowd, tax collectors, and soldiers all asked, "What should we do (10, 12, 14) to give evidence of genuine repentance?" (Cf. similar questions in 10:25; 18:18.) In response John told the people to be (a) generous (:11), (b) honest (:13), and (c) content (:14).

Luke recorded the message of John in ethical terms. John's teaching was that one's life proves whether or not he has truly repented (cf. the Book of James).

Are you bringing forth good fruit? Cf. Matt 7:16-21.

Repentance brings forth *character*; and character produces the fruit of *action*.

11] He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

A tunic (*chiton*) was a shirtlike garment. Often people wore two if they had them.

12] Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13] And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

Tax collectors, notorious for their dishonesty in collecting more than required and pocketing it for themselves (5:27-32), exemplified the need for honesty.

14] And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

And soldiers, known and hated for always trying to get more money (by extorting it and blaming others for it), were examples of the need to be content and gentle.

15] And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

They sensed the special anointing... (No one greater than John the Baptist: Luke 7:28; Matt 11:11.)

(The Temple authorities had sent an inquiry team: Cf. John 1:19-28.)

16] John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

John himself distinguished between his own baptism and the Messiah's baptism: John's baptism was with water, but the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

The Apostle John presented Jesus not only as the Spirit-baptized One (1 Cor 12:13), but also as the baptizing One (John 20:22).

The baptizing "with fire" may refer to:

1) the purifying aspect of the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4), or  
2) it may refer to the purifying work of judgment that the Messiah will accomplish (Mal. 3:2-3).

The latter seems more probable in view of the work of judgment described in v.17, as well as v.9.

Work of the Holy Spirit:

Regeneration: John 3:3-6

Indwelling: John 14:16-17

Sealing: Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30

Interceding: Romans 8:26-27

Enlightening: Romans 10:9-10; John 1:12; Phil 1:6

Putting the deeds of flesh to death: Rom 8:13

Shoes:

Taking off was a prelude to meeting God at the burning bush;

Durable in the wilderness wanderings;

Boaz's marriage license. . .

17] Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

Husk was unpalatable; "threshed..." with wind or fan, and then burned.

"Unquenchable:" asbestoj *asbestos*

Hell is everlasting.

Cf. Psalm 1: "... the ungodly are like the chaff which the wind driveth way."

[Where was Ruth during the threshing floor scene? At Boaz's feet...]

18] And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

## John's Imprisonment

19] But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20] Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

Scholars debate the dates of John the Baptist's imprisonment and death.

It is likely that John began his ministry about A.D. 29; that he was imprisoned the following year; and that he was beheaded not later than A.D. 32. His entire ministry lasted no more than three years—about one year out of prison and two years in prison. (For details on John's imprisonment and death by beheading see Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9, 19-20.)

## The Baptism of Jesus

All four Gospels record this momentous occasion in the life of Jesus, which signaled the beginning of His public ministry (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:29-34). Luke condensed his account more than the other Gospel writers.

21] Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Only in Luke does it mention that Jesus was praying. Luke presented Jesus as praying in or before many occasions in His life (5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:32, 40-44; 23:46).

Three things occur:

- 1) Heaven was opened;
- 2) The Spirit descends;
- 3) The voice of God.

"heaven" = third heaven; the dwelling place of God. We have reason to believe that the multitudes were aware and were stunned; John the Baptist saw everything: John 1:29-34. Cf. Eze 1:1; John 1:51; Acts 7:56; 10:11.

22] And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

This was a visible, palpable descent.

The dove was a symbol of peace or freedom from judgment (Gen. 8:8-12); the Holy Spirit's presence "like a dove" signified that Jesus would bring salvation to those who turn to Him.

Talmud: Gen 1, "moved" Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, moved, brooded... over the face of the water...

Three times God "spoke," always of His pleasure:

- 1) at baptism (here);
- 2) at the transfiguration (Matt 17);
- 3) voice from heaven (John 12:27-33).

[...and always in reference to His death. . .and often associated with a thunderclap: Psa 18:13; Isa 30:30-31; Luke 9:35.]

The voice of God authenticated Jesus by alluding to Psalm 2:7:  
*I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.* (Cf. vv.7-12)

and Isaiah 42:1:

*Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*

All three persons of the Trinity were evident: the Son was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended on Him, and the Father spoke approvingly of Jesus.

In His baptism Jesus identified Himself with sinners though He was not a sinner.

## The Genealogy of Christ

(See chart comparing Luke with Matthew's genealogy . . .)

- 23] And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* [in-law] of Heli, [Eli?]

In the Old Testament, 30 was the age of a priest when his ministry began, (Num. 4); Joseph before Pharaoh (Gen. 41:46); David's reign (2 Sam 5:4); and often the age when one's ministry began (Ezek. 1:1).

(According to Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort: *nomi*zw, *nomizo*, reckoned as by law. Joseph was the *son-in-law* of Heli, having married his only daughter Mary.) (*Jerusalem Talmud, Chag. 77,4.*) (Cf. E. W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*, Kregel, Grand Rapids MI, from 1894 reproduction, p. 160 note.)

\* \* \*

## The Daughters of Zelophehad

There is also a peculiar exception recorded in the Torah, the result of a petition by the daughters of Zelophehad, which provided for inheritance through the *daughter*, if no sons were available and she married within her tribe. (Numbers 26:33; 27:1-11; 36:2-12; Joshua 17:3-6; 1 Chronicles 7:15.)

It became traditional in such cases that the father would legally adopt his son-in-law (Ezra 2:61=Neh 7:63; Num 32:41, cf. 1 Chr 2:21-23, 34-35; Num 27:3-8).

It's remarkable how many commentaries fail to recognize that the inheritance of Jesus through Mary also relates through this unusual exception deriving from this predicament of the daughters of Zelophehad.

*Indeed, we discover that every detail in the Scripture ultimately points to Jesus Christ!*

\* \* \*

- 24] Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph,

- 25] Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge,  
26] Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda,  
27] Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri,  
28] Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er,  
29] Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi,  
30] Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim,  
31] Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David,

Nathan was *second* surviving son of Bathsheba, in contrast with Solomon, the *first* surviving son of Bathsheba, as Matthew's genealogy chronicles. (From here, on, of course, both family trees are identical.)

- 32] Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Boaz, which was *the son* of Salmon [and Rahab], which was *the son* of Naasson,  
33] Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Judah,

This provocative genealogy which concludes the Book of Ruth. Phares was the *illegitimate* son of Judah (Gen 38:6-29). Thus, the provocative prophecy in Ruth 4:12; an illegitimate son cannot inherit for 10 generations (Deut 23:2); the 10<sup>th</sup> generation from Phares was David!

How could Boaz take a *Moabitess* for wife? His mother (Salmon's wife) was Rahab!

What the law could not do, grace did!

- 34] Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor,  
35] Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala,  
36] Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noah, which was *the son* of Lamech,  
37] Which was *the son* of Methuselah, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Mahallelel, which was *the son* of Kenan ['Cainan'],  
38] Which was *the son* of Enosh, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

*B'nai HaElohim* = direct creations of God.

Adam [as were the angels] was a direct creation of God. We are the sons of a fallen Adam. Cf. John 1:11, 12.

Christ the Son of God  
became a son of Adam  
So that we, sons of Adam,  
might become the sons of God.

Luke lays out his genealogy in *climactic* order. Cf. 1 Cor 15:22, 45; Rom 5:17.

## The Scarlet Thread

Adam was created perfect, but with the ability to make his own choices.

He blew it, yielding his allegiance to a rival. The entire cosmic panorama deals with a plan of redemption from this tragic choice. We are all heirs to this primeval mistake. (We continue to carry this as a genetic defect to this day. It isn't HIV<sup>+</sup>; it is SIN<sup>+</sup>. The good news is that there is a "blood cure," and it is available for the asking!)

It was in the Garden of Eden that God declared war on Satan:  
*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Thus, the "Seed of the Woman" (Genesis 3:15) begins the thread of literally hundreds of prophetic revelations of the Coming One, and thus becomes one of the prophetic titles of the Messiah. The term "Seed of the Woman" is both a grammatical and biological contradiction—the seed is in the man—and thus this is the first hint, here in the earliest chapters of Genesis, of the Virgin Birth.

## Why a Virgin Birth?

One answer, of course, is not only to fulfill the prophecy of Genesis 3:15, but also the one later given to Isaiah:

*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*  
-Isaiah 7:14

A sign, indeed. And a prophecy. But this is more descriptive than it is *causal*: why was this *necessary*?

There are, of course, many profound theological issues inherent in the Virgin Birth. However, one way to approach this issue is to address one of the problems it solves.

## The Problem

God announced very early that His plan for redemption involved the Messiah being brought forth from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10) and, specifically, from the line of David (Ruth 4:22; 2 Samuel 7:11-16).

The succession of the subsequent kings of Judah proved to be, with only a few exceptions, a dismal chain. As the succeeding kings went from bad to worse, we eventually encounter Jeconiah (also known as Johoiachin) upon whom God finally pronounced a "blood curse":  
*Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man [that] shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah* (Jeremiah 22:30).

This created a rather grim and perplexing paradox: the Messiah had to come from the royal line, yet now there was a curse on that very blood line!

## The Solution

The solution is revealed in the *different* genealogies of Jesus Christ recorded in the Gospels.

Matthew, as a Levi, focused his gospel on the Messiahship of Jesus, and presents Him as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Thus, Matthew traces the *legal* line from Abraham (as any Jew would) through David, then through Solomon (the "royal" line, through the first surviving son of Bathsheba) to Joseph, the *legal* father of Jesus.

According to Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort: *nomiZW, nomizo*, reckoned as by law. Joseph was the son-in-law of Heli, having married his only daughter Mary. (*Jerusalem Talmud, Chag.77,4.*) Cf. E. W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*, Kregel, Grand Rapids MI, from 1894 reproduction, p.160 note.)

On the other hand, Luke, as a physician, focused on the *humanity* of Jesus, and thus presents Him as the *Son of Man*. Luke traces the blood line from Adam (the first Man) through to David—and his genealogy from Abraham through David is, of course, identical to Matthew’s. But then after David, Luke departs from the path taken by Matthew and traces the family tree through *another* son of David (the second surviving son of Bathsheba), Nathan, which carries it down through Heli, the father of Mary, the mother of Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

[See Genealogy Chart on next page.]

## Hidden Message from Genesis 5

|            |                             |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| Adam       | Man (is)                    |
| Seth       | Appointed                   |
| Enosh      | Mortal                      |
| Kenan      | Sorrow (But)                |
| Mahalalel  | The Blessed God             |
| Jared      | Shall come down             |
| Enoch      | Teaching                    |
| Methuselah | His Death Shall Bring (the) |
| Lamech     | Despairing                  |
| Noah       | Comfort, Rest.              |

\* \* \*

## Luke 4

### The Temptation of Christ

(4:1-13)(Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13)

An epic conflict, specifically arranged by the Holy Spirit . . .

- 1] And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

The traditional site of Jesus’ temptation is a barren area northwest of the Dead Sea.

- 2] Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

## LUKE

Adam  
Seth  
Enosh  
Kenan  
Mahalalel  
Jared  
Enoch  
Methuselah  
Lamech  
Noah  
Shem  
Arphaxad  
Salah  
Eber  
Peleg  
Reu  
Serug  
Nahor  
Terah

## MATTHEW & LUKE

Abraham  
Isaac  
Jacob  
Judah  
Pharez  
Hezron  
Ram  
Amminadab  
Nahshon  
Salmon  
Boaz  
Obed  
Jesse  
David

## LUKE

Nathan  
Mattatha  
Menan  
Melea  
Eliakim  
Jonan  
Joseph  
Juda  
Simeon  
Levi  
Matthat  
Jorim  
Eliezer  
Jose  
Er  
Elmodam  
Cosam  
Addi  
Melchi  
Neri  
Salathiel  
Zerubbabel  
Joanna  
Juda  
Joseph  
Semei  
Mattathias  
Maath  
Nagge  
Esli  
Naum  
Amos  
Mattathias  
Joseph  
Janna  
Melchi  
Levi  
Matthat  
Heli  
(Mary)

## MATTHEW

Solomon  
Rehoboam  
Abijah  
Asa  
Jehoshaphat  
Jehoram  
Ahaziah\*  
Joash\*  
Amaziah\*  
Uzziah  
Jotham  
Ahaz  
Hezekiah  
Manasseh  
Amon  
Josiah  
Jehoiakim\*  
Jehoiachin\*  
Salatheil  
Zerubbabel  
Abiud  
Eliakim  
Azor  
Sadoc  
Achim  
Eliud  
Eleazar  
Matthan  
Jacob  
Joseph

\* Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah all died violent deaths; God thus dealing with idolatry literally “to the 3rd and 4th generations” (Ex 20:4-5); their names are therefore “blotted out” according to the Law (Deut 29:20). Jehoiakim and Jehoniah likewise, since the kingdom ended as an independent kingdom with Josiah’s death at Megiddo. Thus these were “blotted out” of the groups of “14 generations” in Matthew’s account. [E.W. Bullinger’s *Companion Bible*, Appendix 99.]



Six weeks without food . . .  
[Cf. Ex 16, Deut 8 . . . quail and manna for 40 years . . .]

Jesus' temptation in the wilderness continued for 40 days, just as Israel's wanderings and temptation continued for 40 years in the wilderness. A "40 days" interval is prominent in the Old Testament (Gen. 7:4; Ex. 24:18; 1 Kings 19:8; Jonah 3:4).

The first Adam was tempted in a beautiful garden and failed. The Last Adam was tempted in a dangerous wilderness and succeeded.

## #1: Physical Needs

- 3] And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

Greek is the most explicit language ever devised.  
(Perhaps that is why God chose it for the New Testament.)

"If" = Greek: Conditional Classes:

- 1) "if" and "it's so"; thus, "since, indeed,"
- 2) "if" and "it's not so";
- 3) "if": maybe it's so and maybe it's not;
- 4) "if": I wished it was so but it's probably not;

This is a Class 1: "Since, indeed..."

Not a supposition but an affirmation! His deity was the *basis* for this first temptation.

Satan was also slandering humanity: the physical is an incomplete description of the needs of humanity.

*Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.* -Philippians 3:19

- 4] And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Deut 8:3 in which Moses had reminded the people of the manna which God had given them. Though the manna was on the ground, it still was a test of faith for the people. They had to believe that God's Word was trustworthy for their existence.

(Jesus quoted more from Deuteronomy than any other book.)

He had the *power* to do anything, but the *authority* to do only that which the Father had willed (Cf. John 5:17, 30; 8:28; 10:17-18; 15:10, 15).

Jesus did not use His divine attributes for selfish purposes (Phil 2:5-8).

[Whenever we label different spheres of our lives as "physical," "material," "financial," et al., we are bound to exclude God out of areas where He rightfully belongs: first in *everything!*]

What digestion is to the body, meditation is to the soul.

[Note: we do not know why Luke reversed the second and third temptations. Perhaps to parallel 1 John 2:16? Matthew's order is the correct one (Matt 4:5).]

## # 2: Glory and Dominion

- 5] And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the *kingdoms* of the world in a moment of time.
- 6] And the devil said unto him, All this *power* will I give thee, and the *glory* of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Satan's claim is clearly valid or the temptation is vacuous. John 12:21; 14:30.

Notice that Satan is claiming, "Mine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." This is a flagrant challenge by Satan of the right of Christ to enter into the principality which Satan, from the day he was first created, had held in fief, and over which he now claimed suzerainty by right of possession. Whatever else he had lost in his fall, his kingdom had never been taken from him.

[Some attribute this as a reference to a Great Rebellion in the ostensible interval between Gen 1:1 and Gen 1:2.]

- 7] If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

Satan's offer was valid but the terms were unacceptable. The Father had already promised to give the Son all the kingdoms of the world (Ps 2:7-8), but first the Son had to suffer and die (John 12:23-33; Rev 5:8-10). Satan was offering a shortcut. Cf. Matt 16:21-23.

There are no shortcuts in the Christian walk. (Cf. Luke 9:22-26)

- 8] And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Deut 6:13. Moses warned the people about their attitude when they finally were to get into the land and achieve some glory and dominion.

The temptation for them would be to praise themselves and forget to worship God. Jesus, by quoting the verse, showed that He would not make that mistake: He would give **God** the credit and not take it for Himself; He would not fail as Israel had failed.

Satan has always sought worship (Isa 14:13-14).  
(Whatever we worship, we will serve.)

Man's greatest problem today, whether he recognizes it or not, is how to push aside every other allegiance but the eternal one.

It is significant that in the Matthew account vv. 6:9-13), Jesus subsequently gathers His disciples on the mount and teaches them to pray (what should be called "the Disciples' Prayer"):

to approach God as Father;  
to recognize His holiness;  
to desire His kingdom and doing His will;  
to pray for their daily bread;  
and the forgiveness of their sins;  
to ask to be kept from testing and  
to be delivered from the Evil One.

And then, echoing the same order of words that Satan had used in his preposterous claim, the disciples are taught to ascribe *the kingdom, the power, and the glory* to God alone.

[It is interesting to note that the Roman Catholic Church has chosen to use the shorter form of the prayer as found in Luke which does not include, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory."]

The world cannot solve any of its own problems because it is subject to the one who is the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4).

### #3: Altering His Mission

- 9] And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:  
10] For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:  
11] And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Satan misquoted Psalm 91:11-12; he omitted "in all thy ways."

- 12] And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

"On the other hand,..." (Matt 4:7, NASB). Quoting Deut 6:16, balancing Scripture with Scripture.

To attempt to receive the acceptance of the people without going to the cross would be to question whether God was really in the plan at all. That was exactly the situation Moses wrote about in Deuteronomy 6:16, which Jesus quoted. Moses referred back to a time when the people wondered whether God was really with them (Ex. 17:7). But Jesus was confident of the fact that God was with Him and that the Father's plan and timing were perfect.

Trust never employs tricks to find out whether the one trusted is trustworthy.

When a child of God is in the will of God, he can claim the Father's protection and provision; but if he willfully gets into trouble and expects God to rescue him, then he is tempting God.

Whatever is not of faith is sin: Rom 14:23.

Satan questioned the Father's **love** in the first instance;  
Jesus' **hope** in the second;  
the Father's **faithfulness** in the third.

The pinnacle was probably the high point in the southeast corner of the Temple, far above the Kidron Valley.

[The term  $\aleph$ ' *kanaph*, in Daniel 9:27, is also an architectural term for such a pinnacle. Perhaps there will be yet another who will *accept* this offer...]

13] And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Only for a season.

“*Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle.*”  
– Andrew Bonar

All human governments have been built up on one of three (false) foundations (re. Matthew’s order):

The Bread Basis: relying only on the physical;  
The False Religion Basis: emphasizing the spectacular (experience);  
The Compromise Basis.

We have at our disposal the same spiritual resources that Jesus used:

Prayer (3:21);  
the Father’s love (3:22);  
the power of the Spirit (4:1);  
the Word of God: “It is written. . .”  
Plus, we may come to Him as our sympathetic high priest to overcome the Tempter: Heb 2:16-18; 4:14-16.

Temptation may be Satan’s weapon to defeat us, but it can become God’s tool to build us (Cf. James 1:1-8, 13-17).

Cf. Matt 16:24,25; 2Tim 3:12.

## The Galilean Ministry (4:14 - 9:50)

[An entire year appears to have elapsed between the Temptation and the continuing narrative. (Cf. John 1-4).]

Herod had silenced the voice of John the Baptist by putting him in prison.

Jesus moved into Herod’s tetrarchy and made it His base of operations for the coming months.

14] And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15] And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

It was His custom to attend public worship (Heb 10:24-25).

## Presenting His Mandate

- 16] And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.
- 17] And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
- 18] The Spirit of the Lord is upon [*epi*] me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
- 19] To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. [Note the *period* !]

The Jewish rabbis viewed this passage as referring to the Messiah. In comparing this with Isaiah 61:1, 2 (the NT quote is from the LXX):

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God . . .

*Jesus ceased reading at the comma.* That was the extent of the mandate at this point.

- 20] And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

(Sitting down was assuming the position of the preacher.)

- 21] And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

You can imagine how shocked they were when He declared that they were witnessing the specific fulfillment of this prophecy. (We should be glad that He stopped at the comma! The remainder will occur at His *Second Coming*!)

The “acceptable year of the Lord” may be a reference to the Jubilee Year (Lev 25): slaves were set free; property reverted back to the owners; debts were cancelled.

It was “the time of restitution of all things.” (Cf. Peter’s use of the term in Acts 3:21.)

- 22] And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?
- 23] And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.
- 24] And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

## The Unpopular Sermon

- 25] But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;
- 26] But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

(1 Kings 17:7-16)

- 27] And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Naaman was the commander of the armies of Benhadad II in the time of Joram, king of Israel. He was afflicted with leprosy; and when the little Hebrew slave-girl that waited on his wife told her of a prophet in Samaria who could cure her master, he obtained a letter from Benhadad and proceeded with it to Joram. The king of Israel suspected in this some evil design against him—probably a pretext for war—and rent his clothes.

Elisha the prophet hearing of this, sent for Naaman, and the strange interview which took place is recorded in 2 Ki 5:1-19. He was cured of his leprosy by dipping himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the instructions from Elisha.

- 28] And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

*Why?*

Whenever we, as Gentiles, might miss something, the Jewish leadership comes to our rescue! We need to understand *why* they are so upset.

*Each* of the examples were *Gentiles!* Jesus is alluding to the Doctrine of Election. . .

- 29] And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

(On the Sabbath day . . .)

Some wanted to kill him but He was not killed until the proper time, when He chose to die (John 10:15, 17-18).

- 30] But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

When (not if!) you visit Nazareth, you will understand this better: it is built on a hillside overlooking the Jezreel Valley.

## The Demoniac

- 31] And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

“Down” - Nazareth was 1,200 ft. above sea level; Capernaum is 686 ft. *below* sea level. (The Israeli Defense Forces is the only air force that has special altimeters in its aircraft to fly *below* sea level!)

Josephus tells us that at this time in this area there were at least 240 towns and villages and Capernaum was the center of activity. Three primary highways joined there: from Tyre and Sidon; from Damascus; and from Jerusalem.

Jesus established His headquarters here. (Matt 4:13-16; i.e., “His own city,” Matt 9:1.)

The synagogue here was built by a Gentile; a centurion (Luke 7:5).

One of its rulers was Jairus (Luke 8:41).

Capernaum was also the home of Peter and Andrew.

- 32] And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. “Astonished” - ἐκπλησσω *ekplesso*, “to strike with panic or shock,” “struck with amazement.”

The Pharisees were in bondage to quotation marks: they loved to quote authorities, and chains of references; a second-hand theology: legalistic, joyless, labyrinthine, and weightless. . .

- 33] And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

34] Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

Note the plural! Also, note that they recognize and acknowledge who He is! They know, and tremble (James 2:19).

35] And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

“Rebuked” - as He will the great fever (4:39) and the great storm (8:24).

“Hold thy peace” - Literally, “Be muzzled.”

36] And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

“Amazed” = dumbfounded.

37] And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

### **Peter’s Mother-in-Law**

38] And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

Dr. Luke notes that it was a “great” fever.

39] And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40] Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41] And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Again, the demons acknowledge who He is.

Scripture emphasizes that we are at war with a mighty enemy:

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* -Ephesians 6:12

[“Rulers” = kosmokrat<sup>ai</sup> *kosmokrator*, or “Cosmocrats,” high ranking angels.]

However, Christ’s authority is comprehensive:

*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* -Matthew 28:18

42] And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

43] And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

44] And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

\* \* \*

## **Luke 5**

### **Background:**

In this chapter, Jesus will demonstrate the authority He declared in reading His mandate from Isaiah to the synagogue in Nazareth in Chapter 4.

Jesus has gone through Galilee ministering for some time; His fame has begun to spread.

The incident recorded here in the opening is not the first time Jesus had been in contact with the men whom He called to be His disciples. Luke already had indicated that Jesus had healed Simon’s mother-in-law, which denotes previous contact with Simon and Andrew.

This seems to be at least the third time Jesus had contact with these men.

In John 1:41 Andrew told Peter that he had found the Messiah. Apparently the men at first did not follow Jesus on a “full-time” basis, for in Mark 1:16-20 (also Matt. 4:18-22) Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James and John. Mark recorded that that call was before Jesus entered the synagogue in Capernaum and healed a man who was demon-possessed.

It’s no wonder Peter invited Jesus home after the synagogue incident.

Now, some time later, Peter and the others were still apparently partners in a fishing business with at least two ships.

Jesus, having established His authority (Luke 4:31-44), called these men into full-time discipleship.

## Luke 5

- 1] And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

Gennesaret, “harp” (from *ῥαβδὸς kinnowr*), another name for the Sea of Galilee. A harp-shaped lake 13 ½ by 7 ½ miles, 150 ft. deep. The vortex between two mountains (“The Horns of Hattin”) can cause severe storms on the relatively small lake.

Nearby towns include Tiberias, Magdala, Tabgha, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (the last 3 along the north shore).

- 2] And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

They had finished an all-night vigil with little to show for it. (Fishing includes carp, sardine, mullet, catfish, and combfish.)

[*Piscare ergo sum*. “I fish, therefore I am.”]

### The Boat Discovery

In 1986, after a severe drought, and with the lake at a historic low, there was discovered virtually a complete hull from a fishing boat – from approximately 2,000 years ago – preserved in the mud. The unique chemistry of the mud had preserved the wood; experts were flown in from all over the world to assist its preservation and it is presently in a special museum north of Ginosar near Tiberias.

It fits the Gospel presentation well: it is approximately 27 ft long, 7 ½ ft wide, and apparently characteristic of the vessels on the lake at that time.

- 3] And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

An improvised pulpit to address the pressing crowd.  
(Not every fishing boat is a pulpit; but every pulpit is a fishing boat!)

- 4] Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

Jesus assumed command.

- 5] And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

As a professional fisherman, he knew that during the day the fish would be too deep.

“Master” = *ἐπιστάτης epistates*, overseer; captain.

“Nevertheless” was an accommodation of respect...reluctant obedience.

[Miracles are always preceded by obedience. If Peter had not obeyed, he would not have witnessed the miracle. . . ]

- 6] And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

When God guides, He provides.

At another early morning, after the resurrection, this would again be a means of recognition: John 21:1-13.

- 7] And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

That’s a bunch of fish!  
“All their fishes had come true!”

- 8] When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Peter recognizes that Jesus is not mere mortal man.  
...And he saw himself in perspective... in truth.  
...And conviction. And confession. Overwhelmingly so.

This is always the response when confronted with deity: Job (Job 42:5, 6); Isaiah (Isa 6:1); John (Rev 1:17).

- 9] For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

“amazement [*thambos*] seized him and all those with him,”

- 10] And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

Greek verb: *catch men alive*.

A call to full-time discipleship.

(A second call. There was also a third: John 21.)

[Are *you* in a full-time ministry?

(You bet you are, if you are in Christ!)]

- 11] And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Forsook all: *they left everything*. They turned their backs on their investment, livelihood, etc.

The next two healings brought about a confrontation with the religious establishment—the first such conflict recorded in Luke. Both healings authenticated Jesus’ claim to be the Messiah ( 4:18-21).

- 12] And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

“Full of leprosy”: an advanced state; serious. Several skin diseases were classified as leprosy, including modern Hansen’s disease.

It was the task of the Jewish priest to examine people to determine whether they were lepers (Lev. 13). The Law commanded strict segregation of a person who had leprosy, for it was a graphic picture of uncleanness. A leprosy person could not worship at the central sanctuary; he was ceremonially unclean and therefore cut off completely from the community.

[Leprosy was used by Isaiah as a type of sin (Isa 1:4-6).

Sin controls by two lies:

1) Nothing is wrong with us.

2) Nothing can be done for us; we are beyond help.

Lost sinners one day will be isolated in hell.]

- 13] And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

The leper had broken the law to get to Jesus.

Did Jesus break the Law? A leper was not to be touched.

(He became sin for us: 2 Cor 5:21.)

I believe He touched a cleansed man.

(He never “healed” a leper. He *cleansed* them.)

He is *willing* to save (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9);

He is *able* to save (Heb 7:25);

He can do it *now* (2 Cor 6:2).

According to the Mosaic Law, one who was leprosy was not to be touched by anyone who was ceremonially clean. When someone clean touched something unclean, the clean became unclean. Luke showed that Jesus was the Source of ceremonial cleansing: If He was the Source of cleansing for that leper, He would also be the Source of ceremonial cleansing for the nation.

- 14] And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Healing from leprosy was rare: the OT Scriptures record only Miriam (Num. 12) and Naaman (2 Kings 5) as having been healed of leprosy.

Thus it would have been extremely unusual for a person to present himself before the priest and offer the sacrifices for cleansing.

Instructions for an offering for cleansing from leprosy are given in Leviticus 14:1-32. Luke emphasized the phrase “for a testimony to them.”

The fact that a man would go to the priest claiming healing from leprosy would alert the religious leaders to a massive witness to the leadership in Israel that the Messianic Age had come.

Why did Jesus command him not to tell anyone? Perhaps for two reasons:

(a) The man was to go immediately to the priest to be a testimony; it was required by the law.

(b) As the news of Jesus' healing power spread, He was constantly besieged by people, which caused Him to have to withdraw.

- 15] But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

Jesus told him to be quiet; he told everyone.

Jesus told us to tell everyone; and yet we keep quiet.

- 16] And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Prayer is the best antidote for stress and pressure.

[If *He* thought it was necessary, what about *us!*]

- 17] And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

Luke noted that a number of religious officials were present at the occasion, including some from Jerusalem who were probably the most influential.

(Luke did not portray this healing as happening immediately after the preceding event he had recorded. It seems evident that he placed the two accounts side by side as a development in his argument.)

First mention of Pharisees in Luke. Comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to divide, to separate." Probably developed out of the ministry of Ezra, the priest, who emphasized the people were to obey the law and be separate from the heathen nations around them (Ezra 9-10; Neh. 8-9).

They became very legalistic and ultimately hypocritical, not practicing what they preached (Cf. Matt 15:1-20; 23:1-36).

The Decapolis region ("10 cities") was over 15,000...

"The power" = *dunamij dunamis*, "spiritual ability" is unique to Luke; he used *dunamis* on several occasions to describe Jesus' healing (Luke 4:36; 6:19; 8:46).

- 18] And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

- 19] And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus.

Raising the roof for Jesus!

- 20] And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

Surprisingly Jesus did not immediately heal the man's body; instead, He first forgave his *sins*. This is the real issue here; this is extremely important for the argument of this section, for Luke's point was that Jesus had the authority to call disciples, including people (such as Levi) who were not thought of as being righteous (v.27-39).

- 21] And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

The religious leaders immediately began to think that Jesus' words were blasphemy for they rightly associated forgiveness with God (7:49): only God can forgive sin. Such an assault on the name of God was punishable by death (cf. Le 24:10-11, 14-16, 23).

Jesus pointed out that the religious leaders were absolutely right. His subsequent healing of the man was incontrovertible proof that He did have the authority to forgive sins and therefore should be accepted as God.

- 22] But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

- 23] Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

- 24] But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

First use of "Son of Man" in Luke (23 times in Luke; 82 times in the Gospels).

He didn't finish His sentence to them...

- 25] And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.



26] And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

“Strange things” = Greek *παράδοξοι* *paradoxos*, paradoxes: *para*, against; *doxa*, opinion, view.

Jesus’ authority is the issue here; evident from:

His *sinless life* (John 8:46, 29);

His *atonement* (2 Cor 5:2; Gal 3:10-13);

His eternal *priesthood* (Heb 7:25, 26).

27] And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

The call of Levi was the culmination of the previous two miracles. Jesus had shown that He had the authority to make a person ceremonially clean and to forgive sins; now those two authorities were brought to bear on one who was to become His disciple.

Luke did not mention Levi’s duties as a tax collector. He was sitting at the place of toll, the customs house (Matt 9:9).

The Romans collected taxes through a system called “tax farming”: they assessed a fixed tax figure and then sold the right to collect them to the highest bidder. The buyer then had to hand over the assessed figure at the end of the year and could keep any excess. This invited extortion. Duties and tolls were collected from using roads, docking in harbors, and other import and export duties. (There was even a cart tax, by the wheel!)

He was probably collecting tolls from the boats on the seashore; an employee of Herod, a vassal of Rome. But his position alienated him from the religious community of his day. As a lackey of the Romans, he would have been excommunicated from the synagogue and could not serve as a witness in court.

Jesus gave him a new name: Matthew, “Gift of God” (Luk 6:15; Matt 9:9).

Matthew knew shorthand. It may come as a surprise to many that one of the common, virtually obligatory, qualifications among the professionals in the Graeco-Roman world was that of a *tachygráphos*, or shorthand writer.<sup>1</sup> Among the disciples, Matthew, a former customs official, would also likely have had a working knowledge of *tachygraphy*, and thus may have been able to transcribe the Sermon on the Mount

verbatim, just as Tertius and others were able to transcribe Paul’s more verbose utterances.<sup>2</sup>

(Even in the Old Testament, in Psalm 45:1, the Hebrew, רַחֵם רָפֵא, the “ready writer (KJV),” or “skillful writer (NIV),” is translated in the Greek Septuagint, οὐγράφοι, *oxygràphos*, a synonym for *tachygràphos*, or “shorthand writer.” The technical term must have been common enough among Greek-speaking Jews in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. for its use in the Septuagint to have any purpose.)

Matthew was wealthy (v.29).

28] And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

Again, he left all. He made a decisive break from the old life (as indicated by the Greek aorist participle), and followed Jesus—literally, “was following him,” (imperfect indicative)—a continuous pattern of life.

That was quite a franchise to abandon... He left his toll; left his calling; broke with Herod; abandoned any future with the Roman Empire.

29] And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

(That was probably the only fellowship he had; “Birds of a feather flock together.”)

30] But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

Eating and drinking with others denotes a fellowship or camaraderie with them.

Later Jesus would feast again with another tax collector: Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector (Luke 19).

31] And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32] I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Here Jesus was not concerned about discussing who were “the righteous.” His point was simply that His mission was to those in need of “repentance”—a change of heart and a change of life (Cf. 3:7-14). The Pharisees sensed no need for such a change.

The Pharisees had no concern for the sinners and actually distanced themselves from God.

*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* -Micah 6:8

In the parallel account of Matthew's calling there is an additional line recorded:

*But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* -Matt 9:13

This is a quote from Hosea, where, like Micah, Hosea is condemning Israel for attention to ceremony rather than caring for others.

*For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.* -Hos. 6:6

Jesus will reference this again in His Sermon on the Mount, "*Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy.*" -Matt. 5:7

33] And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

The Pharisees had decreed that godly people should fast twice a week (on Mondays and Thursdays).

34] And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35] But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

"Taken away" = *apairw apairo*, taken away by force, violently(!).

[Should we fast? . . .]

36] And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old.

(No "Sanforized" materials in those days.)

37] And no man putteth new wine into old bottles [skins]; else the new wine will burst the bottles [skins], and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

[Would new wine burst old skins *without* fermenting?]

38] But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

Jesus' response was that the new way (His way) and the old way (the way of John and the Pharisees) simply do not mix. He gave three examples.

1. A bridegroom's guests (John 3:29) do not fast while he is with them because it is a joyous occasion. They fast after he is gone.
2. A new unshrunk patch of cloth is not put on an old garment because it will shrink and the tear will be worse.
3. New wine is not put into old wineskins for as it ferments it will break the old skins, which have lost their elasticity, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined.

In each case two things do not mix: a time of feasting and a time of fasting (v.34-35); a new patch and an old garment (v.36); new wine and old wineskins (v.37-38).

39] No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

[Why? We're not talking about grape juice!]

How often people get locked into their traditions; it seems very rare for a new work of the Spirit to operate within an old order. . .

It is easier to get into ruts than out of.

"The only difference between a rut and grave is the length and depth."

Are we stuck in our old ways, limiting our spiritual growth?

\* \* \*

Lord, Keep us open to what you are doing;  
Keep us free of our own traditions and rigidity...

## Notes:

1. E. R. Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul*, Tübingen, 1991, pp.26-47, 169-72 (q.v. Thiede and d'Ancona, p.240).
2. E. J. Goodspeed, *Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist*, Philadelphia, 1959, pp.16-17; and R. H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*, Leiden, 1967, pp.182-4; B. Orchard and H. Riley, *The Order of the Synoptics*, Macon GA 1987, pp.269-73; (q.v. Thiede and d'Ancona, p.240).

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## Luke 6

Continuing to demonstrate His authority declared in Nazareth in Chapter 4...

The Pharisees' attempts to guard the Sabbath further demonstrated how impoverished they were.

Note (Contemporary) OT Prophets:

Micah 6:8

Hosea 6:6

Amos 5:12, 21-24

### His Authority over the Sabbath (6:1-11)

- 1] And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

God allowed people to pick grain from a neighbor's field as they passed through (Deut. 23:24, 25).

- 2] And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?

But the Pharisees, interpreting the Law strictly, held that rubbing the heads together in order to eat the grain constituted threshing, which was not allowed on the Sabbath. The *Mishnah* defined "reaping, threshing, and winnowing" as three of their 39 categories of work (M. Shabbath, 7.2).

- 3] And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;

Jesus responded to the Pharisees' objection by referring to 1 Samuel 21:1-9. David had approached the priests at Nob and asked for bread.

- 4] How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

The only food available at the moment was the consecrated bread that only the priests were allowed to eat (Prohibited: Ex 25:23-30; Lev 24:5-9).

Arranged on the Table of Shewbread, in two rows of six each (Lev. 24:5, 6; Josephus, *Antiquities* 3.6.6).

David was given the bread, and he and his companions ate it. In the interest of survival David and his companions were allowed to be above the Law with the priest's blessing.

Who would criticize God's Anointed? *That was exactly what Jesus was claiming to be: YHWH.*

- 5] And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

Christ and His companions were also above the man-made law, which the Pharisees proclaimed.

Another parallel implicit in Jesus' teaching should not be missed. David, as God's anointed, was being hounded by the forces of a dying dynasty—the dynasty of Saul. Jesus was God's new Anointed One who was being hounded by the forces of a dying dynasty (Luke 5:39).

The ultimate conclusion was that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, that is, He has authority even over matters of the Law.

*"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."*

-Mark 2:27

- 6] And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

...*Shriveled.*

## Background: Six Challenges on the Sabbath

### Six Conflicts:

- 1) He defended His disciples for plucking grain on the Sabbath by alluding to the time when David and his men ate the bread of the Presence: Matt 12:1-4; Mark 2:23-26; Luke 6:1-4. In so doing, Jesus placed the Sabbath commandment in the same class as the ceremonial law. Human need had precedence over the ceremonial requirements.
- 2) He also reminded His critics that the priests in the Temple profaned the Sabbath and were held guiltless: Matt 12:5; Luke 6:1-4..
- 3) He referred to the circumcising a male on the Sabbath day: Lev 12:3; John 7:22, 23.
- 4) Jesus asserted His lordship over the Sabbath: Mat 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5.
- 5) Jesus expressed anger over those at Capernaum who showed more concern for the punctilious observance of the Sabbath than for a human being who was deprived of the use of a hand: Mark 3:1-5; Matt 12:8-14.
- 6) Likewise, the ruler of the synagogue who became indignant when Jesus healed a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for 18 years: Luke 13:10-17.
- 7] And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.  
  
This second contention about the Sabbath seems to have been brought about purposely by the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law. The religious leaders were observing Jesus because they were looking for a reason to accuse Him.  
  
*They were seeking cause to kill him* (Matt 12:4; Mark 3:6; John 5:16, 18).
- 8] But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

As was the case when He was opposed previously by religious leaders, Jesus knew what they were thinking (5:22). He used the situation to show that He has authority over the Sabbath.

- 9] Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

By this question He showed that refusing to do good on the Sabbath was tantamount to doing evil. If suffering is not alleviated, then one is doing evil to the sufferer.

### Seven Healings on the Sabbath

Demoniac, in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-27);  
Peter's mother-in-law, in Capernaum (Mark 1:29-31);  
Impotent man, in Jerusalem (John 5:1-9);  
Man with withered hand (Mark 3:1-6; Matt 12:8-14; Luke 6:7-11);  
Woman bowed together (Luke 13:10-17);  
Man with dropsy (Luke 14:1-6);  
Man born blind (John 9:1-14)

In all of these instances, Jesus showed that He placed human need above mere external ceremonial observance of the Sabbath. *He never did or said anything to suggest that He intended to take away from man the privileges afforded by such a day of rest.*

(Not all healings on the Sabbath: healing on Sunday, after the Sabbath: Mark 1:32)

- 10] And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.  
  
As the man stretched out his hand at Jesus' command, it was completely restored. Jesus performed no "work" on the Sabbath—He simply spoke a few words and a hand was completely restored.
- 11] And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

He humiliated the religious leaders and healed the man all at the same time without even breaking the Pharisees' law. It is no wonder that the religious establishment was furious and sought a way to get rid of Him.

\* \* \*

## [The Seventh Day: ]

The Sabbath was instituted in Genesis, and observed *before* the Giving of the Law (Ex 16);

Prophetically, it will be observed in the Millennium (Isa. 66:22, 23); the Temple will be closed except on New Moons and Sabbaths (Ezek 46:1ff).

The Christian is, of course, freed from the Law (Rom 14:5; Col 2:14-16).

Yet the Seventh Day Sabbath remains in God's original intent: a blessing for man to be taken advantage of. [See *The Seventh Day* for a more detailed review.]

\* \* \*

## Choosing the Twelve

- 12] And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Before Jesus chose the 12 disciples, He spent an entire night in prayer. Here is an example for *us*!

- 13] And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

Jesus had a large number of disciples and from those He picked 12 who were to be close to Him. They would minister to the 12 Tribes and would be preserved on the very architecture of heaven (Rev 21:13, 14).

These were specifically called "apostles" (*apostolous*) as opposed to the term "disciples" (*matheitas*). Disciples were followers, but apostles were delegated authority (9:10; 17:5; 22:14; 24:10).

- 14] Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

In Luke's list of the Twelve (as well as Matthew's and Mark's lists) Peter is listed first and Judas Iscariot is last. Bartholomew must be Nathanael (John 1:45).

- 15] Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, Levi and Matthew are the same man.

- 16] And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Thaddaeus (Mark 3:18) is Judas, *son* of James.

They were now willing to be sent out as apostles, being with Jesus on a full-time basis.

## Jesus' Sermon

- 17] And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

The sermon recorded in verses 17-49 is a shorter version of the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew 5-7. (Matthew's is three chapters long; Luke, 1. Matthew records nine beatitudes; Luke, 4.)

Luke includes woes which follow them; they have no parallel in Matthew.

Both sermons are addressed to disciples, begin with beatitudes, conclude with the same parables, and have generally the same content.

However, in Luke the "Jewish parts" of the sermon (the interpretation of the Law) are omitted. This fits well with Luke's purpose. (And he may not have had the shorthand skills of Matthew.)

The problem in seeing these accounts as reflecting the same sermon is the place in which the sermon was given. Matthew recorded that Jesus was "on a mountainside" (Matt. 5:1), whereas Luke said Jesus was on a level place. The sequence of events could solve the problem easily.

Jesus went up in "the hills" near Capernaum to pray all night (12). He called 12 disciples to be His apostles. He then went down on a level place to talk and to heal diseases. Following that, He went up higher to get away from the crowds and to teach His disciples (Matt. 5:1). The multitudes (Matt. 7:28; Luke 7:1) climbed the mountain and heard His

sermon, which explains Jesus' words at the end of the sermon (Matt. 7:24; Luke 6:46-47).

- 18] And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.  
19] And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

Jesus began His sermon with a series of blessings and woes on His listeners. The items are placed in two sets of four—four blessings and four woes which parallel each other.

Jesus focused on *attitudes*:  
*toward circumstances* (vv.20-26);  
*toward people* (vv.27-38);  
*toward ourselves* (vv.39-45);  
*toward God* (vv.46-49).

He emphasized four essentials for happiness:

Faith in God;  
Love toward others;  
Honesty with ourselves;  
Obedience toward God.

- 20] And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Note: to "His disciples"; His personal followers...

The term "blessed" (*makarioi*) was common in the Gospels; it occurs more than 30 times. All but two of the occurrences are in Matthew and Luke. Originally in Greek usage the word described the happy estate of the gods above earthly sufferings and labors. Later it came to mean any positive condition a person experienced. Unlike the Biblical authors, the Greek authors drew happiness from earthly goods and values.

In the Old Testament it emphasizes that the truly blessed (or happy) individual is one who trusts God, who hopes for and waits for Him, who fears and loves Him (Deut. 33:29; Ps. 2:12; 32:1-2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:12; 112:1).

A formal beatitude was an acknowledgment of a fortunate state before God and man (Ps. 1:1; Prov. 14:21; 16:20; 29:18).

*Poverty a blessing?*

*Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* -Prov 30:8,9

Also, Cf. Isaiah 61:1, 2: "Preach the good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18a).

Jesus' explanation about their inclusion in "the kingdom of God" is mentioned because they were following the One who was proclaiming His ability to bring in the kingdom. They were staking everything they had on the fact that Jesus was telling the truth.

## A Challenge to the Rich

We rich are constantly assaulted with the temptation to rely on riches. Can we have them and yet not rely upon them?

We rich are dulled to our need by our plenty. Can we have plenty and still feel our need?

We rich tend to be proud of what we have done, to take credit for our comforts. Can we live a humble life?

- 21] Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

Psalm 42:1, 2; 63:1.

Thirst? John 4:13, 14; 6:35; 7:37, 38.

- 22] Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Luke already mentioned twice that those who followed Jesus left everything (Luke 5:11, 28).

- 23] Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

## The Woes (6:24-26)

- 24] But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

In contrast with the disciples who had given up everything to follow Jesus were the people who would refuse to give up anything to follow Him (18:18-30). These were the rich, the well fed, the ones who laugh, who were popular; they did not understand the gravity of the situation which confronted them. They refused to follow the One who could bring them into the kingdom, and therefore Jesus pronounced woes on them. These woes were the exact reversal of their temporal benefits and they are the exact opposites of the blessings and rewards of Jesus' followers, cited in 6:20-23.

- 25] Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.
- 26] Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

### True Righteousness Revealed by Love (6:27-38)

- 27] But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
- 28] Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Jesus demonstrated this: after washing the disciples' feet, He lovingly reached out to Judas who was set on murderous betrayal (John 13:18-30), by quoting Psalm 41:9:

*"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."*

[He was quoting a reference to Ahithophel who betrayed David and then committed suicide. (Cf. Psa 55:12; 2 Sam 15:31-37; 17:1-23). Many don't realize that Ahithophel was Bathsheba's *grandfather* (2 Sam 11:3; 23:34; 1 Chron 27:34).]

*God is our best example:* Romans 5:6, 8, 10.

- 29] And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.
- 30] Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.
- 31] And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
- 32] For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.
- 33] And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

*Agape* Love is always a *choice*, not a reflex emotion. A faith choice is usually a contrary-to-our-emotions choice.

[See *The Way of Agape...*]

- 34] And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.
- 35] But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Jesus mentioned seven aspects of unconditional love. These actions, not done naturally by human nature, require supernatural enabling—and are thus proof of true righteousness:

- (1) Love your enemies.
- (2) Do good to those who hate you.
- (3) Bless those who curse you.
- (4) Pray for those who mistreat you.
- (5) Do not retaliate (29a).
- (6) Give freely (29b-30).
- (7) Treat others the way you want to be treated (31).

This kind of love marks one off as distinctive (32-34), and as having the same characteristics as the heavenly Father (35).

- 36] Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Jesus then taught His followers a fundamental principle of the universe—what one sows he will reap (36-38; Cf. Gal. 6:7).

[Here's a word we don't use often:

"Magnanimous" = Latin, *magnus* ("great") and *animus* ("spirit"): great-spirited; lofty spirit that is generous, giving, and forgiving...]

- 37] Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Probably the most misapplied verse in the Scripture. We are called to condemn sin; we are called to inspect fruit (vv.43-45). (Cf. 1 Corinthians 6:2; 5:9-13.)

Jesus is disallowing a judgmental, condemning disposition; what Frederick Godet calls "the tendency to place our faculty of moral

appreciation at the service of natural malignity,” or more simply still, “judging for the pleasure of judging.”<sup>1</sup>

Judgmentalism is merciless; it attaches motives to actions that have never been there; it always sees in the worst light. It is a sign of spiritual cancer and will itself be judged.

A merciful Father has merciful children.

- 38] Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Cf. The “dare” of God:

*8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.*

*9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*

*10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and **prove me now herewith**, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. -Mal 3:8-10*

Can you get “ahead” of God? Will God ever allow Himself to be your debtor?

Jesus outlined five areas which were proof of the sowing and reaping theme, mentioned so often in Scripture:

- (1) Mercy will lead to mercy (Luke 6:36). The disciples were exhorted to have the same merciful attitude God displayed toward them.
- (2) Judgment will lead to judgment (37a).
- (3) Condemnation will lead to condemnation (37b).
- (4) Pardon will lead to pardon (37c).
- (5) Giving will lead to giving (38). It is simply a fact of life that certain attitudes and actions often reflect back on the individual.

- 39] And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

He will not be able to hide the fact that he is not righteous for he will lead others astray.

- 40] The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

We become like the gods we worship: Psalm 135:18.

- 41] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Judgmentalism is intrinsically hypocritical. Cf. Rom 2:21-24.

- 42] Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother’s eye.
- 43] For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
- 44] For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.
- 45] A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

In this case fruit stands for what is said, not what is done: out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Matt 12:34, 35; 15:18; Ps 19:14; James 1:26.

[“Taking every thought captive”: see *Be Ye Transformed...*]

How Should One “judge”?

- Humbly.
- Prayerfully.
- Biblically.
- Lovingly.
- Mercifully.
- How should one offer judgment?
- Exemplarily.
- Privately.
- Gently and constructively.

- 46] And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Outward expression is not nearly so important as obedience. It is not enough to call Jesus Lord, Lord. A believer must do what He says.

- 47] Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:



- Coming.
- Hearing. Or are you “tuned out”? (Like the flight attendant’s safety spiel...)
- Requires listening. And prayer.
- Doing. Don’t just memorize: learn by *doing*. Whether biking, flying, or your Bible.

- 48] He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.
- 49] But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

[We are in a *laboratory course*, and there will be a final exam.  
How will *you* fare on the final Final?]

\* \* \*

**Notes:**

1. Frederick Louis Godet, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids MI, reprinted from the fourth edition of the translation from the second French edition by E. W. Shalders, printed by T. and T. Clark in 1887, p.328.

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## Luke 7

### Jesus’ Ministry in Capernaum

(Chapters 7 & 8)

In these next two chapters is a confluence between the ministry of Jesus in miraculous **signs** (which again *authenticated* that He is the Messiah: 7:1-17, 36-50; 8:22-56); and His **teaching** (which has *authority* based on the message He was proclaiming: 7:18-35; 8:1-21).

In this chapter, we encounter four hurting people:  
 a dying servant;  
 a grieving widow;  
 a perplexed prophet; and  
 a repentant sinner.

- 1] Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

Leaving the countryside, Jesus entered His adopted “hometown.”

(Capernaum = “Village of Nahum”)

### Response to Faith

- 2] And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

Centurion: a Roman officer in command of a hundred men, comparable to a modern-day captain.

(In Luke’s writings—both the Gospel and Acts—centurions are always presented as quality men of good character. Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was a centurion (Acts 10:1,22); a centurion watched the crucifixion of our Lord (Matt 27:54 Luke 23:47) and when he saw the wonders attending it, exclaimed, “Truly this man was the Son of God.”)

This centurion loved his servant and did not want him to die.

- 3] And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

Jewish leaders had little love for Romans in general and soldiers in particular. And synagogue leaders are not given to running errands for anyone.

However, this centurion loved the Jewish people and even built them a synagogue! (v.5)

(Matt 8:5-13 records the same event, but doesn’t highlight the use of intermediates, messengers.)

- 4] And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

They presented the centurion as “deserving” and “worthy.” They were judging from “externals.” The centurion would correct their misrepresentations!

[They were worse than blind: at least the blind know they cannot see.  
The surface-seer thinks he sees.]

- 5] For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

A “God-fearer,” yet not a proselyte.

- 6] Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

Roman soldiers were not characterized by humility, especially in front of their Jewish subjects. Can you imagine a Roman officer telling a poor Jewish rabbi that he was *unworthy* to receive Him into his house?

Yet here he was, demonstrating spiritual perception far beyond the ken of the Jewish leaders...

- 7] Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

His faith is, indeed, remarkable: he was of *pagan* background. He also was in a culture that prized *self-sufficiency*.

Real faith is an exercise in reality.

He understood authority:

- 8] For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

Note the significant “also”: (The KJV omits this in Matt 8:9; the NIV includes it in both places.)

He understood authority, and action at a distance.

He perceived the parallel between his commanding soldiers, and Jesus commanding diseases!

- 9] When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

Twice in the Gospels we are told that Jesus “marvelled.” Here, in Capernaum, He marvelled at the centurion’s faith.

In Nazareth, He marvelled at the Jews’ unbelief (Mark 6:6. Cf. Luke 4:14-30).

Why did Jesus “marvel”?

**The man’s background:** uncircumcised Gentile, raised outside the Covenant, without the tutoring of the Scriptures, etc.

**The man’s occupation:** He was a soldier; an instrument of the oppressive pagan establishment. As an officer, he wielded considerable power.

**The man’s wealth:** an unusually rich soldier. Riches are not a spiritual advantage; they foster this-world attachments (Cf. Luke 18:24, 25).

**The man’s confidence:** His certitude was expressed in stark simplicity: “Say the word and my servant will be healed.”

The only other person Jesus commended for having “great faith” was a Gentile woman whose daughter was delivered from a demon (Matt 15:28).

In both of these instances, Jesus healed *at a distance*.

*He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.* -Psalm 107:20

*Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;*

*That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*

*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* -Eph 2:11-13

- 10] And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

Indeed. Would that we, with our greater available revelation of God, might have such faith.

“Lord, increase our faith!” Luke 17:5.

## Response to Despair

- 11] And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

Nain was about 25 miles southwest of Capernaum--a full day's journey. (He went even though He was not requested to go.)

- 12] Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

The death of a child is most unnatural and hardest to bear. Death is a cruel thief when it strikes down the young.

It is “*a period placed before the end of the sentence.*” –Carl Jung

The woman was not only grieving, she was now completely alone and seemingly unprotected, without a close male relative. Help for widows is a major theme in both the Old and the New Testaments, especially under the Covenant as related in Deuteronomy, the saga of Naomi with Ruth, etc.

Warren Wiersbe suggests that there were, in effect, four special meetings at the city gate that day:

- 1) Two contrasting crowds met. One group was rejoicing in the blessings of the Lord; the other was lamenting the death of an only son. He had not been summoned, but He had an appointment.
- 2) Two only sons met: one alive but destined to die; the other dead but destined to live.
- 3) Two sufferers met. The “Man of Sorrows” could easily identify with the widow’s heartache.
- 4) Two enemies met: The Way, the Truth and the Life met “the last enemy,” death (1 Cor 15:26, 51-58).

*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.* –Heb 2:14-15

- 13] And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

The verb “had compassion” (“heart went out,” NIV) translates *splagchnizomai splangchnizomai*, “to be moved as to one’s bowels, hence to be moved with compassion,” for the inner organs were thought to be the seat of the emotions. It is related to the noun *splanchna*, “inner parts of the body,” which were indicative of the seat of the emotions.

This noun is used 10 times (Luke 1:78; 2 Cor. 6:12; 7:15; Phil. 1:8; 2:1; Col. 3:12; Phile. 7, 12, 20; 1 John 3:17).

(These allusions to the viscera would appear to be more accurate and appropriate than our idiomatic use of “the heart” as descriptive of our emotions.)

“Weep not” = literally, “Do not go on crying,” as a prelude for what He was about to do:

- 14] And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

Touching a coffin or bier violated the ceremonial laws (Num 19:11, 16). Yet, mercy above sacrifice: Hosea 6:6...

A word, from the *Logos* Himself.

(He always is precise about the address; cf. “Lazarus, come forth.” Otherwise, there might have been more responding?!)

- 15] And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

The boy heard Him! (He was fully alive somewhere!)

The young man heard the voice of Christ and obeyed—as must every deceased human in its own time.

“Die once?”

*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:* –Heb. 9:27

[This is often used to support the view that the 2 witnesses in Rev 11 are Enoch and Elijah.]

Exceptions: Lazarus; Jairus' daughter; son of the widow of Zarephath (by Elijah, 1 Kings 17:19-24), et al.

This refers to the general pattern, and is simply a rebuttal to reincarnation, etc.

- 16] And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

[Thinking, no doubt, of the ministries of Elijah and Elisha; but they, too, were sent to deal with the unbelief and decay in the Northern Kingdom on its path to ruin...]

- 17] And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

[Luke may have recorded this raising of the widow's son from the dead here so that the ensuing interchange between Jesus and John the Baptist's disciples would have more impact. The parallels between John and Elijah are deliberate.]

## Response to Doubt

- 18] And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

This event happened while John was in prison (Matt. 11:2). John had had a meteoric ministry which lasted for no more than a year.

His moral courage to condemn Herod's marriage to Herodias, Herod's one-time sister-in-law (Cf. 3:19, 20) caused his incarceration in the dungeon of Machaerus, the desert fortress-palace perched on a desolate high ridge of the Dead Sea. The remains of the castle's dungeons can still be seen, complete with iron hooks. It was there that John's head would be given to Herodias (Cf. Mark 6:21-29).

It must have been difficult for one accustomed to the alfresco freedom of the wilderness to be confined.

John expected that the Messiah would set up the kingdom as he had been announcing. But suddenly John found himself in prison and in danger

of being put to death, and still the kingdom had not come. Thus John was anxious concerning the Messiah. He knew the Old Testament well and knew of the works of the Messiah—but he did not see the kingdom coming.

It is not unusual for leaders to have their days of doubt and uncertainty. Moses was ready to quit (Num 11:10-15); so was Elijah (1 Kings 19) and Jeremiah (20:7-9, 14-18); and even Paul knew the meaning of despair (2 Cor 1:8-9).

There is a difference between **doubt** and **unbelief**:

**Doubt** is a matter of the mind: we cannot understand what God is doing or why.

**Unbelief** is a matter of the will: we refuse to believe God's Word and obey what He tells us to do.

“Doubt is not always a sign that a man is wrong; it may be a sign that he is thinking.” -*Oswald Chambers*

- 19] And John calling *unto him* two of his disciples sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

John had promised that “the kingdom was at hand,” but there was no evidence of it so far.

- 20] When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?  
21] And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.

The disciples of John approached Jesus at the very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.

- 22] Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

He gave them deeds, not discourse. He gave them *empirical* as well as *Scriptural* evidence.

(At least four separate Isaiah texts were alluded to in Jesus' answer: 26:19; 29:18ff; 35:5ff; as well as 61:1, 2.)

23] And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

“Offended” skandal izw *skandalizo* (“scandalize”): to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall, metaph. to offend; to entice to sin; to cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey; to cause to fall away; to be offended in one; i.e., to see in another what I disapprove of and what hinders me from acknowledging his authority; to cause one to judge unfavourably or unjustly of another; since one who stumbles or whose foot gets entangled feels annoyed; to cause one displeasure at a thing; to make indignant; to be displeased, indignant.

Jesus’ response is derived from Isa 8:14, 15.

24] And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

John was not a compromiser; not seeking the praise of the crowd.

25] But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings’ courts.

(He was not a celebrity.)

26] But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27] This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Not only a prophet, but one whose ministry was prophesied! (Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1, 2.) (Gabriel had referred to the Malachi passage in his announcement to John’s father, Zechariah.)

(In Malachi 3:1-2 two messengers are spoken of. One is the forerunner, revealed here as John the Baptist, and the other is “the Messenger of the Covenant” who will purify His people, that is, the Messiah Himself.)

28] For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

Greater than Abraham, Moses, or Elijah!

What!?! *Does that mean John wasn’t saved?*

Luke 16:16 (Matt 11:13): “The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.”

29] And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

[vv.29, 30 are the words of Jesus, not an explanation from Luke. Cf. Matt 21:32. They answer the implicit question, “If John is such a great prophet, why is he in prison?”]

30] But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

The answer is because of the willful unbelief of the religious leaders. The common people accepted John’s message and were baptized by him as proof of their repentance. They “justified God” in that they agreed what God had said about them (Ps 51:4). But the religious leaders justified themselves (Luke 16:15), not God, and rejected John and his message.

31] And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

Luke highlighted the deep division in the thinking of the people who listened to Jesus’ words.

Those who had been baptized by John; that is, had repented of their sins and had been baptized to show their sincerity, agreed with Jesus and acknowledged that God’s way was right.

In contrast, the Pharisees and experts in the Law rejected God’s purpose for themselves. By refusing to be baptized by John they showed that they did not accept his message of repentance or accept the kingdom. Thus they rejected God’s plan of salvation for them.

The ironic fact was that the Pharisees and the experts in the Law were the ones who should have known best about the ministry of the forerunner (John) and the Messiah (Jesus).

They must stop looking for a salvation that is small enough to be earned.

32] They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

(Childish, not childlike.)

33] For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34] The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

They wanted “neither the funeral nor the wedding.”

35] But wisdom is justified of all her children.

*God’s wisdom is not frustrated by the sophistry of the “wise and the prudent.”*

## Response to Love

36] And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat.

Jesus dined with the Pharisees, too, however the invitation may not have been sincere, since common courtesies were omitted:

- the greeting of kiss;
- the anointing with a touch of olive oil;
- the washing of sandaled feet.

It was the custom of the day, when one had a dinner party, to provide for the guests’ feet to be cleaned before the meal. Because most roads were unpaved and the normal foot attire was sandals, it was common for people’s feet to be dusty or muddy. As pointed out later in the episode, Simon did not provide for Jesus’ feet to be cleaned at the beginning of the dinner party (v.44).

For special dinner parties low-lying recliners or couches were provided for the guests to recline on their left elbow, while eating with the right hand, feet extending away from the table.

37] And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

“Behold, a woman!” Some *chutzpah!* Women were not invited to banquets in those days. Jewish rabbis did not speak to women in public. A woman of this (apparent) type would not have been welcomed in the house of Simon the Pharisee.

Her life was known enough for the Pharisee to characterize her as a sinner (v.39). She was not an invited guest at the dinner gathering, but went in anyway with a jar of perfume.

38] And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

This should not be confused with the similar event involving Mary of Bethany (John 12:1-8) nor with Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).

39] Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

Simon was embarrassed and judgmental: where was the spiritual discernment expected of a prophet?  
...revealing an arctic heart and a permafrost soul.

40] And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

Jesus was about to deal with *Simon’s* blindness: he was blind to the woman, to Jesus, and to *himself*.

41] There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

These were huge debts: for one pence (denarius coin) was worth a day’s wages.

42] And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43] Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44] And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

The most penetrating point was that they were *both* sinners. Both were equally *insolvent*.

The woman was guilty of sins of commission, but Simon was guilty of sins of omission. (Cf. Abraham at the oaks of Mamre, Gen 18:1-8.)

- 45] Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.
- 46] My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.
- 47] Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.
- 48] And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.
- 49] And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

*Connect the dots, Guys and Gals: Only God can forgive sins.*

- 50] And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

She was not saved by her tears or her gift: Jesus made it clear that it was *her faith alone* that saved her. No amount of works can pay for salvation (Titus 3:4-7).

Nor should we think that lost sinners are saved by love, either God's love for them or their love for God. God loves the whole world (John 3:16), yet the whole world is not saved.

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:  
Not of works, lest any man should boast. -Eph. 2:8, 9*

Jesus accepted her tears and her gift because her works were the *evidence of faith*. (James 2:14-26).

How did she know her sins were forgiven? Jesus told her.

How do we know our sins are forgiven? God tells us in His Word: (Cf. Isa. 1:18; 43:25-26; 55:6, 7; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 4:7-8; Eph. 4:32; Heb. 8:12).

Jesus healed the centurion's servant: a great miracle.

Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead: a greater miracle.

But here was the greatest miracle of all: saving this woman from her sins and making her a new person.

**God's forgiveness is not automatic.**

In 1830, George Wilson was arrested for mail theft, the penalty for which was death by hanging.

President Andrew Jackson gave Wilson a pardon, *but he refused to accept it!*

The authorities were puzzled as to what to do.

Chief Justice John Marshall handed down the decision: "A pardon is a slip of paper, the value of which is determined by the acceptance of the person to be pardoned. If it is refused, it is no pardon." George Wilson must be hanged.

If you have never accepted God's pardon, now is the time to believe and be saved.

\* \* \*

## Luke 8

- 1] And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him,
- 2] And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,
- 3] And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

We will meet Joanna again among the women on resurrection morning (Luke 24:10).

These three and many other women were helping to support Jesus and the Twelve out of their own means. This would have been viewed as a scandalous situation in Palestine in that day.

- 4] And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

Why did He speak in parables?

Cf. Matt 13:10-17 (...and Mark 4:11,12):

*10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*

*11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.*

*12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*

*13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*

*14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: [Isaiah 6:9,10]*

*15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

*16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.*

*17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

- 5] A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

Who are “the fowls of the air”? Cf. v.12!

- 6] And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.  
7] And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.  
8] And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold.  
And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”:

Appears seven times: Matt. 11:15; 13:9,43; Mark 4:9,23; Luke 8:8; 14:35.  
Also, it is a key structural phrase in Jesus' Letters to Seven Churches, Rev 2 & 3.

- 9] And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

- 10] And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

*And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. -Isaiah 6:9*

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. -1 Corinthians 2:14*

Jesus' speaking in parables was actually an act of grace to those listening to Him: If they refused to acknowledge Him as Messiah, their judgment would be less severe than if they had understood more (cf. Luke 10:13-15).

- 11] Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Consistent in the seven parables of Matt 13.

In this first, the Word lands on four different “soils” and yields fruit accordingly. Soils = condition of the heart...

- 12] Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

[Here the “fowls of the air” are identified!]

- 13] They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

Thin soil on top of rock. No depth.

- 14] And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.  
15] But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Each of these four groups surfaced:

- (1) The Pharisees and religious leaders refused to believe.
- (2) Some people rallied around Jesus because of His miracles of healing and feeding but refused to stay with His message (John 6:66).



[Cf. Ray Comfort’s message, “Hell’s Best Kept Secret”; (parachutes are not for comfort in flight, but the avoidance of destruction...)]

(3) Others, such as the rich ruler (Luke 18:18-30), were interested in Jesus but would not accept Him because of the strong pull of materialism.

(4) Others followed Him and were committed to His Word regardless of the cost (8:1-3).

- 16] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.
- 17] For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *anything* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.
- 18] Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.
- 19] Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.
- 20] And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

He *did* have brothers (eldest in a family of seven: four brothers, two sisters? Cf. Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3. The Epistles of James and Jude were written by two of them).

- 21] And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

Luke had previously recorded events that authenticated Jesus’ authority (4:31-6:16). Here again an authentication was necessary. Jesus had been teaching that one must listen carefully to His words and carry them out. Now He authenticated His words in ways that only the Messiah could do. Jesus showed His power over three aspects of the created world:

- the natural realm (vv.22-25),
- the demonic realm (vv.26-39), and
- sickness and death (vv.40-56).

## The Storm

Storms measure the skill of the sailor.

[See also, *Weathering the Storm* Briefing Pack on Acts 27.]

- 22] Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

“Let us...” Could they have been in any real jeopardy?

- 23] But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

“Came down”: Sea of Galilee 600 ft. *below* sea level; venturi between the mountains (“Horns of Hattin”) can cause extremely turbulent storms on the lake. However, this storm surprised these *experienced* professionals familiar with these waters.

He had already told them that they would cross over; one can view their concern as a lack of faith.

This may have been more than a *natural* storm. The strange encounter with the demonic world immediately followed...

- 24] And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

These were experienced seamen, familiar with these waters: they were partners in a fishing business.

He “rebuked” the wind. Strange figure of speech!

When Jesus rebuked the storm, the lake calmed immediately (which normally does not occur after a storm).

- 25] And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

Cf. Psalm 107:24-30; 65:7; 89:9; 104:7; 106:9.

[And much more than nature alone. Note the following:]

## The Case of the Deviled Ham

- 26] And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

On the eastern shore, opposite from the Galilean cities they normally frequented. This was the region of the ten cities of Decapolis: Gentile country.

- 27] And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

Whereas Matthew wrote that Jesus met two demon-possessed men (Matt. 8:28-34), Luke wrote about only the more dominant of the two. (Matthew was actually there.)

- 28] When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Demons “believe and tremble” (James 2:19); they recognized—and acknowledged—the deity of Jesus(!); they believe in a future judgment (Matt 8:29); and in a place of future torment (v.31) in the *aboussso*; they also believe in prayer: they begged Jesus to not send them into the *aboussso*; but rather into the pigs.

- 29] (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)  
30] And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

A Roman legion was almost 6,000.

- 31] And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

It seems the demons have knowledge of their destiny for punishment in the *Aboussso*. They also readily acknowledged His authority over them.

- 32] And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

They were near the Decapolis, a *Gentile* region, which explains the presence of a herd of swine in the area.

Why did they desire embodiment? (There exist, apparently, “Rules of Engagement”: They even needed His permission to indwell *animals*!)

And why did He yield to their request?  
(To manifest these realities to *us*?)

- 33] Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

(Mark 5:13 tells us that there were 2,000.)

This also highlights an apparent distinction between demons and fallen angels:

Angels can materialize in human form (Gen 18), take people by the hand (Gen 19), dine with them, even be “entertained unawares” (Heb 13:2), and indulge in combat (2 Kings 19:35).

Demons, however, appear to be powerless except as they seek *embodiment*. It has been conjectured that they may be the disembodied *spirits* of *Nephilim* (hybrids deriving from fallen angels with human women).

*Nephilim* (also called *Rephaim*) are not eligible for resurrection (Isa. 26:14, in the Hebrew).

[See *The Return of the Nephilim* Briefing Pack, or *Alien Encounters*, a book by this author, with Dr. Mark Eastman.]

- 34] When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.  
35] Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.  
36] They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.  
37] Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

[It is interesting that in that region subsequently dwelled a people called Troglodites, “dwellers among tombs.”]

- 38] Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,  
39] Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

He was a Gentile in a Gentile region. (Jesus didn't instruct him to reveal all this to the priest, which was required of Jews by the Law.)

40] And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

**(Episode #1 of 2):**

## The Daughter of Jairus

41] And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

The fact that a ruler of a synagogue would come to Jesus showed that people were beginning to acknowledge who Jesus is—that He is indeed the Messiah. A synagogue ruler was in charge of the synagogue services and was responsible for maintaining and cleaning the building.

Other synagogue rulers in the New Testament were Crispus (Acts 18:8) and Sosthenes (Acts 18:17).

42] For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

**(Episode #2 of 2):**

## The Woman with an "Issue of Blood"

43] And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

(Note: the issue of blood apparently began the same year that the daughter was born. Why did the Holy Spirit include this detail? Is this a rhetorical device to suggest a link of some kind between the two episodes?)

44] Came behind *him*, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd.

αἵματι *haptomai* , to fasten one's self to, adhere to, cling to.

\* \* \*

## Hems (Summary)

“Border”: *kraspedon kraspedon*: the extremity or prominent part of a thing, edge, skirt, margin; the fringe of a garment;

In ancient Mesopotamia, “to cut off the hem” was to strip one of his personality, authority, etc.

A husband could divorce his wife by cutting off the hem of her robe.

A nobleman would authenticate his name on a clay tablet by pressing the hem on the clay.

Fringes on Levitical garments were a symbol of authority, rank, in ancient Israel: Nu 15:38,39; Deut 22:12; Ex 28:33,34.

## David's Removal of King Saul's Hem

In wilderness of En Gedi David cut off the skirt (*shuwl*) of Saul's robe. The genealogy was woven into the threads of the hem. David was later conscience stricken because he had personally interrupted the lineage to the throne and symbolically taken away the authority from the Lord's anointed. Saul understood. I Sam 24:20

## God's Covenant with Israel

“I spread my (shuwl) over thee...” Ezek 16:8; Ex 39:25,26;

## Ruth's Petition to Boaz

Ruth 3:9.

## Joseph's Coat: -ySP; תִּרְמָק “Variegated”? many colors? ...or seamless?

Gen 37:3-4.

## Jesus' Seamless Coat = “continuance”?

Temple veil torn, signifying end of man as high priest; Jesus' hem *not* torn, because He is high priest forever...]

\* \* \*

45] And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

Jesus' question, "Who touched Me?" does not imply that He was ignorant of the situation. He wanted the woman to reveal herself and openly express the faith which caused her to touch Him. The woman's faith became public when she fell at His feet.

46] And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

47] And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48] And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

A critical observation concerning this woman: she apparently was a *Gentile*. A woman of Israel with an issue of blood would have had to remain "outside the camp," ceremonially unclean (Lev. 15:25-30). (And anyone who touched her would also be ceremonially unclean.)

49] While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50] But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

["Whole" = same word as in v.48: *swǝw sozo*, to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction (from injury or peril), to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health.]

51] And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

In spite of the fact that Jairus was informed that his daughter had died, he had faith that she would be resurrected (v.50). [Not as great as the centurion's command-at-a-distance faith.] That faith was partly expressed in the fact that he allowed Jesus to come into his house after He had touched an unclean woman.

52] And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

53] And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

[The Jesus Seminar might have taken a vote to decide what really happened...]

54] And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

... "*Talitha cumi*"; which is, being interpreted, *Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*  
-Mark 5:41b

Jesus' address always quite specific.

55] And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

Always something to eat.

56] And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

Jesus didn't want to be formally declared the Messiah until the time was right (Luke 19). Gabriel had revealed the exact time to Daniel over four centuries earlier.

## Concluding Observations

Some would simply regard the 12 years as a mere incidental "coincidence." One who takes the text more seriously would see this as a deliberate rhetorical device.

The ostensible linking of the two healings by the Holy Spirit highlighting the 12 years involved gives rise to a provocative parallel: Jesus was on the way to bring life and healing to Jairus's daughter; yet, ostensibly tangential to His purpose, a Gentile woman is healed, by faith, *outside the Covenant with Moses*.

What do *you* think? How do *you* see it?

\* \* \*

## Luke 9

### Background

Luke's section on the Galilean ministry closes with several important events through which Jesus taught His disciples.

(Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is, for Luke, the highlight of His ministry: the events recorded in this chapter form a climax to this portion of Jesus' ministry (4:14-9:50) and simply a bridge to His journey to Jerusalem, which begins in 9:51.)

## Luke 9

### The 12 Disciples Sent

Cf. Matt. 10:5-15; Mark 6:7-13.

- 1] Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

They were able to carry out His mission because Jesus gave them **power** (*dynamis*, "spiritual ability"; Cf. 4:14, 36; 5:17; 6:19; 8:46) and **authority** (*exousian*, "the right to exercise the power") over the demonic realm and the physical realm of diseases.

Jesus had just shown His power over both of these realms (8:26-56).

Their healing ministry was to authenticate their preaching ministry. The fact that the Twelve healed in Jesus' authority and power showed that He was the Messiah who could bring in the kingdom. Therefore it was necessary that people believe the Twelve. People would evidence their belief in the Twelve—and thus in the Messiah—by showing hospitality to these men who were ministering in Jesus' authority.

Today we test a ministry by its conformance to the revealed Word of God; Satan can enable his ministers to do amazing things.

- 2] And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

## Two Assignments

On-the-job training; preparation for "their own" ministry. Their "solo flight..."

Matthew 10:5,6 indicates that they were sent only to the people of Israel; Luke, as a Gentile, doesn't emphasize this.

- 3] And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

Emphasizing urgency and simplicity.

- 4] And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.
- 5] And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

This was the familiar practice of orthodox Jews whenever they visited Gentile territory (Acts 13:51; Luke 10:10-11).

- 6] And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

Everywhere in the region of Galilee.

### Herod's Queries

Cf. Matt 14:2; Mark 6:14-29.

- 7] Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

The public commotion reached the highest levels of government. Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great and the man who had John the Baptist killed (3:19-20; Matt 14:1-12).

- 8] And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

The Jews had an expectation of Elijah coming (Mal 4:5; Luke 1:17; Matt 11:10-14; 17:11-13).

- 9] And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

Who is this Miracle Worker? John the Baptist did no miracles (John 10:41).

Unlike some “celebrities,” Jesus did not make it a point to mingle with the high and mighty, and was not intimidated by worldly power. When Herod and Jesus did finally meet, the king had hoped to see a miracle, but the Son of God did nothing and said nothing to him. The evil king had silenced God’s voice to him (23:6-12).

## The Feeding of the 5,000

The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle of Jesus which is recorded in all four Gospels. (Cf. Matt 14:13-31; Mark 6:30-44; John 6:1-14.) In many ways it is the climax of Jesus’ ministry of miracles. It was designed to produce faith in His disciples.

- 10] And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

Now they are called *apostoloi*, apostles, “sent ones” (as opposed to apprentices). Although Capernaum was His ostensible headquarters, they retire to Bethsaida, which is across the Jordan in the northeast part of the Sea of Galilee.

[They have recently found the site; it had been obscured due to the retreating of the Galilee shoreline. Our tour was privileged to inspect it prior to being open to the public; it gave us a strange feeling of participation to walk the site... ]

After receiving their progress report, they took off for a rest (Mark 6:30-32).

- 11] And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

Crowds are one of the intractable burdens of popularity...

- 12] And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

They apparently were non-locals, having traveled from their own home regions.

- 13] But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

He was simply getting them to acknowledge the impossibility of provision by human means alone. (In combining the four Gospel accounts, you find that Jesus first asked Phillip where they could buy enough to feed the great crowd. He was only testing Phillip, “for He Himself knew what He was intending to do” (John 6:6 NASB).

[It is good to remember that in crisis hours, when your resources are low and your responsibilities are great, God already has the problem solved.]

A lad found by Andrew donated his five loaves and two fishes. You start with the possible and work from there.

- 14] For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

The 5,000 men (*andres*, “males”) is no doubt a round figure, not counting the women and children who were present (Matt. 14:21). If the latter were also counted, the total might have been over 10,000!

- 15] And they did so, and made them all sit down.

Can you imagine what they were privately thinking?

- 16] Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.  
17] And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

The word used for baskets (*kophinoi*) was considered typical of Jewish commerce.

(The seven baskets from the feeding of the 4,000 (Mark 8:8) were a different kind of basket.)

They all were filled.

Jesus, by this act of provision, had shown Himself sufficient for the

nation Israel. He is the One who could provide prosperity if the people would believe His message.

This miracle is reminiscent of Elisha when he spoke the Word of the Lord and a small amount of food fed many people, with some left over (2 Kings 4:42-44).

Why 12 baskets? One for each Apostle. The feeding of the 5,000 clinched the truth for the disciples that Jesus truly is the Messiah.

In John's account, the next day Jesus preached a sermon on "the bread of life" and received Him as they had the bread (John 6:22-59).

They desired to make Him king so that He would give them bread the rest of their lives (John 6:14-15); however, His "hour had not yet come." He would present Himself as king on the specific day that Gabriel had explained to Daniel (Dan 9:25). (We'll explore that in chapter 19.)

## Jesus' Identity and Mission

Cf. Matt. 16:13-28; Mark 8:27-9:1.

The feeding of the 5,000 marks the end of what some call "the Great Galilean Ministry" (Luke 4:14-9:17). He shortly will begin His journey to Jerusalem (v.51) after some time of preparation.

There is a parallel between His journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem, and Paul's journey from Jerusalem to Rome.

First we have some lessons about His person, His sacrifice, and His kingdom.

- 18] And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

He prayed all night before choosing His disciples; now He prayed before asking for their personal perceptions and convictions.

Mark indicates that it was at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27), north of Bethsaida.

Herod had raised the issue as to who Jesus is (9:7-9). Jesus will now raise the same issue (vv.18-20).

- 19] They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

The same expectations encountered in John 1:21.

- 20] He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

This was Peter's second time (John 6:68) of confessing publicly.

- 21] And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing;

Luke seems to indicate that it was Jesus' sufficiency in the incident of the loaves and fish, which clinched His identification as Messiah in the Disciples' minds. Jesus did not want others to know of this because it was not time for Him to be proclaimed publicly as Messiah.

[Commanded: as an order from a military officer.]

The message of His messiahship could not be divorced from the facts of His death and resurrection. They had a difficult time with this and didn't really grasp it until after He was raised from the dead (24:44-48).

If the apostles began preaching that He was indeed the Messiah, it might cause a popular uprising against Rome.

The public proclamation would come about at a later time and it was that proclamation which Jesus spoke about next.

- 22] Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

For the first time Jesus taught His disciples about His ultimate mission—the fact that He had to die.

(Predicted in Dan 9:26, Psalm 22, et al...)

John the Baptist first introduced Him publicly as "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)." What "Lamb"? The Passover Lamb...

Jesus also predicted the "destruction of the temple" (of His body: John 2:19). This would be the basis of the accusations in His trial before the Sanhedrin.

Jesus compared Himself to the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14), which gave rise to the most famous quote of all: John 3:16.

Jesus also pointed out that the Jewish leaders would play a prominent part in His death.

*That* also must have shocked the disciples.

[There is a parallel in the prediction, by some, that the persecution of the true Biblical believer will be led by the denominational churches. See the similarity?]

Jesus also gave His first express indication that He would be resurrected.

[Jesus also compared Himself to Jonah (Matt 12:38-40).]

- 23] And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Jesus then discussed the deaths of His followers. They were to have the same attitude toward death and life that He had. Each one must deny himself, that is, not think about his own good. Also he must take up his cross daily, and he must follow Jesus, even to death.

Jesus is talking about *discipleship*, not *sonship*. Only after we become children of God can we become His disciples.

- 24] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

No doubt many thought the disciples were throwing their lives away. They had given up their sources of income and were in danger because they associated with Jesus.

- 25] For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

[Nan's latest book: *The Key - Letting Go* (of me!). Saying "no" to *ourselves*. Not simply to our pleasures or possessions—to *self*!]

Discipleship is a daily discipline: we follow Jesus *a day at a time*.

- 26] For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son

of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels.

In the Roman world, the cross was a symbol of shame, guilt, suffering and ultimate rejection. There was no more despicable way to die.

Crucifixion was not mentioned in polite society. People would no more think of wearing crosses as we would think of wearing electric chairs!

Our motive should be to *glorify* Christ.

- 27] But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

Jesus was speaking of the three apostles who would accompany Him up the mountain of transfiguration. Jesus Himself indicates that the transfiguration was a foretaste of the glories of the kingdom. It is the *only* occasion when He revealed the glory of His person.

## The Transfiguration

Cf. Matt 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8.

The greatest "Bible Conference" on the greatest topic: Jesus' "Departure" from Jerusalem.

- 28] And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

[Mark wrote that the event occurred after *six* days (Mark 9:2). The two accounts are not contradictory if one understands Mark as speaking of the intervening days and Luke as including the days of Jesus' teaching as well as the day on which the transfiguration took place.]

The transfiguration may have occurred on Mount Hermon, which is near Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27), though some suggest it was Mount Tabor.

- 29] And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.

Matthew (17:2) and Mark (9:2) use the word *metamorphoo*, which means "to change from within," from which we get "metamorphosis."



- 30] And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:  
 31] Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease [departure] which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

At the transfiguration four events occurred:

1. Jesus' face and clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. This would have immediately reminded those present of Moses' face shining with a bright light when he received the tablets of the Law (Ex. 34:29-35).
2. Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus. God buried Moses' body (Deut. 34:5-6), and Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven (2 Kings 2:11-12, 15-18).
3. Moses and Elijah spoke about His departure (*exodon*, "going out or away"), which He was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. "Departure" referred to Jesus' leaving the world through which He would bring salvation—much as God had brought deliverance to Israel in its Exodus (departure) from Egypt.

Moses had led Israel out of the bondage of Egypt; Elijah had delivered them from the bondage of false gods.

Jesus would die to deliver a sinful world free from bondage to sin and death (Gal 1:4; Col 1:13; Heb 2:14-15). This departure was to be fulfilled in Jerusalem. From this point on, Jesus indicated several times that He was headed toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51, 53; 13:33; 17:11; 18:31).

Moses and Elijah represent the beginning and the end of Israel, for Moses, as the Lawgiver, founded the nation, and Elijah is to come back before the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5-6).

[I personally believe they will be the two witnesses in Revelation 11.]

These will have four unique powers:

(Rev 11:5,6)

- 1) to call fire from heaven (Elijah: 1 Ki 18:37; 2Ki 1:10, 12; Jer 5:14);
- 2) to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: Elijah; 1 Ki 17:1 (3 1/2 years!); Luk 4:25; Jas 5:17; and
- 3) have power over waters to turn them to blood (Moses: Ex 7:19); and
- 4) to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will (Moses: Exo. 8 - 12).

4. The Father spoke out of a cloud (v.35).

Jesus did not want His miracles widely publicized at that time, for the fulfillment had to be at Jerusalem. This was confirmed by Elijah's and Moses' words.

- 32] But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

These three are the "insiders": at Jairus', Gethsemane, et al. At Gethsemane they also were heavy with sleep...

- 33] And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

Peter may have been thinking of the Feast of Tabernacles, a feast of ingathering long associated with the coming kingdom (Lev 23:33-44; Zech. 14:16-21). Some believe that this suggests a proximity to the Feast of Tabernacles.

- 34] While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

A cloud was often a symbol of God's divine presence (Ex. 13:21-22; 40:35, 38).

The Father interrupted Peter;  
 The Son interrupted Peter (Matt 17:24-27);  
 The Spirit also (Acts 10:44).

- 35] And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

As was the case at Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:22), so here a voice spoke to those witnessing the event: "This is My Son, whom I have chosen; listen to Him."

Those familiar with the Old Testament, as the disciples were, doubtless immediately recognized the reference (in the words "listen to Him") to Deuteronomy 18:15 with its messianic prediction of a prophet greater than Moses.

*The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken...*

-Deut 18:15

The people were to listen to (obey) the Prophet.

The Father would speak a third time in the Final Week (John 12:23-28).

Cf. Psalm 2:7; Isa 42:1.

- 36] And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

Three of the disciples did see a manifestation of the kingdom of God before they died; Peter alludes to it in his second epistle (2 Peter 1:12-21).

**“How long shall I put up with you?”** (9:37-62)

The frustrations of our Lord...

## The Healing of the Demonic Boy

Matt. 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-27.

- 37] And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.
- 38] And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child.
- 39] And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.
- 40] And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.
- 41] And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

When you compare the three accounts (Matt. 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-27; Luke 9:37-41) you discover what was lacking in their lives:

Faith (Matt 17:19-20);  
Prayer and fasting (Mark 9:29).

The exercise of spiritual gifts is *not* automatic; they require spiritual discipline.

- 42] And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

“Threw”: *rhgunumi rhegunumi*, a wrestling term.

- 43] And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

After the boy was healed, the crowd was amazed (*ἐκπλ ἡσσω ekplesso*, “struck out of their senses”; 2:48; 4:32) at the greatness of God.

- 44] Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

In the midst of the amazement by the crowd, Jesus taught the disciples a second time that He would die by being betrayed into the hands of men.

- 45] But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

But they did not understand as it was hidden from them. Apparently the disciples were still confused as to how Jesus, with His glorious power, could experience a humiliating death. Nor could they put together the crowd’s reaction to His miracles and His prediction that the nation would turn against Him and kill Him.

(This is the prevalent attitude among Jews to this day.)

- 46] Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.
- 47] And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,
- 48] And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

This same attitude of service characterized Him, the Messiah who was willing to go to the Cross for all people.

- 49] And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.
- 50] And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

Coupled with this discussion on greatness was John’s attempt to stop someone else who was driving out demons in Jesus’ name. John’s reason was that the man was not “one of us.” John must have thought that the disciples’ own greatness was diminished if others who were not of the Twelve could also cast out demons. Jesus’ reply, *Whoever is not against you is for you*, suggested that the Twelve were not to see themselves as God’s exclusive representatives. Rather they should

have rejoiced that the power of God was being manifested on earth by others as well. If they manifested that attitude, it would show that they were truly trying to be of service to the Messiah.

## The Shift toward Jerusalem

This next session extends from 9:51 - 19:27, and is comprised of two parts:  
(1) the rejection of Jesus by most on His journey toward Jerusalem (9:51-11:54) and  
(2) Jesus' teaching His followers in view of that rejection (12:1-19:27).

The previous section (4:4-9:50) dealt with Jesus' **authentication** in His Galilean ministry. In this next section authentication was no longer the issue: The issue was now **acceptance**. Jesus was not accepted by most of the nation.

Therefore He began to teach His followers how they should live in the face of opposition.

- 51] And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,
- 52] And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.
- 53] And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

Conflict between Jews and Samaritans had been going on for several hundred years.

[Review of Assyrian conquest and policy of transferring indigenous populations... myth of "Lost Tribes," etc.]

The general rejection climaxed when Jesus was accused of having demonic power (11:14-54). [This corresponds to Matt 12, which leads to resorting to the parables of Matthew 13.]

- 54] And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

Cf. Elijah (2 Kings 1:9-12).

- 55] But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

- 56] For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

## Three Potential Candidates

Jesus introduced three men who wanted to come along:

- 57] And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.
- 58] And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

Jesus' response was that a person desiring to follow Him must give up what others consider necessities. Jesus had no home of His own nor did His followers. They were on their way to Jerusalem where Jesus would be put to death.

- 59] And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

Jesus called the next man with the same words with which He had called His disciples (5:27). The man's reply that he first wanted to go and bury his father has been variously interpreted.

Some maintain that the man's father was dead already. It would seem strange if that was the case for he would certainly have been engaged in the burial procedure already.

It is more likely that the man's father was ready to die. His request was to let him wait just a little while before following Jesus. Perhaps the man also wanted to receive the inheritance from his father's estate.

- 60] Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

Jesus' response, *Let the dead bury their own dead*, implies that the spiritually dead can bury the physically dead.

- 61] And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

Elijah had allowed Elisha to do this very thing when Elisha was plowing (1 Kings 19:19-20).

Jesus' words underscore the fact that His message of the kingdom of God was more important than anything else—even family members. The message and the Messiah cannot wait. Jesus' message was more important than Elijah's message and demanded total allegiance.

62] And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Jesus' servants should not have divided interests, like a farmer who begins plowing and looks back. Since Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, the man had to make up his mind right then as to what he was going to do. Interestingly, Luke did not record the outcome of any of Jesus' conversations with the three men.

No wonder that "the laborers are few"!

\* \* \*

## Luke 10

Research:

Go not house to house...?

70 or 72? Why?

### General Background

This section contains instructions similar to those given to the Twelve in 9:1-6. On His way to Jerusalem Jesus was sending out messengers to all the towns in order to give people opportunities to accept His message.

Only Luke records this incident.

1] After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

Sending the 70 or 72?

Some Greek manuscripts in verses 1 and 17 have "70" and others have "72." Both readings have strong manuscript support; the issue is evenly divided among ostensibly sound scholarship.

Potential symbolic significance can also be divided:

**70:**

Moses' seventy elders (Exod 24:1, 9; Num 11:16-17, 24-25)

70 nations on the earth (Gen 10-11; However, the LXX lists 72!?)

Rabbinic tradition about Moses' commandments being heard in 70 languages;<sup>1</sup>

Sanhedrin's 70 members (when high priest is not counted).<sup>2</sup>

**72:**

Local counsels of 72 (*m. Zebah*. 1.3; *m. Yad*. 3.5; 4.2);

72 translators of LXX (*Letter of Aristeas* 46-50);

LXX tradition of 72 nations in Gen 10-11;

72 princes and kings in the world (3 Enoch 17.8; 18.2-3; 30.2).

The 72 were people other than the Twelve, who apparently remained with Jesus on His journey. They were to prepare the way so that when Jesus came into a town, it would be ready for Him.

2] Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

When Jesus stated, Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers, He implied that the ones asking were *also* to be workers!

3] Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.  
4] Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

Their mission was dangerous (v.3) and required haste (v.4).

5] And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.  
6] And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.  
7] And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

The 72 were supported by those who accepted their message.

- 8] And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:
- 9] And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.
- 10] But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

Through hospitality people would show whether or not they believed the message of the kingdom. To the believing cities the message was to be, **The kingdom of God is near you.** The Messiah was coming, and He could bring in the kingdom.

- 11] Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Even the cities that rejected the message were to be told that the kingdom was near.

- 12] But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.
- 13] Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

Jesus singled out two cities—Chorazin and Bethsaida, both of which were located in the area of Jesus' early ministry of miracles on the north side of the Sea of Galilee. [Then is *He* responsible for their failure?]

- 14] But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

Those cities (no doubt representative of others as well) were to be more severely judged than pagan cities, such as Tyre and Sidon (and Sodom, v.12), which did not have the benefit of the Lord's miraculous works and words.

[Where does that leave *us*?!!]

- 15] And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

Jesus warned the surrounding towns against rejecting the 72 because that meant rejecting Jesus and the Father (v.16).

He also singled out His adopted hometown, Capernaum, which also had been a site of His miraculous works.

[What does that mean? Is the entire city thus destined to damnation? All of the residents...?]

- 16] He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.
- 17] And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

This was true because of the authority Jesus had given them. They had such authority because Satan's power had been broken by Jesus. He answered them,

- 18] And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Jesus was not necessarily speaking of Satan being cast out at that precise moment, but that his power had been broken; he was subject to Jesus' authority.

- 19] Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

The authority given to these workers and the promise of no harm from snakes and scorpions was given for "this particular situation."(?)

- 20] Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

The personal relationship of a believer with God should be the cause of his joy.

- 21] In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

The people who were following Jesus were not the important people of the nation; they were not considered the wise and learned. They had become like little children to enter into the kingdom, and thus they knew the Son and the Father.

- 22] All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

- 23] And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:
- 24] For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

The disciples were living in an opportune day which many Old Testament prophets and kings longed to see—the day of the Messiah.

“What shall I do...?”  
[Genesis 3:7 once again...]

- 25] And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

This question surfaced on several occasions (Matt. 19:16-22; Luke 18:18-23; John 3:1-15). There is not a more important question to be asked!

The question in this case was not sincere, as can be seen from two points in the text:

- (1) The lawyer wanted to test Jesus. (He called Jesus “Teacher,” *didaskale*, Luke’s equivalent of a Jewish Rabbi.)  
(2) After Jesus answered the man’s question, Luke recorded that the man wished to justify himself (v.29).

[Two lawyers at a trial: one called the other “a thief”; the other called him “a liar.” Then the judge said, “Now that the lawyers have identified themselves, we will begin the case...”]

- 26] He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

Jesus answered his question with two other questions (v.26), driving the Law expert back to the Old Testament Law. The expert answered correctly by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. One must love God and one’s fellowman in order to keep the Law properly.

- 27] And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
- 28] And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

Jesus affirmed that if the man did this, he would live.  
(Not hearers of the law: doers.)

If you say you can do it, God contradicts you:  
“...by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified...” (Gal 2:16).

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:3-4).

- 29] But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

The man’s response should have been to ask, “How can I do this? I am not able. I need help.” Instead, he tried “to justify himself,” that is, to defend himself against the implications of Jesus’ words. So he tried to move the focus off himself by asking, And who is my neighbor?

## The Good Samaritan

(The most famous parable in Luke.)

- 30] And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

The road **from Jerusalem to Jericho** descends approximately 3,000 feet in about 17 miles. It was a dangerous road to travel for robbers hid along its steep, winding way.

- 31] And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

A priest, one expected to love others, avoided the wounded man (probably a fellow Jew).

- 32] And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

Levites were descendants of Levi but not of Aaron, and they assisted the priests (Aaron’s descendants) in the temple.

- 33] But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

The Samaritans were scorned by the Jews because of their mixed Jewish

and Gentile ancestry. It is an intentional irony, then, that the Samaritan helped the half-dead man, dressing his wounds, taking him to an inn, and paying his expenses.

- 34] And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.  
35] And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

He left an open Visa/MasterCard slip.  
(It would give “MasterCard” a whole new meaning!)

- 36] Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

Jesus was teaching that a person should be a neighbor to anyone he meets in need. The ultimate Neighbor was Jesus, whose compassion contrasted with the Jewish religious leaders who had no compassion on those who were perishing.

- 37] And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Jesus wrapped up His teaching with the command that His followers were to live like that true neighbor.

Allegorical?

Mankind had fallen among thieves and was left half dead. (John 8:44: Satan was a murderer from the beginning...)

The Priest = ritualism and ceremonialism. (He passed by on the other side because he saw that the man *already* had been robbed!)

The Levite = legalism.  
*None of these can save.*  
Only the Parable Giver can save...

## The Visit in Bethany

- 38] Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

The village where Martha opened her home to Him was Bethany (John 11:1-12:8), a few miles east of Jerusalem. Jesus stayed in Bethany during His final week on earth.

- 39] And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word.

A sharp contrast was portrayed between the two sisters. Mary . . . sat and listened to Jesus, while Martha made preparations for a meal.

- 40] But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.  
41] And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:  
42] But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

The phrase, only one thing is needful, refers to listening to His words, which Mary had chosen to do. The same theme is seen in 8:1-21.

The focus of this passage is not that people should be unconcerned with household chores, but that the proper attitude toward Jesus is to listen to Him and obey His words.

Don’t be like the Ephesians (Rev 2:1-7) by being so busy in the service of the King that you have no time for the King! Don’t “lose your first love!”

\* \* \*

### Notes:

1. *B. Sab.* 88b; *The Alphabet of Rabbi Akiva* [Strack and Stemberger 1991:381]; q.v. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Book House, 1996, p.1015.
2. *m. Sanh.* 1.5-6.

\* \* \*

## Luke 11

A prayer meeting, a miracle, an invitation to dinner:

...results in instruction on four topics:

Prayer

Satan

Spiritual opportunity

Hypocrisy

## Luke 11

- 1] And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

Cf. Matt 6:9-15.

John the Baptist:

filled with the Spirit before birth;

called to introduce the Messiah to Israel;

“Greatest” of the prophets;

...and yet had to *depend* upon prayer...

Our most compelling example: Jesus.

He prayed at every major crisis point in His life.

...often alone praying (5:16; 9:18); others around (9:28-29); at the time of His baptism (3:21); when choosing His disciples (6:12); when the crowds increased (5:16); before He asked for their confession (9:18); at His transfiguration (9:29); for Simon (22:32); in the garden before His betrayal (22:40-44); even prayed on the Cross (23:46).

## Model Prayer

Not really “the Lord’s Prayer.” He never had to ask the Father for forgiveness!

(The true Lord’s Prayer is in John 17, a glimpse of the intimacy between the Son and the Father.)

- 2] And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Jesus began with an intimate direct address: Father.

The only time He didn’t call Him Father was when He *couldn’t*: “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Ps 22:1).

He couldn’t because He was in *our* shoes.

We can because He did.

## Seven Petitions:

“Hallowed...”: “to set apart or sanctify” or, as here, “to treat as holy.” Thus the request was for God’s reputation to be revered by men.

[Furthermore: when God’s people pray, *His* reputation is at stake!]

“Thy kingdom come...” John the Baptist, Jesus, the Twelve, and the 72 had been preaching about the coming of God’s kingdom.

When Daniel read from Jeremiah that the 70 Years of Captivity were about over, he didn’t lay back and wait: he *prayed* for it! (Daniel 9:1-20, the “interrupted prayer of the O.T.)

“Thy will be done...” We should continually hold up *His* agenda...

Prayer is God’s way of enlisting *us* in what *He* is doing... Getting ourselves to the place where He can trust us with the answer. We never need to be afraid of the answers He gives.

Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

- 3] Give us day by day our daily bread.

The provisions for the day...

(We ask Him for needs—not our greeds.)



- 4] And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

The fifth request concerned man's relationship to God—the forgiveness of sins. Luke had already linked the forgiveness of sins to faith (7:36-50).

In asking for forgiveness of sins a person expresses his faith that God will forgive him (1 John 1:9).

Such a person then evidences his faith by forgiving others.

The sixth request is, “lead us not into temptation.” But why pray such a prayer since God does not want people to sin?

The meaning is that Jesus' followers are to pray that they be delivered from *situations* that would cause them to sin. His disciples, contrary to the Law experts (10:25-29), realized that they were easily drawn into sin.

[Romans 6: “It ain't gonna reign no more.”]

Our “being saved” in the past tense is being delivered from the *penalty* of sin (justification). This can be viewed as “being saved in the present tense: delivered from the *power* of sin (sanctification), by walking by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore Jesus' followers need to ask God for help to live righteous lives.

Seventh petition: “Deliver us from [the] evil [one]”

## Persistence in Prayer

It is common in Luke for good lessons to be taught from bad examples (16:1-9; 18:1-8).

- 5] And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;  
6] For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?  
7] And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

- 8] I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

In contrast with the man who did not want to be bothered, God wants His people to pray to Him (11:9-10). So Jesus encouraged people to be persistent in prayer— not to change God's mind but to be steadfast in praying and to receive their needs (not greeds).

- 9] And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.  
10] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.  
11] If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?  
12] Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?  
13] If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

[Believers today need not pray for the Holy Spirit because this prayer of the disciples (for the Holy Spirit) was answered at Pentecost (Rom. 8:9).]

## The Major Rejection

The turning point. Cf. Matt. 12:22-30; Mark 3:20-27.

- 14] And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

In Luke the terms “demon” and “demons” occur 16 times and “evil spirit(s)” (“unclean spirit[s]” in κJV) occurs eight times.

Jesus always had authority over the demons—a sign of His messianic power (7:21; 13:32). The demons themselves recognized that authority (4:31-41; 8:28-31), and Jesus' enemies did too (11:14-26). Jesus gave others power over demons (9:1), and His authority over demons amazed the crowds (4:36; 9:42-43).

This, however, should have been a more impacting incident than we have the background to imagine: according to some traditions, in the established Jewish procedure for exorcism, the first step was to demand that the demon identify himself, thus, casting out one that had struck his host as “dumb,” was thus denied to anyone but the Messiah.

15] But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

This name given to *the prince of demons*, clearly Satan, originally meant “Lord of the Princes,” but had been corrupted to a pun denoting “Lord of the Flies” (2 Kings 1:1-3), one of the names for the Philistine god Baal.

(“Beelzebub” means “Lord of the Dwelling,” and ties in with Christ’s subsequent illustrations.)

The charge was that Jesus was possessed by Satan himself.

16] And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

A second group wanted Jesus to show **a sign from heaven**. They were probably not sincere in their request as Luke linked them with the former group and noted that they were testing Him.

17] But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth.

Jesus gave a twofold response:

**First**, it was illogical. He said it would be ridiculous for Satan to drive out his own demons, for then he would be weakening his position and kingdom.

18] If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

Satan is a real personage with a kingdom that is strong and united. (Cf. Eph 2:1-3; 6:10ff.)

19] And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

**Second**, Jesus pointed out the self-incriminating double standard of those who were accusing Him. If their followers drove out demons, they claimed it was done by the power of God.

20] But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

It was also an admission of His power. Since Jesus cast out demons, it too must be by God’s finger, that is, His power. Therefore the kingdom of God has come to you.

21] When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22] But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

Jesus had invaded Satan’s domain, destroyed his armor and weapons, and claimed his spoils (Col 2:15; John 12:31-33; 1 John 3:8).

The point of the parable is that Jesus is the stronger One, and therefore He has the right to divide up the spoils. In this case the spoils include formerly-demon-possessed people who no longer belonged to Satan.

He led “captivity captive” (Eph 4:8) and set the prisoners free (Luke 4:18).

23] He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

It is impossible to be neutral in this cosmic war (cf. 9:50).

24] When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

It is critical to invite God to dwell within...

25] And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26] Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

He was referring to the man who was formerly demon-possessed and was making him a symbol of everyone who was demon-possessed. It was vital that this man also accept what Jesus was saying about His being the Messiah, or he would end up in a condition worse than the first.

Matthew recorded that Jesus compared this situation to what would happen to the generation of people who were listening to Him (Matt. 12:45).

## The Call to Obedience

- 27] And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.
- 28] But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

This teaching is similar to that in 8:19-21.

Family relationships are not the most important things in life. A woman noted that it must have been wonderful to have been Jesus' mother. The whole nation took pride in the fact that they descended from Abraham (John 8:33-39).

Jesus pointed out that a physical relationship was unimportant compared with hearing and obeying the Word of God.

As Luke continues to emphasize, the Gospel is not limited to Israel but is for all who trust in Christ.

- 29] And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

(The Pharisees had asked Jesus for a sign (Matt. 12:38; Mark 8:11), which Luke did not mention.)

A sign was a confirming miracle, which showed that the spoken message was true. You would have thought the unique exorcism would have been more than sufficient!

- 30] For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

[This sign has been interpreted in at least two ways: Many say it was the physical appearance of Jonah, for perhaps his skin was bleached white by the sea monster's inner juices. However, nothing in the context hints at this.]

"The sign of Jonah" must have been the death, burial, and resurrection.

The people of Nineveh believed what Jonah preached, even if they had no physical evidence.

(This is what Peter preached at Pentecost (Acts 2:22ff); and the early church centered on Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:22; 3:15; 5:30-32; 13:32-33).)

- 31] The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

Jesus' words about the Queen of the South lend strength to this interpretation. The queen traveled a great distance to listen to Solomon's wisdom (1 Kings 10). She acted on what she heard, without any external confirmation.

- 32] The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

These were both *Gentile* examples! The point is clear: the generation that was listening to Jesus' words did not have as much faith as some Gentiles who listened to the words of God in previous eras.

- 33] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

No "twilight living" for Christians.

- 34] The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness.
- 35] Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.
- 36] If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

Three men in the Bible illustrate this truth: they began in the light and ended up in darkness because they were double-minded:

**Sampson** ended up as a blind slave in a dark dungeon because he yielded to the "lust of the flesh" (Judges 16);

**Lot** began as a pilgrim with his uncle Abraham, but ended as a drunk in a cave committing incest (Gen 19:30-38);

**King Saul** began as a humble leader but pride led him into a witch's cave (1 Sam. 28) and suicide on the field of battle (1 Sam. 31).

[We live in a culture that denies any distinctive between light and dark, right from wrong; “it’s all relative.”]

Jesus often taught His disciples through parables. Because they had been listening to Him they had light shining on them. Thus they should share that light (33).

When a person’s eyes (like lamps) react properly to light, he can function normally. Being receptive to Jesus’ teachings would show that they were full of light (34, 36) and were benefiting from His teachings.

37] And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

After Jesus’ discourse about the Pharisees, this is somewhat surprising...

38] And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

But, true to stereotype, he focused on externals rather than internals.

39] And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40] *Ye* fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?

41] But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

One indication that they were clean on the inside would be their willingness to give material things to the poor. This meant not that their act of giving would atone for their sins, but that it would show a proper relationship to the Law and to God.

### Three Woes on the Pharisees

42] But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Jesus next pronounced three woes (pronouncements of condemnation) on the Pharisees for disregarding justice and the love of God.

They were bound up in the ritual of the Law, tithing even small garden herbs. This made them hypocrites (12:1).

43] Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

They were filled with pride, loving the most important seats in the synagogues.

44] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them*.

And rather than guiding the people aright, they caused people who followed them to be contaminated, just as unmarked graves, which, when walked on, would defile a Jew without his knowing it (Num. 19:16).

(Prior to the holiday season which attracted visitors, it was customary to “whitewash” the tombs to highlight their location and thus avoid being inadvertently defiled.)

The Pharisees feared contamination from ritual uncleanness, but Jesus pointed out that their greed, pride, and wickedness contaminated the entire nation.

### Three Woes on the Lawyers

45] Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

46] And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

They placed burdens on others, which effectively kept them away from the way of knowledge.

47] Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48] Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

And they built tombs for the prophets, thus identifying with their forefathers who killed the prophets. Outwardly they seemed to honor the prophets, but God knew that inwardly they were rejecting the prophets.

- 49] Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:
- 50] That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;
- 51] From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

So they would be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets. The blood of Abel and the blood of Zechariah refers to the killing of innocent men involved in serving God:

Abel was the first innocent victim (Gen. 4:8);

Zechariah the priest (not the writing prophet; cf. Matt. 23:35) was the last martyr in the Old Testament (2Chron. 24:20-21; remember, Chronicles was last in the Hebrew Bible).

- 52] Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

Jesus' indictment became even more severe when He noted that not only were they themselves staying away from knowledge (Jesus' teaching) but were also taking away the key: i.e. they were keeping the knowledge from others (Luke 13:14).

- 53] And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:
- 54] Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

The Pharisees and lawyers ("Law experts") began to oppose Jesus fiercely. No surprise. It continues to this day...

They were constantly questioning Him, plotting against Him, and hoping to catch Him saying something wrong.

\* \* \*

## Luke 12

### Introduction

In this section (12:1-19:27), Jesus is teaching His followers in preparation of His rejection by the people.

The Disciples may not have realized it, but they were in great danger.

While there was emerging a great popularity, it was for the wrong reasons: miracles, personal needs, etc.

Meanwhile, the leadership was plotting to get Jesus out of the way. *This chapter seems to be particularly applicable to each of us today.*

In Luke 12, Luke recorded at least five warnings; four for us believers today; a fifth for a lost world...

- 1] In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

"Hypocrite" comes from a Greek word that means "an actor; one who plays a part."

We encounter them in every walk of life, not just the theater. How often do you discover the *real* self?

How do we keep hypocrisy out of *our* lives?

[1] By understanding what hypocrisy really is. Jesus compared it with leaven, something that every Jew associated with evil (Exo 12:15-20).

Paul likewise (1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:9).

It corrupts by puffing up. (Cf. 1 Cor. 4:6, 18-19; 5:2). Pride. The source of the original sin. It soon infects the whole person.

Once we start to "pretend," the worse it gets.

*"O what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."*  
–Sir Walter Scott

[2] Hypocrisy is foolish and futile (vv.2, 3). Why? Nothing can really be hidden. God's truth is a light which cannot be diffracted.

[3] We must understand what *causes* hypocrisy (vv.4-7). Jesus mentioned "fear" five times in these verses. Hypocrisy = the fear of man. More concern for reputation than character.

(In our culture we have finally disconnected character from destiny...)  
*The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.* -Proverbs 29:25

**The Remedy:** Forget about what people may say and do and *fear God alone!* The fear of God will conquer all other fears.

(Knowledge of God comes from Spirit-led study of His word; fear of God comes from ones devotional life... prayer and meditation...)

- 2] For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.
- 3] Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.
- 4] And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.
- 5] But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.
- 6] Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

The word for "farthing" is *assarion*, a Roman copper coin worth about 1/16 of a denarius (a day's wage), and used only here and in Matthew 10:29.

- 7] But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

[Do you know the number of hairs on *your* head? My inventory diminishes every time I take a shower...]

- 8] Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

Something else is involved: we must confess Christ openly! (Some of us are probably the best "undercover Christians" the world has ever

seen: the neighbors, the people at work, et al; no one ever even suspects our allegiance to our King!)

- 9] But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.
- 10] And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

Finally, we must depend upon the Holy Spirit (vv.10-12).

(In contrast to that, a number of Jesus' own brothers who initially rejected Him [John 7:5] later came to faith [Acts 1:14] and were forgiven even though they had spoken against the Son of Man.)

- 11] And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:
- 12] For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

God did not judge the nation immediately. In fact, Jesus prayed for them as He hung on the cross (Luke 23:34; cf. Act 3:17).

The ministry of the apostles and other believers was the last opportunity for the nation, and they failed by rejecting the witness of the Spirit (Acts 7:51).

This fulfilled during the first chapters of Acts when the message went out "to the Jew first..." (Rom 1:16; Acts 3:26; 13:46).

- 13] And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

Rabbis were supposed to settle legal matters.

- 14] And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

Jesus declined to get involved because He knew that no answer He would give would solve the real problem: the covetousness in the hearts of the two brothers. (The "you" in this verse is in the plural.)

- 15] And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Covetousness is a sin; and thus it feeds on itself and grows...

Mark Twain once defined “civilization” as “a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessities.”

[Paul’s admonition in 1 Tim. 6 does not only apply to the “rich and famous.”]

- 16] And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:
- 17] And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?
- 18] And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.
- 19] And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

There are perils to prosperity (Prov 30:7-9).

Wealth can choke the Word of God (Matt. 13:22), create snares and temptations (1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19), and, perhaps worst of all, give you a false sense of security.

People who are satisfied only with the things that money can buy are in great danger of losing the things that money *cannot* buy.

- 20] But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

This man had a false view of both life and death.  
[So does the world...]

On March 11, 1856, Henry David Thoreau wrote in his famed journal, “That man is richest whose pleasures are cheapest.” He also said, “A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.”

Time, not money, is ultimately the inelastic supply factor...

- 21] So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

“You can’t take it with you (?)” Not true. You can send it on ahead. (Cf. Luke 16, which we will take up a few sessions later.)

The tragedy of the farmer is not what he left behind, but what he now faces in eternity... (Cf. Matt 6:19-34).

What does it mean to be “rich toward God”?

Acknowledge gratefully, and recognize that every good thing comes from His hand.

To be rich toward God means spiritual enrichment, not just personal enjoyment.

Wealth can be enjoyed and employed, *if our purpose is to honor God* (1 Tim. 6:10ff).

## The Tyranny of Worry

The rich farmer worried because he had too much; but the disciples were probably tempted to worry because they did not have enough. They had given up all they had in order to follow Christ, and there were no contracts or guarantees. They were living by faith—and faith is always tested.

- 22] And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

“Take no thought...” = “be not anxious”, lit., “be not torn apart.” The English word “worry” comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word that means “to strangle.”

*Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; but it empties today of its strength.* —Corrie Ten Boom

Worry = a trickle of fear running through the mind, which eventually cuts a rut so deep it will drain all other thoughts away.

Worry = assuming a responsibility God did not intend for you to have.

Worry is like paying interest on a debt that never comes due.

- 23] The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.
- 24] Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

(Unlike sparrows, ravens were not sold for they are scavengers, and were ceremonially “unclean.”)

25] And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

Worry even blinds us to itself. We can get to the place that we actually think that worry accomplishes good things in our lives.

*Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.* -Psalm 39:5

26] If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

Worry is also *deceptive*: it gives us a false view of life, of itself, and of God. Worry convinces us that life is made up of what we eat and what we wear. We get so concerned about the *means* that we forget about the *end*, which is to glorify God.

27] Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28] If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

Again Jesus went to the natural realm (lilies and grass) to point out that God takes care of what belongs to Him.

Worry blinds us to the world around us and the way God cares for His creation. God makes the flowers beautiful and feeds the (unclean) ravens who neither sow nor reap.

29] And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

“Doubtful mind” = “to be held in suspense”; as of a ship being tossed in a storm.

30] For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

Worry is also *deformative*: it can keep us from growing and makes us like the unsaved in the world. It is unchristian, a poor witness, and a sin:

*...or whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*  
-Rom 14:23

Jesus is not suggesting that we sit around and let God feed us; the birds themselves work hard to stay alive.

Rather, He encourages us to trust Him and cooperate with Him in using the abilities and opportunities that He gives us (2 Thess 3:6-15).

31] But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32] Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33] Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

(Luke later came back to this subject in Chapters 16 and 19.) This is also what the early church did (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37).

34] For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

What is your most important *Stewardship*?

Your career? Your family? Your portfolio?

Your Heart!

How do we win over worry?

1) Realize that *God knows our needs*. We can trust Him to meet them. (Cf. Rom 8:32)

2) Strive for the *Divine viewpoint*. His pleasures and our treasures must go together. If our hearts are fixed on the things of earth, we will always worry.

3) We need to “hang loose” of the world's goods (Phil. 4:6-9; Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35). It is not wrong to own things so long as the things don't own us.

## The Call to Diligence

And yet, we are also called to diligence. While we are not be worried about the present, we need to watchful about the future.

The best way to conquer hypocrisy, covetousness, and worry *is to look for the Lord's return*.



- 35] Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;  
 36] And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

Jewish wedding analogy: The bridegroom's servants need for readiness...

- 37] Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

[The Master will serve the servants!?...]

- 38] And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

The second watch was from 9 P.M. to midnight, and the third watch was from midnight to 3 A.M.

- 39] And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

The attitude we must have toward the Second Coming is not to be caught by surprise: it will come unannounced and unexpected (1 Thess 5:2; Matt 24:43; Rev 16:15).

Will *you* be ready?

- 40] Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

This would seem to rebut a "post-tribulational" view: the Second Coming arrives *after* a detailed seven-year scenario.

"*Sad day, Sad day; Jesus Christ cannot come today.*" –Donald Gray Barnhouse (of those that believe Jesus will come for His own at the end of the "70<sup>th</sup> Week").

- 41] Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

In this section Jesus told two parables (vv.35-40 and 42-48), which are

joined by this question by Peter (v. 41). The second parable expands and explains the first.

- 42] And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

We are to be *working*.

Once a believer starts to think that his Master is *not* coming, his life begins to deteriorate.

- 43] Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.  
 44] Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.  
 45] But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;  
 46] The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers ["unfaithful"].

[Whoops! Is your "eschatological view" *that* important?]

What is *your* Blessed Hope?

This verse does not necessarily imply a loss of salvation: "Cut him asunder" means "cut him off; separate him"; "Unbelievers" can be translated "unfaithful."

The unfaithful will lose their rewards (1 Cor 3:13-15).

Salvation depends entirely on His completed works, not ours.

- 47] And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.  
 48] But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

God will be fair.

However, we are called to know His will (Rom 12:1, 2; Col 1:9); and to *grow* in our knowledge of Him (2 Pet 3:18).

49] I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

We in a war; and we are aliens in enemy territory.

Just as Joshua in the conquest of Canaan, we are facing opposition and conflict.

To Jews, fire was a symbol of judgment and our Lord's coming into this world did bring judgment (John 9:39-41).

50] But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

The Lord's "baptism" refers to His suffering and death (Psa 42:7, Jonah 2:3; CF. Luke 11:29-30).

51] Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

Contradicts Luke 2:14?

He does give peace to those who trust Him (Rom 5:1), but a confession of faith becomes a declaration of war among family and friends.

Division: John 7:12, 43; 9:16; 10:19

*"Think not that I come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace but a sword."* -Cf. Matthew 10:34

52] For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53] The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Cf. *Abandonment Theology - The Clergy and the Decline of American Christianity* by John Chalfant

## Final Warning: (1) Discernment

54] And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55] And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56] Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

"The signs of the times."

57] Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

We can map the genome, but we can't discern our genetic defect: sin. We know how to travel in space, but not how to get to heaven.

## (2) Diligence

58] When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

We know how to avoid prison; but not how to avoid hell. Even in the earthly sphere it makes sense to try hard to be reconciled with an opponent—even on the way to the magistrate—in order to avoid being thrown into prison and having to pay the last penny. How much more important it is to "be reconciled" when the opponent is God!

59] I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

(The word for "mite" (or penny) is *leptos*, used only here and in Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2. It was a Jewish copper coin worth about 1/8 of a cent.)

All will be held accountable.

If we knew a storm was coming, we would prepare for it.

*"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."*  
-2 Corinthians 6:2

\* \* \*

## Luke 13

### Introduction

A Jewish student at a Yeshiva (a rabbinical school) asked his teacher, “Rabbi why is it that when I ask you a question, you always reply by asking me another question?”

The Rabbi replied, “Why shouldn’t I?”

*“To question a wise man is the beginning of wisdom.”*  
-German proverb

As Jesus continues on His journey to Jerusalem, He encountered four questions that had to be answered.

## Luke 13

- 1] There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Jesus taught the crowds that calamity can happen to anyone because all are human. Jesus cited two common instances about destruction. The first concerned some Galileans who were killed by Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, while they were offering sacrifices.

Pilate did not get along with the Jews and was insensitive to their religious practices. For example, he brought the official Roman ensigns into Jerusalem and infuriated the Jews who resented having Caesar’s image in the Holy City. He then threatened to kill the protestors only to discover that they were willing to die! Seeing their determination, the governor relented and returned the ensigns to Caesarea, which was the Roman capital in the region.

The tragedy mentioned in verse 1 may have taken place when Pilate appropriated funds from the Temple treasury to help finance an aqueduct. A large crowd of angry Jews gathered in protest; so Pilate had soldiers *in civilian clothes* mingle with the mob. Using concealed weapons, the soldiers killed a number of innocent and unarmed Jews. This intensified the growing tensions.

(When visiting Caesarea, you can view a significant segment of this aqueduct; it still has a commemorative stone plaque acknowledging the 12<sup>th</sup> Legion.)

### The Paradoxical Situation

The raising of this issue may have been a form of entrapment: anything that Jesus said about Pilate would certainly precede Him to Jerusalem and give the Jewish leaders an excuse to accuse Him.

On the other hand, if He ignored the issue, they would accuse Him of being pro-Roman and disloyal to the people.

- 2] And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

[**Paranthetical Insert:**]

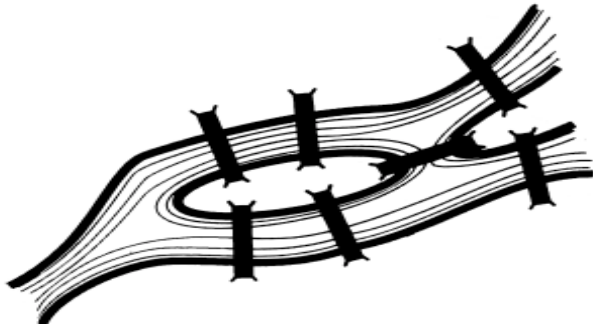
### Paradox Resolution

This is a principal technique of paradox resolution. The classic paradox of predestination and free will is resolved by stepping out above the constraints of the time domain, which is a constraint of our *physical* universe, etc.

Euler’s *Seven Bridges of Koenigsberg* is another example. Euler wrote in 1735,

*“In the town of Koenigsberg is an island called Kneiphof, with two branches of the river Pregel flowing around it. There are seven bridges crossing the two branches. The question is whether a person can plan a walk in such a way that he will cross each of the bridges once but not more than once.”*<sup>1</sup>

[Diagram of *The Seven Bridges of Koenigsberg*, next page:]



The solution to this classic problem relies on not accepting the limits we instinctively impose on the problem ourselves. The solution involves thinking one level higher: in this case, taking a path *around the source* of the river.

One of the basic techniques of paradox resolution is to ascend “up a level” and challenge the implied (or inferred) limits, constraints, and presumptions which we ourselves are imposing upon a problem.

(This is exactly how Dr. Albert Einstein came to recognize that we live in more than three dimensions. This is the same approach which led to the Kaluza-Klein and the Yang-Mills models of hyperspaces, which have expanded our understanding of the nature of the universe: by recognizing that additional dimensions may be involved and stepping “up” a level.)

\* \* \*

Jesus raised the issue to a higher level and avoided the politics completely. Instead of discussing *Pilate’s* sins, He dealt with the sins of the people questioning Him. He answered their question by asking a question.

3] I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Jesus made it clear that human tragedies are not always divine punishments and that it is wrong for us to assume so.

Job’s “friends” made this mistake when they assumed that Job’s afflictions were evidence that he was a sinner. If we take that approach

to tragedy we will have a hard time explaining the sufferings of the prophets and apostles...*and even those of our Lord Himself!*

This point is brought out in verses 3 and 5—unless you repent, you too will all perish. Death is the common denominator for everyone. Only repentance can bring life as people prepare to enter the kingdom.

4] Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

The similar issue concerned 18 seemingly innocent bystanders in Siloam who were killed when a tower fell on them.

Jesus’ point was that being killed or not being killed is no measure of a person’s unrighteousness or righteousness. Anyone can be killed. Only God’s grace causes *any* to live.

Warren Wiersbe says he asked a friend what the death rate was in his city, and he replied, “One apiece.” Then added, “People are dying who never died before.”

- 5] I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.
- 6] He spake also this parable; A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.
- 7] Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

According to Lev 19:23-25, fruit from a newly planted tree was not to be eaten for the first three years, and the fruit of the fourth year belonged to the Lord. This farmer had waited *seven years*, so no wonder he wanted to cut it down!

- 8] And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it*:
- 9] And if it bear fruit, *well*: and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

This parable has an application to both individuals and to the nation Israel.

God is gracious and long-suffering toward people (2 Peter 3:9) and does more than enough to encourage us to repent and bear fruit (Matt 3:7-10; 7:15-21; Luke 8:15). He has every right to cut us down, but in His mercy

He has spared us. Yet we must not presume upon the kindness and longsuffering of the Lord, for the day of reckoning will finally come.

A visible change must be seen in the life of one who claims to trust the Messiah. If there is no visible change that person, like the figless fig tree, is judged.

However, the tree also suggests to us God's special goodness to Israel (Isa 5:1-7; Rom 9:1-5).

God waited three years during the Lord's earthly ministry, but the nation did not bear fruit. He then waited 38 years more before He allowed the Roman armies to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple.

And during those 38 years, the Church gave to the nation a powerful witness of the Gospel message.

Finally, the tree was cut down.

(It was also 38 years that Israel wandered in the wilderness after their failure at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 13 & 14; Deut 2:14).

It is significant that the parable was left "open ended." The listeners had to supply their own conclusion. Did the tree finally bear fruit? Or was it cut down?

The question is not "What happened to the tree?" but "What will happen to *me*?"

Are *you* bearing fruit?

10] And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

Jesus illustrated His teaching by healing a woman on a Sabbath. This episode is the last time in the Gospel of Luke Jesus taught in a synagogue.

11] And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*.

There she was *in the synagogue*. (If I had been crippled for 18 years, I wonder if I would have been faithful to worship God week after week in the synagogue?)

Surely she had prayed and asked for help and yet was not delivered. However, God's ostensible unconcern did not cause her to become bitter or resentful. There she was, in the synagogue.

12] And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

He called her to Him. It must have seemed heartless to expose her handicap publicly, but He knew what He would do.

13] And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

Here was a graphic example of Jesus' touch, bringing the woman to a position of uprightness. Jesus healed her by His words ("Woman, you are set free from your infirmity...") and by touching her. Immediately she straightened up and praised God. This act of praising God was the proper response to the work of Jesus (2:20; 5:25-26; 7:16; 17:15; 18:43; 23:47). It showed that people were understanding His mission.

Not only does Satan bow people down, but so does sin (Psa 38:6), sorrow (Psa 42:5) and suffering (Psa 44:25). Jesus is the only one who can set the prisoner free.

Without denying the historicity of the event, there may also be a symbolic value in Luke's placing this miracle at this point in the narrative.

It was Jesus' mission among the people of the nation to loose them from crippling influences and bring them to uprightness.

14] And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

In contrast to the proper response which the woman evidenced, the synagogue ruler was indignant because Jesus had not followed the Law as that ruler interpreted it. He appealed to the crowd to reject Jesus' miracle. This attitude supports what Jesus had already said about religious leaders keeping others from entering the kingdom (11:52).

The bondage of the ruler of the synagogue was worse than that of the woman. Her bondage was limited to her body; his had shackled his mind and heart.

- 15] The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

The term “hypocrites” is extremely important in the narrative. Toward the beginning of this section (12:54-13:21) Jesus had called the crowds and the leaders of the people “hypocrites” (12:56). Here at the end of the section He again called them “hypocrites” (13:15). Jesus’ point was that the crowds and the leaders were not really interested in what God could and would do in their lives.

- 16] And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

Jesus pointed out that a person is much more important than an animal, and His enemies saw nothing wrong in helping their animals on the Sabbath (14:5). The total hypocrisy and foolishness of the thinking of the religious leaders was obvious.

Luke described the woman as one who had been crippled by a spirit for 18 years and “bound” by “Satan.” Note the repetition of the word “loose” (vv.12, 1-16).

Jesus addressed the woman as “a daughter of Abraham,” referring to her spiritual condition and not her physical birth (Luke 16:22; 19:9; Gal 3:7).

If she was converted *before* Jesus healed her, she is the only believer in the New Testament who was physically afflicted because of a demonic attack. (We are not sure what Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” was or how Satan used it to buffet Paul. Cf. 2 Cor 12.)

- 17] And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

As a result Jesus’ opponents were humiliated but the crowds were delighted.

- 18] Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

Cf. Matt 13. God’s kingdom vs. Satan’s kingdom.

- 19] It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

A mustard seed produces a shrub, not a tree. This one was a monstrosity.

A tree represents a great kingdom (Cf. Dan 4:20-22; Eze 17:22-24; 31:3-9).

Fowls of the air represent ministers of the evil one (Matt 13:19).

- 20] And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?  
21] It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Leaven had already been identified as evil (12:1). Cf. Ex 12:14-20.

Three measures of meal (in both Arab and Jewish cultures) since the three visitors to Abraham in Genesis 18 (v.6).

- 22] And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

*The events recorded in John 9 & 10 fit between verses 21 & 22. In John 10:40-42, Jesus left Judea and went east of the Jordan into Perea. The events in Luke 13:22 - 17:10 took place in Perea as the Lord gradually moves toward Jerusalem.*

- 23] Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,  
24] Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

As with the question about Pilate, Jesus immediately made the matter personal. “The question is not how many will be saved, but whether or not *you* will be saved!”

“Many will seek to enter in and shall not be able.” Why? The parable tells us why:

- 25] When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:  
26] Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.  
27] But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity.

28] There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

Many who were invited waited too long to respond. Grim words. (Cf. 14:15-24; Matt 22:1-14.)

Why did they wait so long?

**Salvation is not easy:** narrow gate; narrow way (v.24. Cf 9:23ff). The world's crown is on the easy way that leads to destruction (Matt 7:13-14). If your gate is wide and crowded, you've got the wrong gate!

**False sense of security:** they enjoyed His fellowship, but they never had placed their trust in Him. God had given the nation many privileges and opportunities, but they wasted them (10:13-16). Many who think they are saved, aren't (Matt 7:21-24).

**Pride:** they would not humble themselves before God (See v.30 note).

29] And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

People coming from the four corners of the world represent various population groups. Those listening to Jesus' words should not have been surprised by this teaching because the prophets had often said the same thing. However, Jews in Jesus' day believed that Gentiles were inferior to them.

When Jesus had begun His ministry in Nazareth, His teaching of Gentile inclusion had so maddened the crowd that they tried to kill Him (4:13-30).

30] And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

Dependence on a reverence for tradition cannot save. Jesus saw them as "workers of iniquity," not doers of righteousness (Isa 64:4; Titus 1:16).

Gentiles would come and take their place (Matt 21:43).

These remarks were revolutionary to Jesus' hearers. Most of them assumed that because they were physically related to Abraham they would naturally enter into the promised kingdom. However, His next words were even more revolutionary—in fact devastating—to those

who assumed that *only* the Jewish nation would be involved in the kingdom.

31] The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

Jesus was in Perea, which was ruled by Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. The Pharisees wanted to get Jesus back into Judea where the religious leaders could watch Him and ultimately trap Him. So they tried to frighten Him away.

Throughout Luke, the Pharisees are presented in a negative light.

Herod had been perplexed by our Lord's ministry and was afraid that John the Baptist, whom he had murdered, had come back from the dead (9:7-9).

In fact, at one point, Herod wanted to meet Jesus so he could see Him perform a miracle (23:8)!

With Herod's heart getting harder, the warning the Pharisees gave was undoubtedly true or Jesus would not have answered as He did.

32] And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.

In response to the warning from some Pharisees, Jesus said that He had to reach Jerusalem because He was appointed to die there (1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8).

He was on a divine timetable (John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1). Even His enemies would help fulfill the will of God (Acts 2:23; 3:13-18).

"Fox": (not held in high regard by Jews: Neh 4:3). Known for its cunning, foxes hunt at night; Jesus walked in the light (John 11:9-10; 9:4).

33] Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

(This parallels what He said to them in Luke 11:47-51.) They not only rejected God's loving invitation, they even killed the servants who brought it!

34] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

(Cf. Matt. 23:37-39). A sob of anguish, not anger.

The hen gathers her chicks when she sees danger is coming.

(Some suggest that the “wings” also suggest the wings of the cherubim in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle (Ex 25:20; Ruth 2:12; Ps 36:7-8; 61:4)).

35] Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

His entire ministry up to this point had been to offer the kingdom to the nation. But since the nation, which had even killed the prophets, had rejected His words, He would now reject them. Jesus stated, Your house is left to you desolate (ἀφιῆται, *aphietai* “abandoned”).

“House” refers both to the family of Jacob (Israel) and to the Temple (“the house of God”). Both would be destroyed and scattered. (Cf. Dan 9:26. We will discuss in detail when we get to Luke 19.)

Jesus noted (quoting Ps. 118:26) that the people of the city would not see Him again till they said that He was the Messiah. The crowd did quote this verse when Jesus entered the city in His Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:38), but their religious leaders disapproved.

The nation has, indeed, been left desolate. The nation has no king nor priest, not temple or sacrifice (Hosea 3:4, 5).

But the nation has not been forsaken (Rom 11:1ff). Its blindness will be lifted when “the fulness of the Gentiles” has come in (Rom 11:45).

Ultimately this truth will be proclaimed when Jesus comes again and enters the city as the millennial Ruler.

\* \* \*

1. Sherman K. Stein, *Mathematics: The Man-made Universe*, W. H. Freeman and Company, London, 1963, p.105.

## Luke 14

### Introduction

This first section continues the thought of 13:22-35 but explains it from another perspective. Rather than the excluded ones being the main subject, the ones *included* in the kingdom are now discussed.

Contrary to His hearers’ expectations, Jewish outcasts and Gentiles will make up a large portion of the kingdom’s population.

1] And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

Sabbath Day hospitality was an important part of Jewish life and it was not unusual to receive an invitation to a home for a meal after the weekly synagogue service. But this was an attempt to trap Him. But Jesus was never caught off guard.

[“They” are always watching. *You* are always on parade, too. We should begin each day with prayer that the day’s opportunities—seen and unseen—glorify Him.]

Jesus’ severe denunciation of the Pharisees and scribes (11:39-52) only provoked them to retaliation and they continually plotted against Him.

2] And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

Dropsy is a condition of excess fluid in the tissues of the body, caused perhaps by a type of cancer or possibly liver, kidney, or heart problems.

The man was probably invited to the Pharisee’s house as bait in a set up.

If Jesus ignored the afflicted man, He was without compassion. If He healed him, He was openly violating the Sabbath and they could accuse Him.

Remember, He had already “violated” their Sabbath traditions on (at least) six prior occasions:

Demoniac, in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-27);

Peter’s mother-in-law, in Capernaum (Mark 1:29-31);



Impotent man, in Jerusalem (John 5:1-9);  
Man with withered hand (Mark 3:1-6);  
Woman bowed together (Luke 13:10-17);  
Man born blind (John 9:1-14);  
...as well as this man with dropsy here.

In all of these instances, Jesus showed that He placed human need above mere external ceremonial observance of the Sabbath. He never did or said anything to suggest that He intended to take away from man the privileges afforded by such a day of rest.

- 3] And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

Jesus immediately took the initiative and turned the tables on them: He asked the host and other guests whether it would be lawful to heal the man on the Sabbath. The dilemma was now theirs!

Apparently Jesus' question disarmed the crowd, for all of them remained silent.

- 4] And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

*In any case, they couldn't heal anybody on any day and everybody knew it.*

- 5] And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

There is a big difference between protecting God's truth and promoting man's traditions.

Are animals more important than people? The current "ecological" emphasis is a small step from paganism and certainly a large step from what our Creator was teaching.

Many people have more affection for their pets than any concern for a lost world.

- 6] And they could not answer him again to these things.

Jesus was setting the stage for the discussion to follow concerning those who were considered ceremonially unclean and therefore unable to enter the kingdom.

## False Popularity

People like to feel important, and this form of pride can be a stumbling block. Many people—particularly in large organizations—measure their "status" by the inches of overhang on their desk; the gigabytes on their hard drive; the protocols on their cellular phone; their seating assignment in the executive dining room...

- 7] And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,  
8] When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

...the head table; the closest chair; etc.

- 9] And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.  
10] But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

Looking around, Jesus noticed how the guests picked the places of honor. The closer a person was to the host, the greater was that guest's position of honor. [In diplomatic circles, proper place settings can be a very serious problem....]

As people entered the room in the Pharisee's house where the table was spread, they must have scrambled for seats at the head of the table. The parable Jesus then told was designed to get them to think about spiritual realities in relation to the kingdom message He had been preaching.

- 11] For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

This recalls Jesus' earlier statement that those who are last will be first and those who are first will be last (13:30).

[Remember, Judas was sitting next to Jesus...]

*"Try not to become a man of success, but try to become a man of value."*  
—Albert Einstein

Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men:

*For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.* -Proverbs 25:6,7

## False Hospitality

Evidences of pride and selfishness; buying recognition...

- 12] Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

Jesus warns us against entertaining *only* family and friends exclusively.

- 13] But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

This would show that he was ministering to them for the Lord's sake and not his own (Matt. 6:1-18; James 1:26-27). He would be laying up for himself treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20) and would be becoming rich toward God (Luke 12:21).

Inviting the outcasts would not make the man righteous; it would testify that he was in a righteous standing before God.

- 14] And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

[If you're making a feast, call *me*. I promise not to recompense thee; you will be recompensed at the resurrection...]

You can't get your reward twice: Matt 6:1-18.

## False Security

- 15] And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Jewish people pictured their future kingdom as a great feast with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets as honored guests (Luke 13:38; Isa 25:6).

Cf. Matt. 22:1-10.

- 16] Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

This person was assuming that he and the other people present would all be present in the kingdom. Jesus took the opportunity to use the feast motif to explain that many of the people there would *not* be present in God's kingdom. In their places would be many outcasts and Gentiles.

- 17] And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

They had already been bidden: a host had to know how many guests were coming so that he could butcher the right amount of animals and prepare sufficient food. Just before the feast was to begin, the host sent his servants to each of the invited guests to tell them that the banquet was ready (Cf. Esther 5:8; 6:14). The invited guests had already agreed to attend; they were expected.

They insulted the host by feeble excuses to defend their change in plans...

- 18] And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

Could he have *purchased* a piece of ground without seeing it first?

- 19] And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

Would he have purchased *10* oxen without first testing them?

- 20] And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

Jewish weddings were never surprises. (Having a new wife could have kept the man from the battlefield (Deut 24:5) but not from a banquet.)

- 21] So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

The three invited guests expected to be reinvited in the future, but that invitation would never come.

Jesus was referring to those members of the Jewish community who were considered inferior and ceremonially unclean as was the man with dropsy He had just healed (2-4). These were the kind of people Jesus came to save.

- 22] And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.  
23] And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

These people outside the city were probably Gentiles, those outside the covenant community.

Jesus had instructed them,  
*“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*  
-Acts 1:8

In Acts 8, the door was opened to Samaritans;  
In Acts 10, to the Gentiles.

- 24] For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

The host then stated that none of the originally invited guests would get a taste of his banquet.

This parable at a banquet about another banquet reinforced His previous teaching that He would abandon Jerusalem (13:34-35). The people who originally had been offered a share of the kingdom had rejected it, so now the message was going out to others including Gentiles.

The excuses seemed good to those who gave them, but they were inadequate for refusing Jesus' kingdom offer. Nothing was so important as accepting His offer of the kingdom, for one's entire destiny rests on his response to that offer.

We rarely think of God as expressing anger against those who reject His gracious invitations, but passages like Isaiah 55:6:

*Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near...* and Proverbs 1:24-33...

- 24) Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;  
25) But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:  
26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;  
27) When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.  
28) Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:  
29) For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:  
30) They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.  
31) Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.  
32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.  
33) But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

These give a solemn warning that we should not treat His calls lightly.

People today make the same mistake: they delay in responding and settle for the second best. The excuse makers were viewed as successful people in the eyes of their friends—but failed to deal with their eternity.

Our host's door is still open:

*“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”* -Revelation 22:17

## Discipleship

This next section has a different focus. There appears to be a distinct difference between salvation and discipleship. Salvation is available to all who will come by faith. Discipleship is for believers willing to pay the price. We need to discern the distinctive differences between those that are saved and those who are the *metachoi*, the partakers, the apprentices, the disciples.

“Disciple” is a learner, one who attaches himself to a teacher; an apprentice. (264 times in the Gospels and Acts: 24 x 11.)

The sanctity of commitment...and the need to make one! A serious one.

Each of us has a “Jerusalem,” a “Gethsemane,” or a “Golgotha,” appointed for us in the will of God.

Like our Savior, we must set *our* face “like a flint:”

*For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* -Isa 50:7

*And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.* -Luke 9:53

We must do what God has called us to do. It may not be easy, but it will bring joy to us and glory to God.

25] And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

The setting has now changed: large crowds were traveling with Jesus.

Jesus intended to impress on the people their need to examine their resolve to follow Him. He deliberately thinned out the ranks.

It is one thing to “fill the house.” It is another to find those who are really willing to pay the price of discipleship.

(Cf. Gideon: 32,000 to 300!)

He was on His way to die on the cross. Ultimately everyone did desert Him when He was alone in the garden and then arrested and put on trial.

26] If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

To begin with, we must love Christ *supremely*, even more than our own flesh and blood. The word “hate” does not suggest positive antagonism but rather to “love less” (Cf. Gen 29:30-31; Mal 1:2-3; Matt 10:37).

Literally “hating” one’s family would have been a violation of the Law.

Since Jesus on several occasions admonished others to fulfill the Law, He must not have meant here that one should literally hate his family. The

stress here is on the priority of love (Matt. 10:37). One’s loyalty to Jesus must come *before* his loyalty to his family or even to life itself.

Indeed, those who follow Jesus against their families’ desires are often thought of as “hating their families.”

27] And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Strange to mention the cross already...

When the Roman Empire crucified a criminal or captive, the victim was often forced to carry his cross part of the way to the crucifixion site.

Carrying his cross through the heart of the city was supposed to be a tacit admission that the Roman Empire was correct in the sentence of death imposed on him, an admission that Rome was right and he was wrong.

So when Jesus enjoined His followers to carry their crosses and follow Him, He was referring to a public display before others that Jesus was right and that the disciples were following Him even to their deaths. This is exactly what the religious leaders refused to do.

What does it mean “to carry the cross”? It means daily *identification* with Christ in shame, suffering, and surrender to God’s will. It means death to self, to our own plans and ambitions, and a willingness to serve Him as He directs (Joh 12:23-28).

*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*  
-Romans 8:17

*And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are **partakers of the sufferings**, so shall ye be also of the consolation.*  
-2 Corinthians 1:7

Partakers = *koinwnoj koinonos*: partakers, partners, intimate companions.

Using three illustrations, Jesus then taught that discipleship must include planning and sacrifice.

28] For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

Before a person begins to build, he should be sure he will be able to pay the full cost of the project.

Planning is not an “unchristian” activity. Many people misunderstand Jesus’ injunction,

*“Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take thought of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”* -Matt 6:34

We are to be *anxious for nothing*... Phil. 4:6. But competent stewardship requires planning (“the futurity of today’s decisions.”)

[In many organizations, planning is “the careful rationalization of accidental events.”]

The point here is that Jesus’ followers must also be sure they are willing to pay the full price of discipleship. Too many—especially in today’s “evangelical community”—are being deceived into thinking that quick, superficial, response to an altar call is all that is required...

29] Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30] Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Finishing well is the essential thing. Like Paul, we would like to declare, *“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”* -Acts 20:24

or...

*“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”* -2 Tim 4:7

31] Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32] Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

The king should be willing to sacrifice a desired victory if he senses he is unable to win.

33] So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

This principle of sacrifice is also important in the realm of discipleship: *one must be willing to give up everything for Jesus*. The people who were following Jesus throughout the countryside of Israel had done that. They had given up possessions and employment, knowing that the message Jesus was proclaiming was the most important thing on earth.

G. Campbell Morgan has an interesting view of the tower builder and the king: that they represent not the believer but Jesus Christ. He is the One who must “count the cost” and determine whether we are the kind of material He can use to build the church and battle the enemy. He cannot get the job done with half-hearted followers who will not pay the price.

34] Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

Jesus had already told His disciples that they were “the salt of the earth” (Matt 5:13).

Salt was a valued item in that day: in fact, part of a soldier’s pay was given in salt. (The words salt and salary are thus related. Hence the saying, “He is not worth his salt.”)

- 1) Salt was a **preservative**.
- 2) Salt was a **purifying agent**; an antiseptic that makes things cleaner; it helps kill infection.
- 3) Salt **adds flavor** to things;
- 4) Salt **makes people thirsty**.

So are we to be! Each of these qualities, for the kingdom.

35] It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Our modern salt is pure sodium chloride and does not lose its flavor, but natural salt in that day was impure and could lose its flavor, especially if it came in contact with earth.

Jesus climaxed His teaching on discipleship by proclaiming that salt is good only as long as it contains the characteristics of saltiness. If it loses its saltiness, it has no value at all and is thrown out into the streets and walked on. The same is true of disciples. They must contain the characteristics of discipleship—planning and willing sacrifice—or they are of no value at all.

Discipleship is serious business: unqualified devotion and commitment.

## Today's Church: Status Report

Look at *Christian Retailing* magazine.

Watch the “Church Growth” movements.

Notice the *market research* to make sure that the Church is maintaining *relevancy* to today's attendees...

This is called, “Rule of the People.” Cf. Laodicea.

All seven churches receiving Jesus' letters (Revelation 2, and 3) were *surprised!*

These seven letters were local, but they were also admonitory, homiletic, and prophetic. (See our briefing pack on *Letters to the Seven Churches*, or our *Expositional Commentary on Revelation* for one of the most important studies to be undertaken.)

\* \* \*

## Luke 15

### Introduction

Jesus confronted the religious leaders by teaching again that some who were considered to be hopeless and sinners will be in the kingdom.

Here are perhaps three of the best known of Jesus' parables—

The Lost Sheep,

The Lost Coin,

The Prodigal Son.

All three parables teach the same message—that God is vitally concerned with the repentance of sinners. But the third story goes beyond the others, applying that truth to the situation in which Jesus found Himself—being accepted by the outcasts of society while being rejected by the religious leaders.

Three words summarize this chapter:

Lost,

Found,

Rejoice!

- 1] Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.
- 2] And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

The opposition to Jesus was once again, as almost always in Luke, the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law.

Jesus spoke these parables to answer the accusations of the Pharisees and scribes who were scandalized at His behavior: He not only welcomed these outcasts, He was *eating* with them. They did not understand that the Son of Man had “come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10).

Even more, they were blind to the fact that *they themselves were among the lost!*

## The Lost Sheep

- 3] And he spake this parable unto them, saying,
- 4] What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

Sheep have a tendency to go astray: they need a shepherd. (Isa 53:6; 1 Pet 2:25).

(A shepherd had to pay for any lost unless he could prove it was killed by a predator (Cf. Gen 31:38-39; Ex 22:10-13; Amos 3:12)).

- 5] And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.
- 6] And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

- 7] I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Jesus was not saying the other 99 sheep were not important. Instead, He was emphasizing that the one sheep not in the fold corresponded with the sinners with whom Jesus was eating (vv.1-2). The 99 righteous persons refer to the Pharisees who *thought* themselves righteous and therefore in no need of repentance.

## The Lost Coin

- 8] Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

This is the same message as the first but it emphasizes the thoroughness of the search. The woman continued to sweep the house and search carefully until she found the coin which was a thing of great value.

A *drachma*, a Greek silver coin referred to only here in the New Testament, equaled about a day's wages. The point would have been clear to Jesus' listeners: the sinners with whom He was associating were extremely valuable to God. (Cf. similar wording in vv.6, 9.)

- 9] And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.  
10] Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Jesus shocked His audience: God actually searches for lost sinners! No wonder the Pharisees and scribes were offended: there was no place for a legalistic theology for a God like that. They had forgotten that God had sought out Adam and Eve when they had sinned and attempted to hide from God (Gen 3:8-9). God was like a father who pitied His wayward children (Ps 103:8-14).

## The Prodigal Son

(This should really be called "The Parable of the Loving Father"; it is more about Him than the wayward son...)

- 11] And he said, A certain man had two sons:

The contrast between his sons is one of the points of the parable.

- 12] And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

He requested an unusual thing when he asked his father to give him his share of the estate. Normally an estate was not divided and given to the heirs until the father could no longer manage it well. This father acquiesced to his son's demand and gave him his share of the inheritance.

(This would approximate 1/3; the eldest son got a double portion (Deut 21:17)).

- 13] And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

The younger son took that wealth, went far away, and squandered it in wild living, involving himself presumably, as his older brother said, with prostitutes (v.30).

Thomas Huxley said, "A man's worst difficulties begin when he is able to do as he likes."

(You see, the errands your wife gives you on the weekends are for your own good...)

We are always heading for trouble when we value...  
things more than people;  
pleasure more than duty;  
distant scenes more than the blessings of home.

The sheep was lost through foolishness;  
the coin through carelessness;  
the son was lost because of wilfulness.

The hearers immediately would have begun to understand the point of the story. Jesus had been criticized for associating with sinners. The sinners were considered people who were far away from God, squandering their lives in riotous living.

(In contrast with the younger son, the older son continued to remain with the father and did not engage in such practices.)

- 14] And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.
- 15] And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

A famine occurred and the second son ran out of money so that he had to work for a foreigner feeding pigs, something detestable to a Jew.

Perhaps the far country was east of the Sea of Galilee where Gentiles tended pigs (8:26-37). In his hunger he longed for the pods—the food he fed the pigs. As a Jew, he could have stooped any lower. The pods were probably carob pods, from tall evergreen carob trees.

He was forced to do for a stranger what he would not do for his own father.

- 16] And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

There is a contradiction in the nature of man. Students of Shakespeare often contrast two quotations that illuminate this contrast:

*“What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving, how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god!”*  
*Hamlet, Act II, Scene 2*

*“When he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast.”*  
*The Merchant of Venice, Act I, Scene 2*

- 17] And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

In this low condition, he came to his senses. He decided to go back to his father and work for him. Surely he would be better off to work for his father than for a foreigner.

- 18] I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

Had he stopped there he would only have experienced regret and remorse; but true repentance involves *action* and commitment: “I will

arise... and go...” Our resolutions may be noble, but we must *act* upon them.

- 19] And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

He fully expected to be hired by his father as a servant, not to be taken back as his son.

- 20] And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

The father had been waiting for his son to return... The father *ran to him*, and hugged and kissed him.

- 21] And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

The son had brought disgrace to his family and village and should have been stoned to death (Deut 21:18-21).

- 22] But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

The father would not even listen to all of the young son’s rehearsed speech. Instead the father had his servants prepare a banquet to celebrate the son’s return. He gave the son a new position (with a robe, a ring – emblem of *sonship* – and sandals). (Cf. Gen 41:42, Pharaoh establishing Joseph; Isa 61:10, our garments of salvation; and 2 Cor 5:21).

(Servants did not wear rings or expensive garments.)

Cf. 103:10-14.

Jesus intentionally used the banquet motif again. He had previously spoken of a banquet to symbolize the coming kingdom (13:29; 14:15-24).

Jesus’ hearers would have easily realized the significance of this feast.

Sinners (whom the young son symbolized) were entering into the kingdom because they were coming to God. They believed they needed to return to Him and be forgiven by Him.



Key Point: Despite his failures, *he never lost his sonship!*

23] And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry:

The father did not ask him to “earn” his forgiveness. No amount of good works can save us from our sins (Eph 2:8, 9; Titus 3:3-7:)

*3: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

*4: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,*

*5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

*6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*

*7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

24] For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Interesting description: dead, and now alive again.

### **The Prodigal Son**

### **John 14:6**

He was lost; (“I am the way”)

He was ignorant (v.17) (“I am the truth”)

He was dead (v.24). (“I am the life”)

Jesus continued the parable focusing on the elder brother, a clear illustration of the scribes and the Pharisees:

25] Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26] And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27] And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28] And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

The older brother, coming home from working in the field and hearing what was happening, got angry. Similarly the Pharisees and teachers of the Law were angry with the message Jesus was proclaiming. They did

not like the idea that people from outside their nation as well as outcasts and sinners in the nation were to be a part of the kingdom.

Jesus had previously warned the two disputing brothers (12:15), “Take heed and beware of covetousness.” The covetous person can never be satisfied, no matter how much he accumulates; and the dissatisfied heart leads to a disappointed life.

Like the older son who refused to go to the feast, the Pharisees refused to enter the kingdom Jesus offered to the nation.

The same loving father that ran to meet the prodigal son came out of the house of feasting to plead with the older son!

Likewise, Jesus ate with Pharisees as well as sinners. He did not desire to exclude the Pharisees and teachers of the Law from the kingdom. The message was an invitation to everyone.

29] And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

Those words betrayed the fact that the older brother thought he had a relationship with his father because of his works. He served his father, not out of love but out of a desire for reward. He even thought of himself as being in bondage to his father.

The Pharisees had a religion of good works. By their fasting, studying, praying, and giving, they had hoped to *earn* blessings from God and *merit* eternal life. They knew nothing of the grace of God.

Works can lead to pride and self-righteousness...

*The “justified” hurts are the most dangerous.*

His unconcern for his missing brother, and his resentment that he had come home is disturbing and a fatal indictment to the Pharisees and scribes.

30] But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

Jesus had taught that the two greatest commandments are to love God and love others. The elder son broke both of these: he did not love God (typified here by the father) and did not love his younger brother.

[His dreams were shattered because of his brother's return. One of the most insidious traps are our own *expectations*. How important it is to leave them at the Throne...]

31] And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

The father pointed out that the older son had had the joy of being in the house all the time, and now he should rejoice with the father in his brother's return. The words, "You are always with me and everything I have is yours," suggest the religious leaders' privileged position as members of God's Chosen People. They were the recipients and guardians of the covenants and the Law (Rom. 3:1-2; 9:4). Rather than feeling angry, they should rejoice that others were joining them and would be a part of the kingdom.

32] It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Some view these parables as teaching a believer's restoration to fellowship with God. One cannot lose something he does not own, they reason, so the first two parables must represent children of God who come back to Him. Also, a son is already a son, so the third parable must be teaching that people who are believers can be restored to fellowship with God.

Others understand the parables to teach that lost people (people who are not believers) can come to Christ. This view seems preferable for two reasons:

(1) Jesus was speaking to Pharisees who were rejecting the message of the kingdom. Their objection was that sinners were coming to Jesus and believing His message. In no way could these two groups be adequately represented in the third parable if the point of the parable is a restoration to fellowship by a believer.

(2) Verse 22 indicates that the son who came back received a new position which he did not have before. The Jews were God's "children" in the sense that they had a special covenant relationship to Him. But each individual still had to become a believer in God. It was their responsibility to accept the message Jesus was preaching—that He was the Messiah and that He would bring in the kingdom for the nation.

Interestingly, while the father had the last word, we do not know how the story ended. (See Jonah 4 for a parallel narrative.)

We do know that the Pharisees continued to oppose Jesus and distance themselves from His followers; and their leaders eventually brought about the Lord's death. In spite of the Father's pleading, they would not come in.

Everybody in this chapter experienced joy except the older brother.

There are two aspects to salvation:

**God's part:** the shepherd seeks the lost sheep; the woman searches for the coin.

**Man's part:** the wayward son willingly repented and went home.

Both the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man must be considered (John 6:37; 2 Thes 2:13-14). (See our briefing pack, *The Sovereignty of Man*.)

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## Epilogue: An Aged Prodigal

It is tragic to see a young chap gather together his all and take his journey into a far country only to waste his substance on loose living. But our grief may be softened by the hope that he is not playing for keeps. Some day he may recover his sanity, return to his waiting father, and make it possible for festivities to begin at the once-shadowed home.

But when an older person heads toward the pigpen, we all know that the odds are that he will soon reach the point of no return. This ugly turning away from God is likely to be final.

Solomon failed at his hour of greatest need and the hour of his greatest opportunity.

He inherited great position. He was not only the choice of David, but the choice of God as well.

He also had the ability to fill that lofty position. A lofty position does not always guarantee great abilities. "Pygmies will be pygmies even though perched on the Alps."

He was enriched by having a consecrated father. David was a dedicated man, in spite of some shady yesterdays. He had greatly sinned, he had greatly repented, and had been greatly forgiven.

Solomon also had had a personal experience of God Himself. Two appearances were mentioned; certainly there may have been others.

He was an able ruler, a magnificent monarch, and a shrewd and successful merchant as well. He was a man of peace; he did not squander his wealth in fruitless wars. He was a great builder.

But he was foolishly fond of display. And he garnered a pampered court and lived extravagantly. And in the accumulation of wives: 700, plus 300 concubines!

It seems people in the heights assume the rules aren't for them. I've often seen promising executives get "CEO fever"—a megalomaniacal transformation that takes place when finally landing the top job.

Solomon had become so powerful that he felt himself above the moral law. He went his gaudy and godless way, feeling himself an exception because of his great gifts and seeming success.

His self-indulgent blindness wrecked his son, and his kingdom.

Finishing well is the *real* challenge. Like Paul, we would like to proclaim, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7).

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[*The Aged Prodigal* was contributed by Pastor Brian Hughes, Calvary Chapel Auckland, New Zealand.]

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## Luke 16

### Introduction

What happens when you die? Where do you go to?  
Much of what we understand comes from this very chapter.

This chapter includes two "parables" about wealth, and the right and wrong of riches.

The first parable (vv.1-13) was spoken primarily to the disciples. It is disturbing to have the objectionable behavior of the "unrighteous" steward commended.

The second parable (vv.19-31) was addressed to the Pharisees because of their response (vv.14-18) to the first parable. *It really isn't a parable*: the participants in parables don't have names. This one is not only an actual, real, episode, it is one of the more significant insights into the afterlife and the topology of Hades.

### The Unrighteous Steward

- 1] And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

A steward is someone who manages another's wealth. He was comparable to the financial manager today, responsible for managing a large estate.

The most important thing about a steward is that he serves his master faithfully (1 Cor 4:2).

### Stewardship

[We, as Christians, are called to the highest standard of conduct: that of a *fiduciary* of our employer, etc. (Cf. Eph 6:5-9). *koinwnoj koinonos*: partner, fiduciary; putting the other's interests ahead of one's own; as a doctor/patient, attorney/client, etc.) [See our briefing package, *Being Faithful in a Faithless World*.]

We should thank God for *all* that we have (Deut 8:11-18) and use it as He directs. (A tithe is just a beginning. The application of the other 90% should also be under His direction.)

The thief says, "What's yours is mine—I'll take it."  
The selfish person says, "What's mine is mine—I'll keep it."  
The Christian should say, "What's mine is a gift from God—I'll share it."

We are not just stewards of money; *time* is our most inelastic commodity. [Actually (statistically), how many weekends do *you* have left?]

Our most critical stewardship: our *hearts*! What is the real focus of our

lives. Our *lives* are an even more critical “investment.” (The second lesson in this chapter will bring this even more into focus...)

- 2] And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. It’s audit time.

*Each of us* will face an audit of our stewardship (Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10ff). If we have been faithful, our Lord will give us His commendation and reward (Matt 25:21; 1 Cor 4:5). If we have not been faithful, we will lose those blessings, but will still be saved (1 Cor 3:13-15).

It is interesting that Jesus sent seven “report cards” to seven (representative) churches in Revelation 2 & 3. *Each one* was surprised at the results: those that thought they were doing well, weren’t. Those that thought they were not doing well, were! [That’s sobering when you think it through...]

- 3] Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

He knew that he was going to lose his position. His boss was suspicious of his competence; not necessarily aware of any wrong doing. From his subsequent conduct, he also may well have been dishonest...

In any case, it certainly was time to do some serious career planning!

- 4] I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

While still in authority, he could feather his future nest by taking advantage of his current situation.

- 5] So he called every one of his lord’s debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

He is going to “adjust” (write down) his lord’s receivables!

- 6] And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

[You may have heard about the silly embezzlers: they ran off with their boss’s *payables!*?]

This manager (while still in office) changed the books of his boss’s debtors to less than what they actually owed—50 instead of 100 measures of olive oil.

- 7] Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

80 instead of 100 measures of wheat. This is, of course, a form of stealing.

(Even if this had been in the scope of his previous authority, it was not in the interests of his employer—it was a breach of his *fiduciary* duties. A steward is not in an “arms-length” relationship.)

- 8] And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

(Notice that even his boss commended the cleverness of the unjust—dishonest—steward!)

When the wealthy employer realized what he had done, he commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. The dishonest manager had not done a good thing, but he *had* been careful to plan ahead, using the available material opportunity to insure a secure future.

- 9] And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

Jesus was not teaching that His disciples should be dishonest. He was teaching that they should use their present material opportunities for their future spiritual benefit. This was a good lesson from a bad example.

You have probably heard that “You can’t take it with you.” Wrong: yes, you can!

(You must send it up ahead. Use your present position—contacts, network, opportunities, resourcefulness—to provide kingdom benefits!)

- 10] He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

[AES anecdotal example: the man that didn’t call as he promised caused a key principal to withdraw from the deal...]

- 11] If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?

The concept of a fiduciary (*Koinonon*).

Over my 10 years in “full-time ministry,” it has been my painful experience that the *ethics* among “Christian professionals” has been *twice as bad* as that which I had encountered over a 30-year secular executive career—spanning virtually a hundred ventures as a principal or key advisor, and serving on a dozen boards of directors of public companies. The deliberate breach of fiduciary duties, and the diverting of corporate opportunities for private, personal gain, has required the removal from office of trusted managers on several occasions.

Cf. *Being Faithful in a Faithless World* Briefing Package published by Koinonia House.

Were they *really* saved? In each case, contrition and repentance is totally absent. Our contrition over our sin is a *key evidence* of our regeneration. We can’t be orthodox in our theology and heretical in our ethics. Paul was very careful that everything was honest “not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men” (2 Cor 8:21; Acts 24:16).

- 12] And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?

It is tragic to see how God’s wealth is being wasted by Christians who live as though Jesus never died and judgment is never coming.

- 13] No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

There at least three lessons here regarding living among nonbelievers in a nonbelieving world.

(1) One should use his resources to win people into the kingdom. Jesus said, “The people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.” Here Jesus set His disciples apart from the dishonest manager. The dishonest manager was a person of “this world,” seeking a way to make his life more comfortable. The disciples, “the people of the light” (11:33-36; Eph. 5:8), should act in a shrewd (wise, not dishonest) manner. Jesus plainly taught that the

people of light should use worldly wealth (v.9). Jesus also used the word “wealth” (mammon, riches) (v.13) when He affirmed that one cannot serve both God and the love of wealth for its own sake. In verse 9 Jesus was saying that one is to *use* wealth, not store it up or be a servant of it.

Wealth should be a disciple’s servant, not vice versa. The disciples were to use wealth to gain friends, the same reason the dishonest manager used the rich man’s wealth. The disciples would then be welcomed into eternal dwellings. The disciples’ wise use of wealth would help lead others to believe the message of the kingdom and bring them to accept that message.

Jesus’ second application is in verses 10-12. If one is faithful in his use of money, then he can be trusted with greater things. “True riches (v.11)” refers to the kingdom’s spiritual riches of which the disciples will partake.

*There is nothing secular before the Throne of God.* You cannot divorce the “spiritual” from the “material.”

The third application Jesus drew from the parable was that we are to be single-minded (v.13; Cf. Matt 6:19-24). You can’t have two masters any more than you can walk in two directions at once. As *masters*, God and mammon are mutually exclusive. *Love for money* will drive one away from God (1 Tim. 6:10); conversely, loving God will cause one not to make money his primary concern in life.

[It may come as a surprise to learn that most successful entrepreneurs are *not* simply money motivated! (Over 100 competent studies.) They are motivated by a compulsion to achieve a change, to pursue a goal, or fill a need. Financing is simply one of the key ingredients required towards achieving an objective. They use financial measures to competitively “keep score.”]

## An Unsavory Response

It was the unsavory response of the Pharisees which will lead to the next lesson.

- 14] And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

“Derided”: *ekmukthri zw ekmukterizo*, to deride by turning up the nose, to sneer at, to scoff at.

The Pharisees, who loved money, reacted negatively to Jesus’ teaching about it. They were sneering at Jesus because they saw Him as a poor man being followed by other poor men and yet having the nerve to teach about money.

- 15] And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Jesus responded that God knows the hearts of people and is not impressed with their outward appearances or their wealth. Though the Pharisees justified themselves (vv.7, 15; 15:7), God, who judges the inward man, will be the ultimate Judge.

## The Close of the Old Testament

- 16] The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

Key insight. Malachi is the last *book* of the Old Testament (as we arrange it). But the *dispensation* of the law and the prophets were until John the Baptist (Cf. Matt 11:7-15).

The Pharisees misunderstood the blessings of God’s covenant. They apparently assumed that a person’s wealth was God’s blessing in return for his righteous conduct. They completely neglected the fact that many righteous people in the Old Testament lacked material things, while many unrighteous people had plenty.

Luke 16:16-18 is included with Jesus’ teaching about money to the Pharisees because it illustrates what Jesus had just said about the Pharisees justifying themselves but really being judged by God.

Jesus stated that since the time of John the Baptist, He had been announcing God’s kingdom. People, including the Pharisees (14:15 and comments on Matt. 11:12), were attempting to force their way into it.

- 17] And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

A tittle is the tiny decorative “hook” on some of the Hebrew letters. Talk about taking the Biblical text *literally!* Indeed.

*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* Matt 5:17, 18.

- 18] Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

However, in spite of justifying themselves, the Pharisees were still not living according to the Law. Jesus spoke of divorce as an example. To divorce and remarry constituted adultery.

(Jesus gave one exception to this. See comments on Matt. 5:32; 19:1-12.)

Some Pharisees took a loose view of divorce. It was acknowledged that a man should not commit adultery. But if a man wanted another woman, many of the Pharisees condoned divorcing his present wife for no good reason and marrying the desired woman. In this way they thought adultery did not take place. However, as Jesus pointed out, this was a perfect example of justifying themselves in the eyes of men but not being justified before God (Luke 16:15).

The religious leaders were not actually living according to the Law. Jesus pointed out the importance of the Law (v.17), which showed that the people should live by it.

## The Rich Man and Lazarus

Jesus then revealed the episode (*not parable*) of the Rich Man and Lazarus to show that being rich should not be equated with being righteous.

- 19] There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:  
20] And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores...

He has a name. (The name Lazarus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name which means “God is my help.”)

This is not a “parable”; it is an actual incident. This is important. We

should be careful not to “spiritualize” or “symbolize” the application. It is a real place; an actual destiny. Think about that.

I suspect that emphasizing his name was in deliberate contrast to the rich man who probably didn’t even know the needy person’s name... (But the Lord knew the number of hairs on his head!)

Lazarus was sick, and possibly crippled: he “was laid” at the rich man’s gate.

- 21] And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

...Abject poverty with hunger and poor health.

- 22] And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

Death is not the end. It is the beginning of a whole new existence in another world.

Lazarus was righteous not because he was poor but because he depended on God.

The rich man was not condemned because he was rich, but because he didn’t use his resources properly. (Abraham was an extremely wealthy man—probably among the wealthiest in the world of his day—yet was not in torment in Hades.)

- 23] And in hell [*Hades*] he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

“Abraham’s bosom” apparently refers to a region (a place of paradise) for Old Testament believers at the time of death (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4).

It is commonly understood among most theologians that this region was evacuated after the cross and resurrection (Eph 4:8-10): Christ was the firstfruits of them that slept (1 Cor 15:20).

For the Christian, death means to be present with the Lord (2 Cor 5:1-8; Phil 1:21).

For the unbeliever, death means to be separated from God’s presence; it results in a tormented state.

## Tutorial on Terminology

**Hell**, English word derived from the Saxon *helan*, to cover; hence the covered or the invisible place. In Scripture there are three words so rendered:

### Sheol

לָאֵלֶּשֶׁת *sheol*, occurs in the Old Testament sixty-five times. This word *sheol* is derived from a root word meaning “to ask,” “demand”; hence, insatiableness (Prov 30:15,16). It is rendered “grave” thirty-one times (Gen 37:35; 42:38; 44:29,31; 1Sam 2:6; etc.). In thirty-one cases in the Authorized Version this word is rendered “hell,” the place of disembodied spirits. The inhabitants of *sheol* are “the congregation of the dead” (Pro 21:16). It is the abode of the wicked dead (Num 16:33; Job 24:19; Ps 9:17; 31:17) etc.; it is also of the good (Ps 16:10; 30:3; 49:15; 86:13) etc. *Sheol* is described as deep (Job 11:8), dark (Job 10:21,22), with bars (Job 17:16). The dead “go down” to it (Num 16:30,33; Eze 31:15,16,17).

### Hades

ᾍδης *Hades*, the Greek word for that which is out of sight, is the word used to denote the state or place of the dead; it is translated “hell” 11 times in the New Testament. The Septuagint used *hades* to translate the Hebrew לָאֵלֶּשֶׁת *she’owl*, (the place of the dead) on 61 occasions (Gen 42:38; Ps 139:8; Hos 13:14; Isa 14:9, et al). In Greek it is associated with Orcus, the infernal regions, a dark and dismal place in the very depths of the earth, the common receptacle of disembodied spirits. In the Greek conceptions, it had two subterranean divisions: Elysium and Tartarus.

Hades refers to the abode of the unsaved dead prior to the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). It is a prison (1 Pet 3:19) with gates and bars and locks (Matt 16:18 Rev 1:18) and it is downward (Matt 11:23 Luke 10:15). The righteous and the wicked are separated.

Some view the blessed dead as in a part of Hades called Paradise (Luke 23:43). They are also said to be in “Abraham’s bosom” (Luke 16:22). However, the rich man lifted *up* his eyes (v.23); the “bosom of Abraham” was “afar off.” They are as opposite and disconnected as the zenith and the nadir. Abraham’s bosom is in heaven (Matt 8:11). Most of the early church fathers viewed Paradise as a part of Heaven, not Hades.<sup>1</sup> The “two compartment” view is an accommodation of the Greek conception.

Hades is not to be confused with *Gehenna*.

## Gehenna

Gehenna (originally *Ge bene Hinnom*; i.e., “the valley of the sons of Hinnom”), a deep, narrow ravine to the south of Jerusalem, separating Mount Zion from the so-called “Hill of Evil Counsel.” (The U.N. headquarters are presently on this hill, much to the amusement of the Israelis.) It was in the Valley of Hinnom that the idolatrous Jews offered their children in sacrifice to Molech (2Ch 28:3 33:6 Jer 7:31 19:2-6). This valley afterwards became the common receptacle for all the refuse of the city. Here the dead bodies of animals and of criminals, and all kinds of filth, were cast and consumed by fire, always kept burning. It thus, in process of time, became the idiom of the place of everlasting destruction. In this sense it is used by our Lord 11 times in His discourses (Matt 5:22,29,30; 10:28 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5).

Hades and Gehenna are somewhat opposites in both location and destiny: Hades is geocentric (Matt 12:40); Gehenna is “in the outer darkness” (Matt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). Hades is temporary; it will ultimately be *cast into* Gehenna (Rev 20:14).

## Tartarus

Another word translated “hell” but only one use in the New Testament (2 Peter 2:4).

The deepest abyss of Hades. Homer’s *Iliad*: “...As far below Hades as the earth is below heaven...” It is the specific place of incarceration of the angels that sinned in Genesis 6.

## Abouso

Another related term is the “bottomless pit,” or the *abyss*, or *abousoj aboussos*. This is where the Beast of Revelation comes out of (Rev 11:7; 17:8) and wherein Satan will be bound for 1,000 years (Rev 20:1, 3). It is also the place from which the demon locusts emerge in Revelation 9. Satan will be brought to “the sides of the pit,” in Isaiah 14:15.

\* \* \*

We need to recognize that these are literal locations and destinies—not simply didactic concepts. It is serious business—there is no priority more serious than the reality facing the lost in this world.

The disturbing insight is that the rich man found himself in *conscious torment!* (v.24, 28). No “soul sleep” or annihilation here.

[When someone claims that he doesn’t believe in a “hell,” ask him what his backup plan is...!]

- 24] And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Torment (mentioned four times in this account) is tangible. And forever. Without hope.

And he began to pray. The rich man was able to converse with Abraham. And he was aware of Lazarus’ situation.

(He did not change: his entire concern was for *himself* and *his* family. The punishment of lost sinners is not remedial: it does not improve them. Hades and Gehenna are not hospitals for the sick; they are prisons for the condemned.)

- 25] But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.
- 26] And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

The gulf is impassable. The word *casma chasma*, a gaping opening, a chasm, a gulf; (from a form of *chao* (to “gape” or “yawn”)); denotes space either lateral or vertical, but more commonly vertical.

(Some conjecture that the Abouso is involved in this geocentric topology. The only place one can have a “bottomless” pit would be at the *center* of the earth.)

- 27] Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house:
- 28] For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.



(This verse suggests that Lazarus had testified to the rich man and probably to his brothers, but was not taken seriously.)

*People in hades have a concern for the lost, but can't do anything about it.*

- 29] Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.
- 30] And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.
- 31] And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

One did. It is interesting that his name was also Lazarus (John 11). And the response of the chief priests was to plot to kill him (John 11:46-50; 12:10).

Faith that is based solely on miracles is not a saving faith (John 2:23-25).

## In Conclusion

Jesus spoke more of hell than of heaven. It is real. It should pre-empt all of our other priorities!

C. S. Lewis wrote, "*The safest road to hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.*"

Many ask, "**How can a loving God even permit such a place as hell to exist, let alone send people there?**"

In asking that question, they reveal that they do not understand either the love of God or the wickedness of sin.

God's love is a *holy* love, not a shallow sentiment.

And sin is rebellion against a holy and loving God. God's mercy is unobligated and sovereign. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (Rom 9:15).

The incarnate God, who has vicariously suffered more for man's sin than any man has or will personally, surely has the right to determine the method and extent of his own self-immolating compassion.

God does not "send people to hell." They send themselves there by refusing to heed His call and believe on His Son.

(Cf. Rev 21:8; John 3:18-21, 36.)

However, to escape danger, one must believe in it.

Salvation supposes a prior damnation. Denial prevents penitence for sin, and this prevents pardon. No error, consequently is more fatal than that of Universalism. It blots out the attribute of retributive justice; it transmutes sin into misfortune, instead of guilt; it turns all suffering into chastisement; converts the redemptive work of Christ into mere moral influence; and makes salvation a debt due to man, instead of an unmerited boon from God.

No doctrine throws its solemn shadows upon even the most careless human life. The fall and eternal ruin of an immortal spirit is the most dreadful event imaginable.

\* \* \*

### Addendum:

Review of John 11:

Lazarus was

1) Dead.

2) Defeated. (Raised, but trammelled by his grave clothes (John 11:44)).

3) Dangerous. His enemies *had* to kill him.

Application:

The real "you" is software, temporarily resident in a hardware system.

The software is massless—therefore, eternal.

Whether you are saved or not. That is the problem!

Your destiny is the most important priority of your existence!

### Bibliography:

William G. T. Shedd, *The Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1886. Reprinted by Klock & Klock, Minneapolis MN 1980.

## Notes:

1. Cf. Shedd, *The Doctrine of Endless Punishment*, for a more detailed discussion.

\* \* \*

## Luke 17

- 1] Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him*, through whom they come!

### Predestination or Free Will?

**Pharaoh's heart being hardened** (10 times, Exodus 8 - 10; same as the number of the plagues).

**Saul not killing Agag:** Amalekites were the traditional enemy of Israel. Amalek fought with Israel at Rephidim. Ex 17: 8-16.

“YHWH will have war with Amalek from generation to generation” (Exo 17:14-18).

In 1 Sam. 15:1-3, Samuel commissioned Saul to “go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not.” But Saul failed to carry it out. He spared Agag, and so God took the kingdom from Saul.

Cf. 1 Sam 15:7-28. Haman was a descendant of Agag. Had Saul been obedient, Haman could never have appeared on the scene.

David had refused to take vengeance upon Shimei; Mordecai was one of his descendants! (2 Sam 16:5-13; 19:16-23; 1 Kings 2:36-46).

**Herod's killing the babes of Bethlehem:** prophesied in Jer 31:15 (Cf. Matt 2:18)

Judas was without excuse. Psalm 41:9.

Esau/Jacob:

12 *It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.* [Gen 25:23.]

13 *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

-Romans 9:12-13.

## Paradox Resolution:

[Cf. Euler's “Seven Bridges of Koenigsberg” (diagram on page 150):]

“In the town of Koenigsberg is an island called Kneiphof, with two branches of the River Pregel flowing around it. There are seven bridges crossing the two branches. The question is whether a person can plan a walk in such a way that he will cross each of the bridges once but not more than once.”

The resolution is to look beyond self-imposed boundaries. The path can include going around the source of the river.

The paradox dissolves when one recognizes that God is outside this *physical* dimension called time: “*God alone knows the end from the beginning.*” Isa 46:10[See also *The Sovereignty of Man*, and our discussion in our *Expositional Commentary on Romans*, on Chapter 9].

### Application to today

It is impossible (for those who are trying to live a godly life) to escape offenses: *especially today!*

- 2] It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Jesus had already noted that the Pharisees were not only refusing to enter the kingdom but were also keeping others from entering (Luke 11:52).

There is a special application to those who would presume to destroy the faith of children...!

- 3] Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Not only are Jesus' followers not to cause others to sin; they are also to counteract sin by forgiving others. One should rebuke a brother if he sins. **If** he repents, he is to be forgiven, even if he sins and repents over and over.

- 4] And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Condition: repentance. Obligation is on me.

- 5] And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.  
[v.4 is difficult! (“We can’t...”) It takes a divine capacity.]

*Our walk must be by the Holy Spirit by faith.* Romans 6: “It [sin] ain’t gonna reign no more.”

[Past, present, future:...]

Pool, cot: go home... Answering questions that weren’t asked. ...responded in faith...

[Cf. Matt 18:22. 70 x 7? Cf. 490-year periods in Israel’s history (see chart?)]

- 6] And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

Quality, not quantity, is the key issue.

- 7] But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?  
8] And [But] will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?  
9] Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

[Priorities...]

- 10] So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

Cf. 12:35f Let your loins be girded about and lights burning (“girded about” = be *readied to work*; “rolling up your sleeves,” etc.)

A call to diligence.

And don’t seek special recognition...

- 11] And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst [borders] of Samaria and Galilee.

- 12] And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

Fatal: incurable, deadly disease. (Transmission is still a mystery, even today. Hansen’s disease; Dr. Damien in Molokai...)

- 13] And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

His fame had spread; He is at the end of His ministry, on the way to Jerusalem to be crucified.

Word travels fast in that world of hopelessness...

[Cf. Blind Bartimaeus in Jericho. There isn’t a single case where Jesus was called for help and He didn’t respond!]

- 14] And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

Lev 14:2: Law of the Leper in the day of his cleansing.

[Apparently a progressive healing, in contrast to an “instant” healing. We, too, need to recognize that God often works in progressive steps...]

- 15] And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,  
16] And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

(Considered a stranger to the covenants, etc.)

- 17] And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?  
18] There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.  
19] And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

“Your faith has saved you” is the literal translation.

Many are healed; only a few are made whole! The physical is only

It was *through the thanksgiving* that he received his “wholeness.”

[This may also be an aspect of the offerings during the Millennium; they will point back to the Cross, just as the ones in the O.T. looked forward...]

20] And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

They were looking for the earthly kingdom, vs. the Roman rule. (Cf. Psalm 2:8)

“Observation” or spying.  
parathrh<sup>s</sup>ij *parateresis*, noun form;

parathroumenoi, verb form is always used in sense of hostile watching.

In 14:1, the Pharisees were hoping to entrap Him; in 20:20 they also sought to entrap him regarding taxes: tribute to Caesar, etc.

21] Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within [*among*] you.

...because the King was there!

entoj *entos*; its use with the plural always means *in the midst*, not within an individual, but in the midst of the group.

If you have surrendered your life to Jesus you are in the Kingdom of God. (There *will* be a time when it will be established on the earth.)

22] And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*.

23] And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

[It's not in Toronto or Pensacola...]

24] For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25] But first must He suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

He was dispelling the notion that He was on the way to Jerusalem to throw off the yoke of Rome...

26] And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

[One cannot fully gain a full perspective of v.26 unless one understands

Genesis 6. Here, however, the primary issue is that it was “business as usual” until the consummation...]

27] They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

“Business as usual” until D-day.  
[All but *nine*: one had been removed first.]

28] Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29] But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

[All except those that were removed before. Cf. Gen 18, and 19:22!]

30] Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31] In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

Cf. Matt 24...

32] Remember Lot's wife.

Pillar of salt . [Cf. Josephus, Ireneaus, et al].

33] Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34] I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

Rapture? Or judgment? Many opinions.

35] Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

A pre-breakfast chore.

36] Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

[Proof of a round world: night, pre-breakfast chore, and mid-day workers—all in the same moment.]

37] And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

Two major *opposite* views:

1) Taken = blessed ones. Many assume that this refers to the Rapture, or *Harpazo*. Eagles (denotatively) do *not* seek out dead meat as vultures do. Some (Watchman Nee, et al.) see the eagles as the saints, being gathered around our Lord.

2) Taken = to judgment. Most, however, hold the view that the text is dealing here with world conditions at the Second Coming, not the *Harpazo*. The term *aitos* may be being used as a synecdoche (specific for the general, or vice versa), for birds of prey.

However, it is interesting that in the two previous allegories the ones who “were taken” were those that were *spared!*

It was Noah and his own that were taken and spared.

[Furthermore, there is the curious possibility that the translation of Enoch may also bear on our perspectives here. And then there is that intriguing tradition that he was translated (“raptured”?) on *his birthday*, which some rabbis believe was on the day that they celebrate as *Hag Shavout*, the Feast of Pentecost. (!?)]

And at Sodom:

*7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*

*8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)*

*9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*

-2 Peter 2:7-9

When this is put in juxtaposition with Abraham’s rather audacious haggling at the end of the previous chapter (Gen. 18), Lot’s extraction is provocative, indeed! It was a *prerequisite condition* for the judgment to proceed (Gen 19:22!).

My private discussions with many of the prominent conservative

scholars on this point indicates that no one is dogmatic on this. There is merit, and difficulties, to both views. We need to keep our file open for more illumination on this one...

\* \* \*

## Luke 18

### Introduction

(14 - 18): Lessons en route to Jerusalem

#### Chapter 14

Pharisee’s dinner: Man with dropsy;  
False popularity;  
False hospitality;  
False security;  
Discipleship: counting the cost.

#### Chapter 15

God cares and seeks  
Lost Coin  
Lost Sheep  
Prodigal Son

#### Chapter 16

Stewardship  
Unrighteous Steward  
Rich Man and Lazarus

#### Chapter 17

Role, Position of a Servant  
Ten Lepers; One Saved  
The (Later) Return...

This chapter, concluding the journey, includes two of Jesus’ parables about prayer: One was addressed to the disciples (vv.1-8), and the other (vv.9-14) to “some who were confident of their own righteousness.”

## Luke 18

### Persistence in Prayer

- 1] And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;
- 2] Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:
- 3] And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

Luke mentions widows more than do all the other Gospel writers combined.<sup>1</sup>

### Widows

O.T. Care instructions: Ex 22:22-24; Deut 14:28-29; Ps 146:9; Isa 1:17, 23; Jer 7:6.

NT: Acts 6:1; 1 Tim 5:3-10; James 1:27.

- 4] And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

The judge, not the law set the agenda. He had to be approached through his assistants (who often needed to be bribed, etc.).

She had three obstacles to overcome:

- 1) A woman had no standing before the law.
  - 2) Being a widow, she had no husband to stand with her in court.
  - 3) She was poor and couldn't pay a bribe if she wanted to.
- 5] Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

A widow continued to go before an unjust judge to plead for justice in her case; yet he continually refused to "hear" her case, until finally he decided to give her justice so that she would not wear him out with her complaining.

- 6] And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

Another good illustration from a bad example.

Persistence pays. It does not mean we should constantly be repeating prayers: Jesus warned us about vain repetitions (Matt 6:7-8).

- 7] And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

Jesus interpreted the parable, pointing out that if the unjust judge would give justice, then imagine how God (the just Judge) will see that they get justice, and quickly.

Note, too, the contrasts:

The woman was a stranger; we are God's children.

The widow had not access to the judge; we have open access to His presence (Eph 2:18, 3:12; Heb 4:14-16; 10:19-22).

The woman had no friend at court; we have an advocate, our Savior (1 John 2:1; Heb 2:17-18).

The woman came to a court of law; we come to the Throne of Grace (Heb 4:14-16).

She pled out of her poverty; we have all of God's riches available to meet our every need (Phil 4:19).

Hence, if we fail to pray (v.1), we will be just like the poor widow.

A critical contrast is between the judge and our Father. God does not need to be "argued" or "bribed" into answering prayer! He is a loving father who is attentive to our every cry, generous in His gifts, and concerned with our every need, ready to answer when we call (1 John 5:14-15).

What about *delays*? Romans 8:28 is still operative.

- 8] I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find [that kind of] faith on the earth?

Jesus' question was not spoken out of ignorance. Nor was He questioning whether all believers would be gone when He returns. Instead, I believe, the rhetorical question was a device to spur the disciples on to faithfulness in prayer, to encourage them to continue in their praying.

[1 Tim 4 and 2 Tim 3 paint a dark picture of the last days...]

This is another good lesson from a bad example (Cf. 16:1-13).

## The Dangers in Self-Esteem

- 9] And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:  
10] Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Lord continually exposed the self-righteousness and unbelief of the Pharisees (Cf. 11:38-54)...

...as bankrupt debtors (7:40-50);

...as guests fighting for the best seats (14:7-14);

...sons unconcerned about others (15:25-32).

- 11] The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

He was using other people as his standard for measuring righteousness.

- 12] I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

[Why? Jews were required to fast only once a year, on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:29).]

He tithed everything, even the tiny herbs from his garden (Matt 23:23).

- 13] And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

The tax collector used *God* as his standard for measuring righteousness. He realized that he had to throw himself on the mercy of God for forgiveness.

- 14] I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Jesus' application of the parable echoed His teaching in 13:30.

It is necessary for people to humble themselves before God to gain

forgiveness, and those who are proud (everyone who exalts himself) will be brought low (humbled) by God.

The Pharisee's pride condemned him;  
The publican's humble attitude save him (14:11; Isa 57:15).

It is the Prodigal Son and his elder brother again (Luke 15:11ff).

- 15] And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.  
16] But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.  
17] Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Jesus was stating that a person must come to Him in humility in order to enter the kingdom.

Childlike, not childish!

Children come with expectation and excitement; they come realizing that they are not sufficient in themselves. They depend totally on others.

If these same attitudes are not present in adults, they can never enter into the kingdom.

## The Hindrance of Wealth

(Cf. Matt. 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31)

- 18] And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?  
19] And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is*, God.

(He had an inadequate view of Christ. The Jews reserved the word "good" for God: Ps 25:8; 34:8; 86:5; 106:1.)

Jesus was testing the young man's view of Himself.

- 20] Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

Jesus then went further: Jesus responded to the man's question by

instructing him to keep the 7<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> commandments (Ex. 20:12-16), each of which pertains to man's relationship with *man*.

(The first four of the Ten Commandments pertain to man's relationship with God.)

21] And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

Possibly true... But he still had an inadequate view of his own self.

22] Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

This action would touch on the 10th commandment against coveting, which included the idea of greed and holding onto things which are one's own as well as wanting things that belong to others. It was at this point that the man faltered.

Instead of preaching to him about covetousness, Jesus simply presented him something He knew a covetous person would not do.

Jesus' reasoning is quite evident:

(a) One must keep the Law perfectly in order to inherit eternal life (James 2:10).

(b) Only God was good—truly righteous.

(c) Therefore nobody can obtain eternal life by following the Law (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:21; 3:21). Jesus was not presenting the law as a means of salvation, but as a mirror of our need.

The only avenue open to an individual is to follow Jesus in order to obtain eternal life.

23] And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

The ruler was not prepared to take that step (in contrast Zacchaeus, Luke 19:8). The ruler was more attached to his wealth than to the idea of obtaining "eternal life" which he had so nobly asked about at the beginning (v.18).

He didn't fully appreciate just *who* Jesus really was. That is the tragic situation throughout the world today.

The young man had three serious misconceptions:

1. Of Christ;
2. Of his own sin;
3. Of the means of salvation.

24] And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Jesus responded that riches are a hindrance to one's obtaining eternal life: they cause us to focus on material things and too often cloud a person's thinking about what is truly important in life.

It is not the possession *of* riches that keeps people out of heaven. (Abraham and David were wealthy men.) It is being *possessed by riches* that makes salvation difficult for the wealthy.

25] For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

βελ ορηj , noun, feminine singular: a sewing needle; *not* a small door in a city gate.

Likewise it is most difficult (but not impossible; e.g., Zacchaeus, 19:1-10) for a rich person to be saved.

*26: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:*

*27: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;*

*28: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:*

*29: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*

-1 Cor 1:26-29

[This seems to also be a rebuttal to the "Health and Wealth," "Name it and claim it," "Blab it and grab it" preachers who promote that God is the path to wealth, etc.]

*The rich young ruler is a warning to people who want a Christian faith that does not change their values or upset their lifestyle!*



Jesus does not command every seeking sinner to sell everything and give to the poor; but He does put His finger of conviction on any area in our lives about which we are dishonest.

- 26] And they that heard *it* said, Who then can be saved?  
27] And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.  
28] Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

They had left livelihoods and their families (14:26-27), for a leader whom their traditional leaders were vigorously rejecting, etc.

- 29] And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

“You” is plural: the promise was to all of them.

- 30] Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

There's a remarkable declaration!

## The Coming Climax

- 31] Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.  
32] For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:  
33] And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

Each time Jesus told His followers about what would happen to Him in Jerusalem, He got more explicit.

At this point He laid out the events which would come to pass. *He clearly stated the involvement of Gentiles in His trial and death.* This was important because Luke did not want his readers to think that the Gentiles were guiltless in Jesus' death. Much tragedy has resulted from those who attempt to put the blame on the Jews alone. The whole world was guilty of the death of the Savior.

[If you want to blame someone, blame me: it was *my* sins that put Him on that tree!]

- 34] And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

But the disciples could not comprehend any of this at the time; only later did they reflect on these discussions.

## The Determined Blind Man

In this passage and the next (Luke 19:1-10) are two examples of how the nation *should* have responded to the Messiah. In each case the person who did respond was an outcast from the mainstream of Judaism.

Cf. Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52

Matthew tells us that there were two blind beggars who met Jesus as He *left* Jericho (Matt 20:29-30; one was named Bartimaeus, Mark 10:46), but Luke introduces us to one who called out as Jesus *approached* Jericho.

There were two Jerichos: the old ruined city and the new one built by Herod the Great, and they were about one mile apart. This helps resolve the ostensible discrepancies among the several accounts.

- 35] And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:

Great symbolic value is here in Luke's account. The man was a beggar sitting by the side of the road, waiting for something to happen. He was blind and could do nothing to improve his condition. (Just as we are!)

- 36] And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.  
37] And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.  
38] And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

He had heard of Him, and knew who He was. The Messianic title indicates that he knew that Jesus could give sight to the blind (Isa 35:5, Luke 4:18).

He seized the opportunity...  
[As should we!]

- 39] And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

Those nearby tried to make him keep quiet. (Similarly the religious leaders tried to keep people from believing on Jesus.)

But the opposition caused the man to be even more adamant in his faith.

Persistence pays.

- 40] And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,
- 41] Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.
- 42] And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

He was not saying that the man's faith possessed some power: The man had faith in the Messiah, and it was the Messiah's power that had healed him (Cf. 7:50; 17:19).

In the same way, if the nation had faith in the Messiah, their faith would have healed them of their spiritual blindness.

- 43] And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

As a result of the man's healing, he and all the people who saw the miracle praised God.

There would seem to be a deliberate contrast, by Luke, between the rich young ruler and the blind man: one was rich, but really poor; the other was poor, but eternally rich!

The widow was not discouraged by the indifferent attitude of the judge; Nor was the publican discouraged by the attitude of the Pharisee; The parents brought the children despite the rebuff of the disciples; The blind men came to Jesus despite the attempted obstruction of the crowd. All were examples to follow.

...But the rich young ruler is a *warning* to us all.

\* \* \*

#### Notes:

- 1. 2:37-38; 4:25-26; 7:11-17; 18:1-8; 20:45-47; 21:1-4.

\* \* \*

## Luke 19

### Introduction

A second person in Jericho came to faith in Jesus. Zacchaeus, like the blind man, was considered outside the normal Jewish system because of his activities for Rome as a tax collector (5:27; 18:9-14).

Zacchaeus responded to Jesus' message in precisely the *opposite* way the rich ruler had responded (18:18-25). Zacchaeus, also wealthy (19:2), knew he was a sinner. When Jesus called on him, he responded with a greater enthusiasm than Jesus had asked for.

This account is also a commentary on Jesus' words that with God all things are possible (18:25-27), for Zacchaeus was a wealthy person who found salvation.

## Luke 19

- 1] And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

(His trip to Jerusalem was six days before Passover (John 12:1). It was more than a "Sabbath Day's" Journey: Passover couldn't have been on a Friday.)

- 2] And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

Zacchaeus = "righteous one" (this doesn't mean he was living up to his name).

He was the supervisor of the tax collectors.

Publicans were on an incentive system and notorious for abuse. He was a renegade in the eyes of the Jews; he was a precious lost sinner in the eyes of Jesus.

- 3] And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.
- 4] And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way*.

Ran? That was not decorous; climbing a tree? He was acting *childlike*... (Luke 18:17).

[Too often it is *pride* that keeps us from Jesus.]

- 5] And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.

This is the only instance in the four Gospels of Jesus inviting Himself to someone's home. (Cf. Rev 3:20)

The seeking man became "found." Jesus was seeking him!

By nature, a lost sinner does not seek the Savior (Rom 3:11). When Adam and Eve sinned, they *hid* from God, but it was God who came and sought them out (Gen 3:1-10).

- 6] And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

[Conjectures: was it Matthew that had previously conditioned Zacchaeus' thinking? Had he been praying for him? ]

- 7] And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.  
8] And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

Under Mosaic Law, if a thief voluntary confessed his crime, he had to restore what he took, add 1/5 to it, and bring a trespass offering to the Lord (Lev 6:1-7). If he stole something he could not restore, he had to repay 4X (Ex 22:1); if he was caught with the goods, he had to pay double (Ex 22:4). He offered to pay the highest price because his heart had truly been changed.

Interestingly he parted with much of his wealth, similar to what Jesus had asked the rich ruler to do (18:22).

- 9] And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

(I.e., a child of faith; cf. Rom 4:12; Gal 3:7.)

He was not saved because he promised to do good works. He was saved because he responded by faith to Christ's gracious word to him. Having trusted the Savior, he then gave evidence of his faith by committing to make restitution to those he had wronged. (James 2:14-26).

- 10] For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

The host has become the guest in his own house: Jesus was now his Master.

## Rewarding the Faithful

This parable brings to a close the section of Jesus' teaching in response to rejection (Luke 12:1-19:27). It also concludes the subsection of Jesus' teaching about the coming kingdom and the attitudes of His disciples (17:11-19:27).

Jesus' disciples should be like the grateful ex-leper (17:11-19), persistent in prayer (18:1-14), childlike (18:15-17), like the former blind man (18:35-43), and like Zacchaeus (19:1-10) as opposed to the rich ruler (18:18-25).

- 11] And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

It was Passover season, and the emotions were high as they celebrated their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt. This annual observance aggravated the misery of their bondage to Rome and made them yearn for a deliverer.

The Zealots used commando tactics against Rome; the Herodian politicians compromised with Rome; but most of the Jews rejected both of these approaches. They simply wanted the O.T. prophecies fulfilled and to receive their promised king.

When Herod the Great died in 4 B.C., he left a third part of his kingdom, viz. Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, to his son Archelaus, who had to go to Rome to have his inheritance approved. Not wanting Archelaus as their ruler, the Jews sent 50 men to argue their case before Augustus Caesar, who did ratify the inheritance, but without giving Archelaus the title of "king."

12] He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

The man of noble birth obviously represented Jesus. Because His followers thought the kingdom was to be set up immediately, Jesus said the nobleman in the parable had to go to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. He would have to leave them before the kingdom would be set up.

This Parable of the 10 Minas sums up Jesus' teaching to the disciples.

Each disciple had duties given to him by Jesus, and each was to carry out his responsibilities.

But the parable was addressed not only to disciples. It was also addressed to the nation at large, to show that it too had responsibilities. If the nation did not turn to Jesus, it would be punished.

13] And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

“Pounds” = *mina*:

- 1) in the O.T., a weight of 300 shekels was one pound.
- 2) In the N.T., a weight and sum of money equal to 100 drachmae, one talent was 100 pounds, a pound equalled 10 1/3 oz (300 gm).

Each of the servants received a sum equal to three months' wages.

“Occupy” means do business, put the funds to work.

14] But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

15] And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

We only have the reports of three of the servants.

- 16] Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.
- 17] And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.
- 18] And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.
- 19] And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.
- 20] And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

- 21] For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.
- 22] And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

The unfaithful servant's heart was not right toward his master; he had no love for him.

*“Nothing twists and deforms the soul more than a low or unworthy conception of God.”* -A. W. Tozer

- 23] Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?
- 24] And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

(Entrusting money to one who has the best track record seems prudent!)

- 25] (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)
- 26] For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.
- 27] But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

“Enemies”!

“We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). Cf. v.14.

God was gracious and gave the nation 38 years before judgment fell (vv.41-44).

We are living between vv. 14 and 15, when our Master will return from His absence for a reckoning... 1 Cor 4:1.

Note: In the Parable of the 10 Talents (Matt 25:14-30) it's similar, but different and the lessons are not to be confused. In this parable, each of the 10 servants received the same amount but earned different rewards; while in the 10 Talents, the servants received different amounts but received the same reward: the joy and approval of their Lord (Matt 25:21).

The deposit may refer to the message of the Gospel (1 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 1:11). Our gifts are different, but our job is the same: to share the Word of God so that it multiplies.

On Pentecost, 120 believers met and 3000 more were added (Acts 1:15; 2:41). And soon, 5000 more (Acts 4:4). They soon “filled Jerusalem” with their message (Act 5:28).

Wasted opportunity = loss of reward.

## The Triumphal Entry

28] And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

(See note on v.1.)

Earlier during Jesus’ ministry, they tried to take Him and present Him as king; but He refused: “mine hour has not come.” (Cf. John 6:15). Then, one specific day, He not only permits it—He *arranges it!*

He is also controlling the *timing*: He was forcing the religious leaders to act. They had not planned on doing it on a feast day (Matt 26:3-5), but God had ordained that His Son be slain *on* Passover as “the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; cf. 1 Cor 5:7).

Every precious attempt to arrest Jesus had failed because “His hour had not yet come” (John 7:30; 8:20; cfr. John 13:1; 17:1).

29] And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30] Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you*; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither*.

31] And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him*? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

(Some suspect this was all a pre-arranged password, etc.)

32] And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33] And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34] And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35] And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

Jesus was deliberately fulfilling Zechariah 9:9. He was doing it *on the very day* that Gabriel had prophesied to Daniel (Dan 9:25).

36] And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37] And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38] Saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

They are singing Psalm 118 (Cf. Matt 21:9; Psa 118:26), which, in this context, was declaring Jesus to be the *Mashiach Nagid*, the Messiah the King (as specified in Daniel 9:25).

(Note Psalm 118:24 declares a *specific* day...)

39] And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

Any time that we, as Gentiles, might miss the full significance of an event, it seems that the Pharisees come to our rescue! When they are especially upset, we need to understand *why!*

This is the very day that Gabriel had specified to Daniel 5 centuries earlier! Dan 9:14-16.

[see addenda]

40] And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

**The Best Bargain in Israel:** when you visit the Mount of Olives, and walk down this very road to reach the garden of Gethsemane, pick up a stone or two. When you get back home, mount it on a suitable base for your den or office. When people ask, “What is that?” you can tell them, “It is one of the stones that didn’t cry out!” You can then take them into Luke 19, Daniel 9, etc. (After all, they brought it up!)

41] And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

While the crowd rejoiced, He was weeping! (Just as did Jeremiah, cf. Jer 9:1ff.)

42] Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

This thy day: the very day that was specified by Gabriel to Daniel.

And as a result of their not being ready, *these things are now “hid from thine eyes.”*

[But not forever: Paul tells us that Israel will be blinded in part *until* the “Fulness of the Gentiles” be come in (Rom 11:25).]

43] For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

38 years later, in 70 A.D., Titus Vespasian had the 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Roman Legions laid siege to Jerusalem. In 143 days 600,000 Jews were killed. Historians estimate that over 1.5 million men, women, and children died from that horrible siege and the disease and famine that followed.

44] And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Although Titus had hoped to retain the Temple as a trophy, during the battle a torch was thrown through a window and the resulting fire forced Titus to command the dismantling of the Temple—stone by stone—to recover the gold that had melted inside. This prophecy was literally fulfilled in 70 A.D.

Why was Jerusalem destroyed in 70 A.D.? Jesus explained in the last clause: “...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Jesus held them *accountable* to know the prophecy of Daniel 9!

45] And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;

46] Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Instead of praying, they were *preying* on the people.

Jesus cleansed the temple twice—once at the beginning of His ministry (John 2:13-22), and again at the end of His ministry. Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded the latter but said nothing of the former.

Because of Jesus’ role as Messiah, His bringing ceremonial cleanliness to the nation was logical at both the beginning and the end of His

ministry. In both cases His teaching in the temple was disregarded by the religious leaders.

Jesus quoted from Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11 as He was driving out the people who were selling in the temple. Mark adds that the buyers and money changers were also driven out, as well as people who were apparently taking shortcuts through the temple compound in their business dealings (Mark 11:15-16). Money changing was done because only certain coinage was then accepted in the temple from those who bought animals for sacrifices.

The religious leaders made money off the system of buying and selling animals for sacrifice (thus making the temple a den of robbers). Also they led the people into mere formalism. A pilgrim traveling to Jerusalem could go to the temple, buy an animal, and offer it as a sacrifice without ever having anything to do with the animal. This led to an impersonalization of the sacrificial system. The commercial system was apparently set up in the area of the temple which had been designated for devout Gentiles to pray and so was disrupting Israel’s witness to the surrounding world.

47] And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

But not on a feast day (Matt 26:5). It was Jesus Himself that controlled the timing! He would force their hand by His own announcement during the Last Supper. . .

48] And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

\* \* \*

## Addenda:

[The following is an exposition of Daniel 9:24-25:]

### ***The Seventy Weeks***

24] *shabu'im* = sevens, “week.” (Gen 29:26-28; Lev 25, 26.)  
*hatak*, determined, reckoned.

#### **Scope (Verse 24)**

- 1) The focus of the passage is on the **Jews**, not the Church or the Gentile world.
- 2) The six major items listed have *yet to be completed*.  
to finish the transgressions;  
to make an end of sins;  
to make reconciliation for iniquity;  
to bring in everlasting righteousness;  
to seal up (close authority of) the vision;  
to anoint the *godesh gadashim*, the Holy of Holies.

Unfulfilled in 2000 years (therefore, are not contiguous!).

#### **The Structure of the Passage**

- 24) The Scope of the entire passage.
- 25) The 69 Weeks.
- 26) The interval between the 69th and 70th Weeks. The key to understanding this passage is to realize that the 70 “weeks” are not all contiguous.

(At least 40 years +...)

- 27) The 70th Week.

#### **Background: Sabbatical Years**

Note: focus of entire prophecy is *Israel*, not the Gentile world (Daniel 9:24).

Seventy “Sevens” imply weeks of *years* (Gen 29:27, et al.).

Sabbath for the land ordained: Lev. 25:1-22; 26:33-35; Deut 15; Ex 23:10, 11. Failure to keep the sabbath of the land was basis for 70-year captivity: 2 Chr 36:19-21.

#### **The 69 Weeks (Verse 25)**

**360-Day Years (Background):** All ancient calendars were based on a 360-day calendar:

Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Hebrews, Persians, Greeks, Phoenicians, Chinese, Mayans, Hindus, Carthaginians, Etruscans, Teutons, etc.

All these calendars were based on a 360-day year; typically, twelve 30-day months. (In ancient Chaldea, their calendar was based on a 360-day year and it is from this Babylonian tradition that we have 360 degrees in a circle, 60 minutes to an hour, 60 seconds in each minute.)

#### **All Calendars Change in 701 B.C.?**

In 701 B.C., all calendars appear to have been reorganized. Numa Pompilius, the second King of Rome, reorganized the original calendar of 360 days per year, by adding 5 days per year. King Hezekiah, Numa’s contemporary, reorganized his Jewish calendar by adding a month each Jewish leap year (on a cycle of 7 every 19 years).

(A fascinating conjecture as to the cause of this calendar change is detailed in *Signs in the Heavens*, a Briefing Package exploring the possible orbital antics of the Planet Mars.)

The Biblical Calendar uses 360-day years (Gen 7:24; 8:3,4, etc. In Revelation, 42 months = 3 1/2 years = 1260 days, etc.). We are indebted to Sir Robert Anderson’s milestone work for this insight.

#### **The Trigger: (*terminus ad quo*)**

The Decrees to “Rebuild Jerusalem”?

- 1) Cyrus, 537 B.C., Ezra 1:2-4;
- 2) Darius, Ezra 6:1-5, 8, 12;
- 3) Artaxerxes, 458 B.C., Ezra 7:11-26;

4) Artaxerxes, 445 B.C., Neh 2:5-8, 17, 18.

(1) (2) & (3) were to build the *Temple*. Only the last one (4) was to rebuild the city, the walls, etc. Note: *rehob*, “street”; *haruts*, moat, fortification.

Why “7 + 62”? Time to build the city? Time to close the OT canon? Time between testaments?

### The Target (*terminus ad quem*)

**The Meshiach Nagid:** “The Messiah the King.” The prediction is to the presentation of the Messiah the King (“Nagid” is first used of King Saul).

On several occasions in the New Testament when they attempted to take Jesus as a King, He invariably declined, “Mine hour is not yet come.” (Jn 6:15; 7:30, 44; etc.) Then one day, He *arranges* it.

**The Triumphal Entry:** All four Gospels, Mt 21:1-9; Mk 11:1-10; Lk 19:29-39; Jn 12:12-16. Nisan 10: “take to everyone a lamb.” Jesus deliberately arranges to fulfill Zech 9:9. This is the only day He allows them to proclaim Him **King** (Luke 19:38).

The Pharisees assure our noticing the significance! Hallel Psalm: Ps 118:26. Jesus held them accountable to recognize *this day*. (Luke 19:41-44).

This was the 10th of Nisan, prior to the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, 32 A.D.: (Luke 3:1: Tiberius appointed, 14 A.D.; 15th year = 29 A.D.; 4th Passover, 32 A.D. (April 6). *See the chart on next page.*

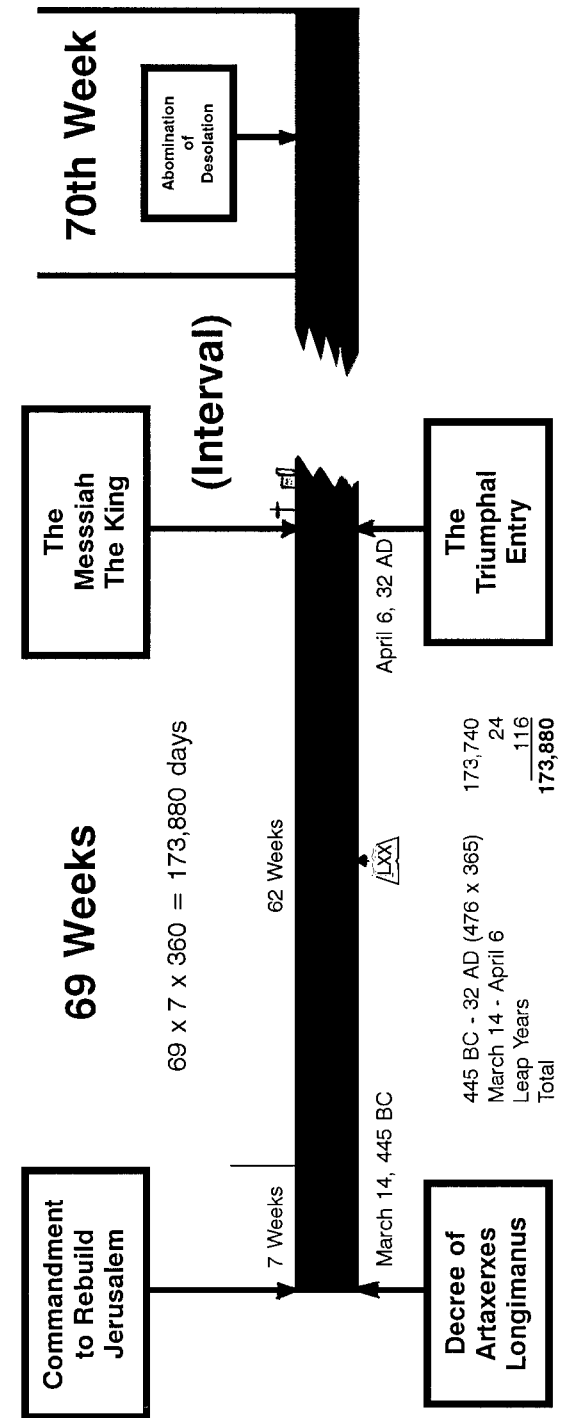
[Other examples of Precision: Gen 8:4, Noah’s new beginning, 7th month, 17th day. (Exodus 12:2: Nisan becomes 1st month). Jesus resurrected on anniversary of the “New Beginning” under Noah!]

### Interval (Verse 26)

26] After the 69th, before the 70th:

*Karat*, execution; death penalty (Lev 7:20; Ps 37:9; Prov 2:22).  
 “Not for Himself”: nothingness: rejection, substitution.  
 “Flood”: diaspora.

# The Seventy Weeks of Daniel





Titus Vespasian: 38 years later; (not 3½!).

An interval, or gap, clearly required by v. 26: events described are *after* the 69th and *prior* to the 70th week: Messiah “cut off” (karat = executed); Sanctuary destroyed, etc.

38 years are included with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. 1900 years have transpired so far.

**Interval also implied:** Dan 9:26; Isa 61:1,2 (re: Lk 4:18-20); Rev 12:5,6. Also: Isa 54:7; Hos 3:4,5; Amos 9:10,11; (Acts 15:13-18); Micah 5:2,3; Zech 9:9,10; Luke 1:31,32; 21:24.

**Interval defined:** Luke 19:42 until Rom 11:25. This interval is the period of the Church, an era kept secret in OT: Mt 13:34,35; Eph 3:5,9.

“Israel” is *never* used of the Church (73X). [Gal 6:16 misunderstood, by ignoring the *kai* in the Greek which clearly distinguishes the two groups.] Heresy: Romans 9-11.

It seems that the Lord deals with Israel and the Church *mutually exclusively*. [The example of a Chess Clock...]

**The Church:** (Our need: *Ecclesiology*, not Eschatology!) Born at Pentecost: Col 1:18; 1 Cor 12:13; Acts 1:5, 11:15-16. Prerequisites—Atonement: Mt 16:18, 21; Resurrection: Eph 1:20-23; Ascension: Eph 4:7-11 (Spiritual gifts only after ascension).

\* \* \*

## Luke 20

### Introduction

Jesus was now approaching His climax in Jerusalem. He had already told His disciples to expect conflict, and even His death (Luke 9:22).

Those present would have clearly understood that He was presenting Himself as the Messiah, capable of bringing in the kingdom. Up to this time Jesus had not sought to be openly called Messiah, but now He allowed it and even encouraged it. Everything He did over the course

of these days was designed to call attention to the fact that He is the Messiah.

In this chapter we will meet three groups of religious leaders: chief priests, scribes, and elders. (It may come as a shock to discover which group is the most disastrous—then, and even in our own day!)

The word “rejected” in both 9:22 and 20:17 means “to reject after investigation.” It was required that the Jews carefully examine the Passover lambs from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (Passover) to make sure they had no blemishes (Ex 12:1-6).

Jesus was first introduced by John the Baptist as “the Lamb of God,”—a Passover title. He had presented Himself in accordance with the requirements—riding a donkey (Zech 9:9) on the very day specified by Gabriel (Dan 9:25)—the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. And He was being watched and tested by His enemies during the very days precedent to the offering of the Lamb.

And He would be, *on the very spot that Abraham had acted out the offering of his son 2,000 years earlier!* (Gen 22).

However, Jesus was also “examining” them: it was *their* responses to *His* questions that revealed their ignorance, hatred, and unbelief. The Lord’s questions centered on four different men...

## Luke 20

- 1] And it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him* with the elders,

The cleansing of the Temple was the dramatic event that had captured the attention of the people and, of course, aroused the anger of the religious establishment.

[Why is it that the established religious organizations—throughout history—are so often the impediment to God’s purposes?]

- 2] And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

The chief priests claimed their authority from Moses, for the Torah set

the tribe of Levi apart to serve in the sanctuary.

The scribes were students of the Torah, claiming their authority from the rabbis whose interpretations had become venerated even over the plain text itself.

The elders of Israel were the leaders of the families and clans chosen for their ostensible experience and wisdom.

[A fourth group will be specifically prominent in vv.27ff.]

Their question was an attempt at entrapment:  
He couldn't excuse His disruption of the Temple unless He claimed authority from God;

Yet, if He claimed authority was from God, He would invoke the concern of the Romans, who were extremely sensitized to would-be Messiahs, especially during the Passover season (Cf. Acts 5:34-39; 21:37-39).

- 3] And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

Turning the tables on them, the Lord put them on the defensive, with a question (vv.3-8); a parable (vv.9-16); and a prophecy (vv.17-18).

- 4] The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

Jesus highlighted their previous *rejection* of John, who had first introduced Him to the nation (John 1:15-34); (their rejection of John was, thus, a rejection of Jesus);

Furthermore, a rejection of a previously offered truth is a barrier to the revelation of a further truth. (This is a basic spiritual principle: cf. Matthew 13, John 7:14-17, et al).

- 5] And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

This grenade sent them into a huddle themselves!

- 6] But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

This revealed their hearts: they were not prepared to receive the truth.

They had rejected the message of John (Luke 7:24-30); they would reject the message of God's Son.

- 7] And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it was*.

(A self-indicting demurrer.)

- 8] And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

## The Ultimate Husbandry

- 9] Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

The vineyard is, of course, Israel (Isa 5:1-7; Psalm 80:8ff; et al).

- 10] And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

The nation, rather than respond with gratitude for their provision and care, proceeded to rob God and reject His messengers (Neh 9:26; Jer 7:25-26; 25:4; et al).

- 11] And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

God sent one servant after another, but they still refused to obey (Matt 23:29-39).

- 12] And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.  
13] Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

Finally, God sent His beloved Son Himself (Luke 3:23f).

- 14] But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

(Under Jewish law, any man could lay claim to ownerless property.)

This is exactly the way the leadership was thinking as they stood there before Jesus! (Cf. John 11:47-54.)

In this parable, Jesus (again) gave His own death announcement... they were going to kill Him.

- 15] So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?  
16] He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid.

Mh. *genoi to* *may genoito*, “May it never be!” Paul uses this intensive expression several times in his letter to the Romans.

- 17] And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

Psalms 118:22. This Messianic psalm was the same one shouted by the crowd as He presented Himself as the *Mashiach Nagid*, the Messiah the King as He rode the donkey into the city (Cf. Luke 19:38; Psa 118:26).

“The Builders” were, of course, the Jewish religious leaders (Act 4:11).

“The Stone” is the familiar symbol of the promised Messiah (Gen 49:24; Ex 17:6; 33:22; Deut 32:4, 15, 30-31; Isa 8:14; 28:16; 1 Cor 10:4; as well as Dan 2, see below).

- 18] Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

When we fall on that stone, broken in spirit, we are on the foundation stone: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20).

Those who stumble over Him in disbelief are judged; e.g., the “smiting stone” (Dan 2:34-35, 44-45).

[The ultimate rejection was “the unpardonable sin” (Matt 12:24-37), which terminated God’s witness to the nation, as climaxed in the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:51-60). From then the Gospel went from the Jews to the Samaritans (Acts 8) and then to the Gentiles (Acts 10).]

Sin always compounds upon itself:

The Jewish leaders  
*permitted* John the Baptist to be killed;  
*asked* for Jesus to be crucified; and  
*they themselves stoned* Stephen.

It is a serious thing to reject the message of God and the messengers of God (Cf. Heb 2:1-4; John 12:35-43).

- 19] And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

They recognized that He was speaking of the vineyard of Israel (Isa 5:1-7; Ps 80:8ff), and thus was focused on them... [They got the point of His parable; the problem is that too many people today miss the point.]

- 20] And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

But not on a feast day (Matt 26:5).

But Jesus would control the timing!

## Citizenship Obligations

- 21] And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of *any*, but teachest the way of God truly:

These hypocrites were spies sent by the Pharisees and the Herodians (Mark 12:13) hoping that He would either offend the Jews (“Pay the tax”), or invoke a cause of action against the Romans (“Don’t pay the tax”).

- 22] Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?  
23] But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

Jesus escaped their intended trap by *raising the stakes*: elevating the discussion to a much higher level, forcing a focus on the relationship between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of men.

- 24] Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar’s.

The coinage was emblematic of his administrative authority, his provision of law and order, his protections; maintenance of roads and sea lanes, a universal currency system that was an aid to commerce, etc.

- 25] And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

While our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20) and we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth...

Saints:

*"A group of displaced persons, uprooted from their natural home, and on their way to an extraterrestrial destination, not of this planet, neither in its roots nor in its ideals."* -Donald Grey Barnhouse

*... But that does not mean we have license to ignore our earthly responsibilities!*

Governmental authority is instituted by God and must be respected (Prov 8:15; Dan 2:21, 37-38; Rom 13; 1 Pet 2:11-17). Our problem is particularly acute when we are members of a *representative republic*, and our leaders are *our employees!* Our loyalty is to a rule of law, rather than to a person. In our unique form of government, our leaders are accountable to us, and our citizenship is just another stewardship for which we will be held accountable before the Throne of God!

[Citizens of heaven pay taxes while down here; pilgrims down here can deposit their wealth in heaven by sending it up ahead! (Luke 16).]

The counsel that Jeremiah gave the Jewish exiles in Babylon is a good one for God's "strangers and pilgrims" to follow today: "Seek the peace of the city." (Jer 29:4-7).

- 26] And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

The religious leaders used this incident against Jesus in His trial, but they totally misrepresented His position, charging that Jesus opposed payment of taxes to Caesar (Luke 23:2).

## Here come the "Liberals"

["Liberal" is the euphemistic (politically correct) term for spiritually bankrupt degenerates—even today.]

- 27] Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

The Sadducees, a sect which arose about 300 B.C., rejected the supernatural, as typified by their disbelief in the resurrection. (That's why they were "sad, you see.") [That terrible pun is useful as a mnemonic in distinguishing them from the legalists, the Pharisees.]

They opposed the apostles' preaching of the resurrection (Acts 4:1-2); why they had to kill Lazarus after he was raised: John 12:10-11.

Most of the priests and temple politicians were Sadducees. They were prominent and rich.

[Isn't it interesting that most of the church politicians and rich churches today are "liberal"? Not much has changed through the centuries.]

"Liberalism" is also a departure from historic Christianity; in fact, it is a masquerade, posing as Christianity.

There was a time that the unregenerates were outside the church. Denying the authority of Scripture, the deity of Christ and the supernatural, they were called skeptics and infidels. Today we find that they have crept into our pulpits unawares.

The Sadducees were the greatest enemies which Christ had and were the main instigators of the first persecution of the Church. The Pharisees with the Sadducees were the leaders of the persecution of the Lord Jesus.

After the death of the Lord, most of the Pharisees dropped the whole affair. They lost interest in persecuting Him or His followers; in fact, many of them became Christians (Acts 3 & 4). A Pharisee named Nicodemus was converted, as were many priests who were obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7).

There is no account in Scripture of a Sadducee ever coming to Christ for salvation. The acid test of the Sadducees was the resurrection, as it is today among the "liberals."

The Sadducees were the worst enemies that the gospel of Christ ever had—whether in the first or 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- 28] Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Re: **Levirite marriage** (Latin *levir*, which means “a husband's brother”): Gen 38; Deut 25:5-10; best exemplified by the drama of the Book of Ruth.

- 29] There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.  
30] And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.  
31] And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.  
32] Last of all the woman died also.  
33] Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.  
34] And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:  
35] But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:  
36] Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

This is widely misunderstood. Procreation is, of course, restricted to the continuance of mortals. This leads to the *presumption* that angels could not have joined human women to produce the hybrids called *Nephilim* (Genesis 6). There is no basis to impose any technological restriction on Satan's angels bent on mischief. The presumption that angels are sexless fails to appreciate the grizzly aspects of Genesis 19.

The Greek word οἰκῆθριον *oiketerion*, the body as a dwelling place for the spirit, appears only twice in the New Testament:

2 Cor 5:2, where it refers to the *resurrection* body of the believer; and Jude 5, 6, where it refers to the bodies from which the fallen angels *disrobed* to indulge in the mischief of Genesis 6.

Any serious study of demonology should be careful to distinguish between the nature of angels (fallen and unfallen): they can materialize, lead people by the hand, share meals, indulge in physical combat. The demons of the N.T., however, appear to be powerless except through the *embodiment* of a hapless soul who has *allowed* entry through the gate of their volition.

[Some theorize that the “demons”—denotatively so termed—are the disembodied spirits of *Nephilim* who have perished. They are ineligible for resurrection (Isa 26:14)].

- 37] Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Jesus deals with the writings of Moses, the only part of the Tenach—the Torah—that the Sadducees accepted. He referred to an incident when the Lord told Moses that He is the God of the patriarchs (Ex. 3:6). Jesus appealed to Moses because the Sadducees wrongly taught that Moses' teachings did not reveal a resurrection.

He met His adversaries on their own ground (vs. Job 14:14; 19:25-27; Psa 16:9-10; 17:15; Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2).

- 38] For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

The statement that the Lord is the God of the patriarchs should have shown the Sadducees that the patriarchs were still alive (“He is the God of the living”), even though those words were uttered several hundred years after the last patriarch's death. God was preserving them for future resurrection.

[It is interesting that no one ever died in Jesus' presence.]

- 39] Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

The Pharisees among them applauded the refutation of the Sadducees' false views. (Their turn is also coming; see below.)

- 40] And after that they durst not ask him any *question at all*.

## Here's One for the Pharisees

While the Pharisees were still gathered together, Jesus asks the final question:

- 41] And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

Cf. Matt 2:41-42.

Every one of us has our eternal destiny determined entirely by what we think about Christ (1 John 2:21-25; 4:1-6; 5:1).

They, of course, understood that the Messiah (Christ) was to be Son of David: 2 Samuel 7:13-14; Isa 11:1; Jer 23:5.

- 42] And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,  
43] Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Re: Psalm 110, which is quoted in the N.T. more than any other psalm.

- 44] David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

*Good question!* Only by being both God and Man.

Two points are evident in these words of Jesus.

(1) The Son of David is also David's Lord (Luke 20:44) by the power of the resurrection. (Rom 1:3; 9:4-5; Act 2:32-36; 13:22-23.)

(In Acts 2:34-35 Peter used the same verse from Ps. 110 to prove that Jesus' superiority is based on His resurrection.)

(2) David must have realized that the Son, who was to be the Messiah, would be divine, for David called Him Lord.

Jesus is teaching about His own virgin birth. (Review our notes on Luke 3 concerning the genealogical end run on the curse on Jeconiah and the royal line, etc.)

They did not believe on Him because they could not let go of their presuppositions, their hearts were hardened, their eyes were blind (John 12:37-50).

Christ's question silenced His enemies (Matt 22:46) and ended their public challenges, but they would not admit defeat...

- 45] Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,

Because of their hypocrisy and dishonesty, they were dangerous to have around, so Jesus warned the people about them (cf. Matt 23, esp. vv37-39).

- 46] Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

Rather than personal holiness, they wanted public recognition; special garments, special titles, special seats at public gatherings, etc.

- 47] Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

Of all rackets, religious rackets are the worst. Posing in sanctimonious garb, they were defiling and destroying souls.

The same tragedy is being reenacted.

The Holy Spirit warns, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:7-8).

"How often I wanted to . . . but you were not willing." (Matt 23:37)

\* \* \*

## Luke 21

### Introduction

In the previous chapter, Jesus was confronted with questions from His adversaries. He turned the tables on their attempts to entrap Him by asking them questions.

Now it was the disciples' turn to ask questions.

### A Lesson on Proper Measures.

- 1] And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.  
2] And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

Two *lepta*, each worth about 1/5 cent; (Luke 12:59; Mark 12:42).

- 3] And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:

- 4] For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

She gave more than the others: God sees more than the portion; He sees the *proportion*. Men see what is given; God sees *what is left*.

Cf. Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 8:1-15.

- 5] And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,  
6] *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

Jesus had already told them that the city would be destroyed (Luke 19:41-44; Cf. Dan 9:26); now He specifically announced that this magnificent building would be destroyed.

## Olivet Discourse

Parallel accounts: Matt 24, 25; Mark 13.

Matthew (who was skilled in shorthand) gives us the most complete account.)

Mark highlights that there were specifically four disciples present: Peter, James, John, and Andrew (Peter's brother) (Mark 13:3).

- 7] And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

They came to Him *privately* (Mark 13:3: Jesus' response was a confidential briefing); and asked Him three questions:

- 1) When would the Temple be destroyed?
- 2) What would be the sign of His coming?
- 3) What would be the sign of the end of the age?

They thought that these three events would occur at the same time, but Jesus explained things differently. Actually, the Temple would be destroyed first, and a long interval of time would intervene before He would return to establish His kingdom on the earth. (Cf. Luke 19:11-27).

## Caveats

Luke wrote with the Gentile reader in mind and omitted some of the strong Jewish elements of the briefing. However, it is important to bear in mind that the emphasis—by a Jewish rabbi to Jewish listeners—was on Jerusalem and the Temple.

He was not discussing the church: for which He can come at any time, with no “signs” preceding it (1 Thes 4:13-5:11; 1 Cor 15:51-58). “For the Jews require a sign” (1 Cor 1:22); the church looks for a Savior (Phil 3:20,21).

## General Outline (Cf. Dan 9:24-27)

- 1] The First Half of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week:  
Matt 24:4-14; Mark 13:5-13; Luke 21:8-19
- 2] The Middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week:  
Matt 24:15-28; Mark 13:14-18; (Dan 9:27)
- 3] The Last Half of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week:  
Matt 24:29-31; Mark 13:19-27; Luke 21:25-27
- 4] Closing admonitions:  
Matt 24:32-25:51; Mark 13:28-37; Luke 21:28-36.

[Many speak of the seven-year “tribulation”; but technically “The Great Tribulation” is the last half of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel (Dan 9:27). Jesus Himself labels it so (Matt 24:21, quoting from Dan 12:1).]

Luke records four topics regarding the future of the nation of Israel:

- The Description of the Age (21:8-19)
- The Destruction of the Temple (21:20-24)
- The Return of the Lord (21:25-28)
- The Responsibilities of the Believers (21:29-38)

## The Description of the Age (21:8-19)

The characteristics that Jesus stated are “non-signs”: they are characteristics which can be seen in *every* age of the Church. From the beginning there have been counterfeit messiahs, national and international upheavals, and religious persecution. “But the end is not yet.”

8] And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Even God’s people will be in danger of being deceived. For centuries Satan has led people astray by deceiving their minds and blinding their hearts (2 Cor 11:1-4, 13-15; 4:1-6; 2Pet 2).

There have been “date setters” and the like in every age, yet nobody knows the time of His return (Matt 24:36-44).

Be not deceived; but seek balance and obedience: 2 Pet 3:17-18.

9] But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by.

These are *not* “signs.”

And “don’t be terrified.” These things must come to pass; there is nothing anyone can do to prevent them. This is not submitting to blind fate: rather, it means that we are yielding to the plan of a loving Father who works all things “after the counsel of His own will” (Eph 1:11).

10] Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11] And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

Jesus referred to tremendous earthquakes would occur, causing famines (*loimoi*) and pestilences (*limoi*). But these events do not fit between Jesus’ day and the fall of Jerusalem. These fearful events and great signs from heaven refer to the Great Tribulation which will precede the return of the Lord to the earth.

There have been wars, earthquakes, famines and pestilences throughout the centuries, which, by themselves, are not signs.

However these will all intensify. Matt 24:1-14 lists them in detail and they parallel Revelation 6:

|               | <b>Matthew</b> | <b>Revelation</b> |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| False Christs | 24:4-5         | 6:1-2             |
| Wars          | 24:6           | 6:3-4             |
| Famines       | 24:7a          | 6:5-6             |

|              |          |         |
|--------------|----------|---------|
| Death        | 24:7b-8  | 6:7-8   |
| Martyrs      | 24:9     | 6:9-11  |
| Global chaos | 24:10-13 | 6:12-17 |

Revelation 6-19 details the events of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel 9:24-27.

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Half | Rev 6-9   |
| Middle               | Rev 10-14 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Half | Rev 15-19 |

12] But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name’s sake.

There will be religious persecution, both official (v. 12-15) and personal (vv.16-19).

Jesus promised that His people would suffer (John 15:18-16:4, 32-33). That promise holds true today (2 Tim 3:12).

13] And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

These are precious opportunities to be a witness.

The English word *martyr* comes from the Greek word μαρτυρ, *martus* which means “a witness” (Cf. 1 Pet 3:13-17).

14] Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:  
 15] For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

This is not an excuse for failure to prepare; it is simply the assurance that God will provide the Holy Spirit in times *en extremis*.

16] And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death.

Matt 10:34ff.

17] And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name’s sake.

18] But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

Jesus’ next two statements (vv.18-19) have confused many. Ultimately even though a believer dies, he or she will be protected eternally by God.



Not a hair on you can perish apart from His sovereign will (Matt 10:28-31).

19] In your patience possess ye your souls.

However, it appears that Jesus was speaking here of salvation as entering into the kingdom alive (Matt. 24:9-13). To “in your patience possess your souls” means that believers show that they are members of the believing community in opposition to those who turn away from the faith during times of persecution (Matt. 24:10). The ones who are saved are those who are preserved by God’s sovereign power (Matt. 24:22).

## The Destruction of the Temple (21:20-24)

This section is peculiar to Luke, despite similar language in Matt 24:16-21 and Mark 13:14-17. [Cf. Outline: 2]

The Middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week:  
Matt 24:15-28; Mark 13:14-18; (Dan 9:27)

Matthew and Mark are referring to events in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week, when the “abomination of desolation” would be set up in the Jewish Temple and the Coming World Leader would begin to persecute Israel (Dan 9:27; Rev 13; 2 Thess 2:4ff.).

20] And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

Luke’s account refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Roman army in 70 A.D., 38 years after Luke 19:41-44.

21] Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22] For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Cf. Isaiah 61:2, the part that Jesus *did not* read in Luke 4:16-19.

23] But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24] And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into

all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Josephus records that over a million people were killed and over 100,000 taken captive.

The “times of the Gentiles” began with Nebuchadnezzar and will continue until Jesus returns to set up His kingdom on the earth (Dan 2:34-36, 44-45; Dan 7:9-14, 22, 27). Jerusalem will again fall under Gentile domination in the Tribulation (Zech. 14:1-2), just before the Messiah returns to restore Jerusalem. It is that restoration of which Jesus spoke next (Luke 21:25-28).

[Believers today who are looking for the Lord’s return should not apply vv.20-24 to their own situation. In Matthew 24:15-28 and Mark 13:14-23, Jesus was speaking about Israel’s situation in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week. Since our Lord’s coming for the Church will take place “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor 15:52), no one will have time to go back home for a coat; nor will we have to worry about traveling on the Sabbath or caring for nursing babies, etc.]

Thus far, Jesus has told the disciples when the Temple would be destroyed and what signs would point to the end of the age. Now He tells them about His own coming at the end of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week.

## The Return of the Lord (21:25-28)

Revelation 15-19 describes the frightening judgments that God will send on the earth during the final ½ of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week, the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer 30:7).

25] And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Nations rising and falling like waves in a storm (Ps 46:1-6; Rev 17:15).

The population of the earth dwellers will still not repent or turn to God (Rev 9:20-21; 16:9-11).

The sun and moon will be darkened (Matthew 24:29) and the stars will fall (Isa 13:10; 34:4; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15). Matthew 24:30 states that “the sign of the Son of Man” will appear in heaven. We don’t know what sign this will be, but it will produce fear among the nations of the earth.

However, when Jesus Christ shall appear, every eye shall see Him (Rev 1:7).

The believing remnant of Israel will ultimately recognize Him, repent, and petition His return (Hos 5:15ff; Zech 12:10-14).

- 26] Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
- 27] And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Quoted as His trial: Mark 14:61-62; an allusion from Dan. 7:13-14.

- 28] And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Believers today look for the Savior, not signs. However, as we see coming events casting their shadows, we believe that the Lord's coming is imminent.

There are those who ignore, or even ridicule, these anticipations. Peter answered these taunts in 2 Peter 3: God keeps His promises whether we believe them or not.

His delays are but opportunities for the lost. Jesus now turns to our responsibilities.

## The Responsibilities of the Believers (21:29-38)

- 29] And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;

(Note "*and all the trees.*" This obstructs attempts to make the tree specifically Israel.)

- 30] When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.
- 31] So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

See Luke 12:54-57, and Matt 16:2, 3 for similar passages.

- 32] Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

Three of several possibilities:

- 1) That Jesus was referring to the apostles. However, none of these signs Jesus mentioned took place before or during the subsequent period.
- 2) The Greek word translated "generation" can mean "race" and could refer to Israel. (Jesus used it in Mark 8:12, 38 and 9:19). Satan continues his attempts to destroy the nation but will not succeed (Rev 12:6ff).
- 3) The Biblical generation can be argued is 40 years. The issue is, *which* is the trigger?

The conjectures that it is the formation of the state of Israel (May 14, 1948) or the regaining of Jerusalem (June 6, 1967) are without textual support.

If we understand the "mutual exclusiveness" of God's dealing with the Church and Israel, it could well be the *harpazo*, or the "rapture."

- 33] Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.
- 34] And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

The key admonition is to be awake and prepared.

- 35] For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
- 36] Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Watch! Be alert!

We aren't looking for "signs." We are listening for sounds: the sound of a trumpet; the shout of the archangel! (1 Thess 4:16).  
Even so, Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev 22:30)

- 37] And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.
- 38] And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

\* \* \*

## Luke 22

### Introduction

Jesus knew full well what was coming: they were appointments, not accidents. He would fulfill innumerable details over the following hours.

The Gospel definition (1 Cor. 15:1-4) includes the key fact: “that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” Not just that He died, but that it met all the specifications spelled out over the centuries.

Having given four of His disciples a confidential briefing on their prophetic questions, including His Second Coming, we now begin the climactic chronicle of the ultimate offering: the Passover Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world...

- 1] Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

Denotatively, these are separate feasts: the Feast of Passover is on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (Lev 23:5). The Feast of Unleavened Bread is on the 15<sup>th</sup> and lasts seven days (Lev 23:6). This was one of the three compulsory feasts that every able-bodied Jewish man was expected to attend each year in Jerusalem.

(The Feast of First Fruits is on the morning after the Sabbath after Passover (Lev 23:11, 15). It is thus contained within the Feast of Unleavened Bread.)

Connotatively, the entire period is called Passover.

- 2] And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

They have planned that it should not occur on a feast day, for they feared the people: Matt 26:5.

It is ironic that history's greatest crime was perpetrated during Israel's holiest festival.

- 3] Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

Judas was motivated and energized by Satan (John 13:2, 27). It is

sobering to realize how close a person can come to God's kingdom and still be lost: Matt 7:21-29.

Satan's taking part in Jesus' death was actually his own downfall, for through dying Jesus conquered Satan and death (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14).

- 4] And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.
- 5] And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

Zech 11:12, 13.

- 6] And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14; (Also, Cf. 69:25 & 109:8 with Acts 1:15-20).

Jesus had predicted this: Matt 17:22; 20:18.

- 7] Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

Luke, as a Gentile, is not precise concerning the Jewish holidays.

The Passover Lamb is killed “between the evenings” on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Feast of First Fruits is always on the following Sunday (“the morning after the Sabbath after Passover.”)

- 8] And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.  
These were two of the insiders.

- 9] And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

The arrangements are suggestive in that they anticipate that there were plots afoot...

- 10] And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

This seems to be an undercover sign: men rarely carried pitchers of water; this was a woman's task.

- 11] And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?  
 12] And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.  
 13] And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

This would include an approved lamb that was roasted, appropriate wine, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, commemorating their bondage in Egypt (Ex 12:1-28).

- 14] And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.  
 15] And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

“This Passover”: God’s last.

- 16] For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

There are no more Passovers on God’s calendar.

- 17] And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves:

There were four cups:

1. “Bring out”
2. “Delivering”
3. “Redemption/Blessing”
4. “Taking Out”

It was the “Cup of Blessing” that apparently was used (1 Cor 10:16).

The *Mishna* alludes to the mixing of warm water with the wine: (*Mishna*, Pes. VII 13; Cf. John 19:34)<sup>1</sup>

- 18] For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

Some feel that the fourth cup was deferred until we are all gathered with Him in the Kingdom.

- 19] And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.  
 20] Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

The “Last Supper” was for at least three reasons:

- 1) In Remembrance of me (1 Cor 11:24-25);
- 2) Proclaiming His death until He returns (1 Cor 11:16);
- 3) A reminder of the unity of the church (1 Cor 10:17).

- 21] But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table.

The cat is out of the bag: this announcement forces Judas’ hand: he has to “fish or cut bait.”

Who is in charge here?

- 22] And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!  
 23] And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.  
 24] And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

Worldliness, even here. Not the first time: Luke 9:46-48; Matt 20:20-28; Mark 9:33-37.

- 25] And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.  
 26] But ye *shall not be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.  
 27] For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.  
 28] Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.  
 29] And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;  
 30] That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.  
 31] And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

“You” is in the *plural*. Satan desired to have them all to sift as wheat.

- 32] But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

This was both a warning and an encouragement.

“Converted” means turned around; he was already a saved man, but would soon head in the wrong direction; he didn’t jeopardize his salvation, only his discipleship.

33] And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

Careful: we always fail in the point of our greatest strength.

Abraham's faith: lied about Sarah (Gen 12:10-13:4).

Moses' meekness (Num 12:3), yet he lost his temper and thus denied entrance into Canaan (Num 20).

Peter, a brave man, denied his Lord three times...

34] And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

We always fail in what we regard as our "strongest suit": our strength is our weakness, our most vulnerable point.

35] And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36] Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

Things are going to get rough. Self-reliance is important. Self-defense is also an issue.

37] For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38] And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

["Enough already."] Deut 3:16.

They probably missed the point.

(Some see this clause in conjunction with a quotation from Isaiah and understand Jesus to mean that by possessing more than two swords they could be classified by others as transgressors or criminals.)

## The Garden

39] And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

History began in a garden . . .

Gethsemane means "olive press." Significant.

Peter, James, and John were closer in a private place to pray (Mark 14:32-33). This was the third time He shared a special situation with these three:

Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:41-56);  
Transfiguration (Matt 17; Luke 9:31);  
...and here.

[James was the first to die (Acts 12:1,20); John the last. Peter was crucified upside down.]

40] And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41] And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42] Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

"Cup": Isa. 51:17,22; Psalm 73:10; 75:8; Jer 25:15-28.

43] And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Luke emphasizes angels in his gospel and Acts.

44] And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Dr. Luke makes this point. Hematidrosis: under great emotional stress, tiny blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of blood and sweat.

45] And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46] And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47] And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48] But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49] When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50] And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

(Peter...and it seems he missed: he was probably aiming for the middle of his head!)

Perhaps responding to his boast in the Upper Room (22:33).

Peter had been sleeping when he should have been praying.

- 51] And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

Jesus thus saved Peter's life.

- 52] Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?  
53] When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Jesus gives the orders: "If ye seek me, let these go their way."

- 54] Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

He will endure six trials:

Jewish Trials:

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Before Annas         | 18:12-14    |
| Before Caiaphas      | 18:19-24    |
| Before the Sanhedrin | Matt 27:1,2 |

Roman Trials:

|               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| Before Pilate | 18:28-38     |
| Before Herod  | Luke 23:6-11 |
| Before Pilate | 18:39-19:16  |

This was before Annas, the former high priest, retained this honorary title (John 18:12-13) and who retained great influence in the nation.

Annas will then send him Caiaphas, his son-in-law, who was the official high priest (Matt 26:57).

At daybreak, Jesus will be found guilty before the Sanhedrin (vv.66-71).

- 55] And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

Why was he even there? He was totally unprepared for what follows.

- 56] But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.  
57] And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.  
58] And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.  
59] And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.

Galilean had a distinctive dialect.

- 60] And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.  
61] And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.  
62] And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Jesus' prophecy was also a promise of restoration...

- 63] And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote *him*.  
64] And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?  
65] And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.  
66] And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,  
67] Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:  
68] And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.  
69] Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

"Son of Man": a Messianic title found in Daniel 7:13-14.

"Right hand of the power of God": a clear reference to Psalm 110:1, the very psalm that He used to confound them in Luke 20:41-44.

(Cf. Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22; Act 2:33; 5:31; 7:55-56; rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1).

- 70] Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

Only Luke records the direct question and direct answer. They would use this testimony later before Pilate (John 19:7).

Some “liberal” theologians say that Jesus never claimed to be God; we can’t help but wonder what they do with this official trial!

71] And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

The Jewish leaders know what Jesus was talking about, and this is why they condemned Him for blasphemy.

Self-incrimination was prohibited in their law.

Virtually all of the aspects of the six trials Jesus endured were illegally administered.<sup>2</sup>

The religious trial was over. The next step was the criminal trial before the civil authorities. Only they could execute Him for death.

[...by a method that had been invented only a century earlier; yet prophesied 800 years earlier!]

\* \* \*

## **Addenda:**

### ***Legal Irregularities***

The binding of a prisoner before he was condemned was unlawful unless resistance was offered or expected. Jesus offered none. John 18:12,24.

It was illegal for judges to participate in the arrest of the accused. John 18:3

No legal transactions, including a trial, could be conducted at night. John 18:28

The arrest was effected through the agency of an informer and traitor. John 18:5; Ex 23:6-8

While an acquittal could be pronounced the same day, any other verdict required a majority of two and had to come on a subsequent day. Matt 26:65,66

No prisoner could be convicted on his own evidence. Matt 26:63-65

It was the duty of a judge to see that the interest of the accused was fully protected. John 18:14

Preliminary hearings before a magistrate were completely foreign to the Jewish legal system. John 18:13

It was illegal to carry weapons on the feast day. John 18:3

The use of violence during the trial was apparently unopposed by the judges. John 18:22,23

The judges sought false witnesses against Jesus. Matt 26:59; Mark 14:56

In a Jewish court the accused was to be assumed innocent until proved guilty by two or more witnesses. Matt 18:63

The Jews failed to find two witnesses agreeing against Jesus. Mark 14:59

When the witnesses first disagreed, the prisoner should have been released. Mark 14:56-59

The trial under Caiaphas took place in his home rather than the council chamber where it should have been held. John 18:13-16

The Court lacked the civil authority to condemn a man to death. John 18:31

It was illegal to conduct a session of the court on a feast day. John 18:28

A guilty verdict was rendered without evidence. John 18:30

The balloting was illegal. It should have been by roll with the youngest voting first. Here it is simultaneous. Matt 26:66

The sentence is finally passed in the palace of the high priest, but the law demanded it be pronounced in the temple, in the hall of hewn stone. John 18:28

The high priest rends his garment. Matt 26:65

(Cf. Lev 21:10) He was never permitted to tear his official robe. (If he did not have on his priestly robe, he couldn't have put Christ under oath.)

#### Notes:

1. For more detail on the prophetic symbolism of the feasts, see our briefing package, *The Feasts of Israel*.
2. See *The Agony of Love* briefing pack for more details.

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## Luke 23

### Introduction

In the previous session we followed Jesus and His disciples from the upper room, to the Garden of Gethsemane, and His arrest and the three Jewish trials.

In this chapter we will follow the several attempts of Pilate to “get off the hook,” and his final yielding to administrative expediency, and allowing Jesus to be crucified.

Six encounters are detailed.

### Jesus and Pilate

(Matt. 27:1-2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; John 18:28-38.)

- 1] And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

Pontius Pilate served as governor of Judea from A.D. 26 to A.D. 36, after which he was recalled to Rome and then passed out of official history.

He was hated by the orthodox Jews and never really understood them.

He once aroused their fury by putting up pagan banners in the Jewish Temple and was not hesitant to send armed spies into the Temple to silence Jewish protesters (13:1-3).

- 2] And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

There were three charges:

He perverted the nation;  
He opposed paying the tax to Caesar;  
He claimed to be a king.

The Jewish authorities charged Him falsely: They said He opposed paying taxes to Caesar, but Jesus had said the opposite (Luke 20:25).

And the blasphemy charge—He claims to be Christ, a king—was worded to sound as if Jesus was an insurrectionist.

- 3] And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*.
- 4] Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man.

Jesus was pronounced innocent (three times: vv.4, 14, 22) by the personal representative of the ruler of the known world.

Pilate would make seven different moves to find a loophole... (John 18:29, 33, 38; 19:1, 4, 9, 13).

Three other witnesses also proclaimed Him not guilty: King Herod (v.15), one of the malefactors (v.40-43), and the Roman centurion (v.47).

- 5] And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.
- 6] When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.

A bureaucratic opportunity to pass the buck!

- 7] And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

Herod Antipas, ruler (“tetrarch”) of Galilee: the man who murdered John the Baptist.

- 8] And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.
- 9] Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

Herod had silenced the voice of God. It was not Herod who was judging Jesus; it was Jesus who was judging Herod.



- 10] And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.  
 11] And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.  
 12] And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.  
 13] And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

Notice that this isn't a random crowd: it represents the enemies of Jesus. Cf. Matt. 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; John 18:39-19:16.

- 14] Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

Again, Pilate pronounces Jesus innocent.

- 15] No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.  
 16] I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.  
 17] (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)  
 18] And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas:  
 19] (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

He was a robber (John 18:40), a murderer, and an insurrectionist. May have been a leader of the Zealots who were working for the overthrow of Rome.

- 20] Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.  
 21] But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

Don't necessarily assume that this crowd was the general populace. It was primarily the official religious leaders of the nation, the chief priests in particular (v.23).

- 22] And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

Pilate's indecisiveness and mishandling almost caused a riot, the last thing he wanted—especially during the holiday season.

- 23] And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

- 24] And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

He washed his hands, again affirming his innocence (Matt 27:24-25).

- 25] And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Barabbas and Jesus changed places: the condemned was set free; the innocent incurred the punishment.

[*We* are in Barabbas' shoes!]

## The Crucifixion

(Matt. 27:32-56; Mark 15:21-41; John 19:17-30).

Crucifixion was a common method of carrying out the death sentence in the Roman Empire. It was probably the most cruel and painful method of death the Romans knew. Crucifixion was reserved for the worst criminals; by law a Roman citizen could not be crucified. Crucifixion was usually a long slow process, sometimes taking nine days.

## Jesus and Simon

- 26] And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

Carrying the cross was a sign of guilt. *Our Lord was not guilty!*

Simon of Cyrene had come 800 miles from Africa to celebrate the Passover. (Thousands had come from many countries to celebrate the feasts (Acts 2:5-11)).

[Another Simon had promised to go to prison and to death, yet denied Him under pressure.]

Simon may have been converted in the process: he was the father of Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), two men Mark assumed his Roman readers would know. A Christian named Rufus was greeted by Paul in Romans 16:13; it's possible it could be the same.

## Jesus and the Jerusalem Women

27] And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

As far as the Gospel records are concerned, no woman was ever the enemy of Jesus.

Certainly His teachings and redemption have done much to dignify and elevate women.

The news of His birth was shared by women; His death was witnessed by women; and His resurrection was announced first to a woman.

28] But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

It is the nation that they should be concerned over... a judgment that was fully justified (Luke 19:41-44).

29] For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

The Lord's intercession postponed God's judgment on the nation for 38 years (the same period they wandered in the wilderness), giving them additional opportunities to be saved (Acts 3:17-19).

30] Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31] For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Israel was like a "green tree" during the years when Jesus was on the earth; a time of blessing and opportunity.

But now the nation had become like a "dry tree," fit only for the fire.

I.e., "If the Roman authorities do this to One who is innocent, what will they do to you who are guilty? When the day of judgment arrives, can there be any escape for you?"

32] And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

Prophetic fulfillment: Luke 22:37; Isa 53:12.

Robbers (Matt 27:38); Greek word  $\lambda\eta\sigma\tau\eta\iota$  *lestes* signifies a brigand, "one who uses violence to rob openly."

33] And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Calvary: from the Latin, *calvaria*, which means "a skull." (The Greek  $\kappa\rho\nu\nu\alpha\nu\iota\omicron\nu$  *kranion*, which gives us the English *cranium*.) The Aramaic word is *Golgatha*.

Jesus was crucified about 9 a.m. and remained on the cross until 3 p.m. From noon to 3 p.m. there was darkness over all the land (Mark 15:25, 33).

34] Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Jesus spoke seven times during those six terrible hours:

1. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Prophetic: Cf. Isa 53:12.
2. "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43);
3. "Woman, behold thy son" (John 19:25-27).

[Three hours of darkness...]

4. "My God, Why has Thou forsaken me?" (Matt 27:45-46; Mark 15:33-34; Cf. Psalm 22:1). This is the only time He *didn't* refer to Him as "Father."
5. "I thirst" (John 19:28)
6. "It is finished" (John 19:30); "Paid in full." He finished the work His Father gave Him to do (John 17:4; Heb 9:24ff).
7. "Father, into Thy hands..." (Luke 23:46; Cf. Psalm 31:5.) Gambled for clothing: Psalm 22:18.

Ignorance is not a basis for forgiveness. The law provided a sacrifice for sins committed ignorantly, but there was no sacrifice for deliberate presumptuous sin (Num 15:27-31; Ex 21:14; Ps 51:16-17).

35] And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

Cf. Psalm 22:6-8.

36] And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

Cf. Psalm 69:21.

37] And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

### A New Testament Acrostic?

38] And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

When Jesus was crucified, Pilate wrote the formal epitaph that was nailed to the cross. Luke’s rendering is less precise than John’s. The particular wording he chose displeased the Jewish leadership and they asked him to change it. He refused. There are some interesting aspects to this incident that are not apparent in our English translations.

*“And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth The King of The Jews. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.”*  
-John 19:19-22

The chief priest’s distress highlights something we might otherwise miss. Notice that Pilate refused to revise the epitaph he had composed. This may have more significance than is apparent in our English translations. The Hebrew is shown below (remember, Hebrew goes from right to left):<sup>1</sup>

~ydWlhyh; %l mW yrenth ; [WwyE

HaYehudim v’Melech HaNazarei Yeshua  
Jesus the Nazarei and King of the Jews.

What we don’t notice in the English translation is the potential acrostic made up of the first letter of each word which would spell out the Tetragammaton, YHWH, *Yahweh*:<sup>2</sup>

hwby

If Pilate had rewritten it in the manner they had requested him to, it would not have spelled out the Name of God. Did Pilate realize this? Was it deliberate? If so, did he do it just to upset the Jewish leadership, which he realized had delivered Him up for envy?<sup>3</sup> Or was he beginning to suspect that there was more going on here than he previously realized? It is interesting that Jesus’ enemies recalled that He promised to rise on the third day. When they later requested a special guard for the tomb, Pilate also responded with an enigmatic remark, “Make it as sure as you can.”<sup>4</sup> What did he mean by that? Had he begun to suspect that Jesus really was who He said He was? Was Pilate really surprised when Jesus was resurrected after three days? One wonders.

- 39] And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.
- 40] But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?
- 41] And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.
- 42] And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.
- 43] And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

What hope in this witness!!

The man was saved wholly by grace; it was a gift of God (Eph 2:8-9). He did not deserve it and he could not earn it. Personal and secure, guaranteed by the Word of Jesus Christ.

Cf. 2 Cor 12:1-4.

### Jesus and the Father

- 44] And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.
- 45] And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

Not an eclipse: it would be impossible at Passover which always had a full moon: the alignment was just the opposite.

(Three days of darkness preceded the first Passover in Egypt (Ex 10:21ff.)

46] And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

This completed an eternal transaction between Him and the Father (Isa 53:4-6, 10-12).

This was actually a Jewish bedtime prayer, and tells us how He died: confidently, willingly (John 10:17-18), and victoriously.

[Those who know Jesus as their Savior may die with the same confidence and assurance (Phil 1:20-23; 2 Cor 5:1-8).]

Mark tells us that when our Lord released His spirit, the veil of the Temple was torn in two “from top to bottom” (Mark 15:38), indicating that the way to God’s presence was now open for all who would come to Him by faith through Jesus Christ (Heb 9:1-10:25).

47] Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

He was impressed by the darkness, the earthquake (Matt 27:54), and the manner in which Jesus suffered and died...

48] And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

49] And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

The women were the last to leave the cross and the first at the tomb Sunday morning.

## The Burial of Jesus

(Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; John 19:38-42).

50] And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just:

Joseph and his friend Nicodemus were both members of the Jewish council, but were not present at the vote against Jesus.

It is likely that they both knew their Tenach (Old Testament Scriptures) and how the Messiah was to die, so they prepared *ahead of time* for the

burial. (They wouldn’t have been able to purchase the necessities on Passover.)

51] (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52] This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

[Apocryphal account:

Pilate was shocked! “You, as one of the richest men in this region, having a brand new tomb for your family, and you are going to give it to this criminal?”

“Oi Veh! It’s just for the Weekend!”]

Fulfilling Isa. 53:9.

53] And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54] And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

Preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the day following Passover, one of the three compulsory feasts; it, too, was a “sabbath.”

55] And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56] And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

When after six days God finished the work of the Creation, He rested (Gen2:1-3).

After six hours, our Lord finished the work of the “New Creation” (2 Cor 5:17), and He rested on the Sabbath in Joseph’s tomb.

\* \* \*

## Addenda:

### *The Cities of Refuge*

I have long insisted that everything in the Bible is there by specific design, and, further, relates, somehow, to Jesus Christ. I have been challenged on this view: “Aren’t some of the Biblical rules and regulations simply quaint tribal customs?”

We have already explored the peculiar exception granted to the daughters of Zelophehad in regards to the genealogy in Luke Chapter 3. Another specific challenge is the strange practice involving the “Cities of Refuge.”

## The Cities of the Levites

After the conquest of Joshua was completed, the land of Canaan was divided, by lot, among the Twelve Tribes.<sup>5</sup> (As we pointed out in Chapter 8, there were actually 13 tribes.) The tribe of Levi, however, did not inherit land as “the Lord was their inheritance.”<sup>6</sup> They were, however, awarded 48 cities, six of which were designated “cities of refuge.”<sup>7</sup>

If someone was killed by an assailant, his slayer would be pursued by the next of kin, the *goel*, the “avenger of blood.” In the case where there was no premeditation—what we would term “manslaughter,”—the slayer could seek refuge in the nearest “city of refuge.” Assuming that he could convince the elders at the gate of the city that there was no premeditation, etc., he was secure from the “avenger of blood,” *as long as he remained within the city*. If the slayer left the confines of the ‘city of refuge,’ he was fair game to the “avenger of blood.”<sup>8</sup>

All of this remained in this state until the death of the high priest in Jerusalem. After the death of the high priest the slayer was free to leave the “city of refuge,” free of any further jeopardy from the “avenger of blood.”

In Israel they had no police force, or prisons. Still, it does seem like a strange procedure. The fate of the slayer was dependent upon his ability to access the nearest city of refuge.

And what has the death of the high priest, in distant Jerusalem, have to do with any of this? Why should this impact the status of the fugitive refugee?

## Quaint Rule or Spiritual Insight?

These peculiar arrangements are expressly specified in the Torah, the most venerated part of the Old Testament. Paul emphasized,

*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our*

*learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.* -Romans 15:4

“Whatsoever things” means everything. What’s the possible *spiritual* significance behind this unusual procedure involving the cities of refuge?

Jesus also declared,  
*The volume of the book is written of me.*  
Psalm 40:7 (q.v. Hebrews 10:7)

So, perhaps, the key to any Biblical dilemma is to put Jesus right into the middle of it and see what emerges! (In fact, that can also apply to any of the issues of life!)

## First or Second Degree?

Let’s begin by examining the death of Jesus Christ. Was it “first degree” (premeditated) murder or “second degree” (manslaughter)?

From God’s point of view, it was “first degree.” It was ordained “being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,”<sup>9</sup> and, thus, from the Father’s point of view, it was indeed premeditated. In fact, it was a deal struck with the Son before the foundation of the world!

## Our Predicament

But what about *our* position? After all, it *was* our sins which put Him on that cross! Would this be considered “first” or “second” degree murder?

Remember the words of Jesus Himself, (who is, after all, our own defense counsel): “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”<sup>10</sup> I would argue that, for this purpose at least, it could be considered manslaughter, and would qualify us to flee to our city of refuge!

And just where *is* our city of refuge? In *Jesus Christ Himself*, of course.

*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* -Galatians 2:20

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* -Romans 8:2

And all this was to obtain until the death of the high priest. Who is *our* High Priest? Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

And it was His death that has freed us from the pursuit of the Avenger of Blood.<sup>12</sup>

However, every check, to be cashed, requires an endorsement of the recipient. Every pardon needs an acceptance. Have *you* laid claim to what He has purchased for *you*?

[This Addenda was excerpted from *Hidden Treasures in the Biblical Text*, Koinonia House, 2000, p. 101-104.]

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#### Notes:

1. Suggested by Peter A. Michas, Robert Vander Maten, and Christie P. Michas, *God's Master Plan: From Aleph to Tau*, Messengers of Messiah International Ministries, P.O. Box 125, Troy IL, 1994. There are, however, some that are uncomfortable with the *wav* conjunctive being included in an appositive construction.
2. Psalm 96:11 contains four Hebrew words that also make the same acrostic. The Massorah has a special rubric calling attention to this acrostic. (E. W. Bullinger's *Companion Bible*, Appendix 30.)
3. Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10.
4. Matthew 27:63-66.
5. Joshua 11:23; 18:10.
6. Numbers 18:20.
7. Number 35:2-7; Joshua 21:41.
8. Numbers 35:15-34.
9. Acts 2:23.
10. Luke 23:34.

11. Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:1, 5, 10; 8:1; 9:11, et al.

12. Romans 8:1.

\* \* \*

## Luke 24

### Introduction

The Resurrection! The most essential truth for Satan to attack.

It is interesting that even atheistic scientists have concluded—just from the laws of physics and mathematics—that all life is destined for a resurrection! [Cf. Frank Tipler, *The Physics of Immortality*, ... I don't recommend it particularly; you will learn much more about the subject by reading the most critical chapter of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 15.]

The entire Book of Acts ("Luke, Volume 2") is on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He first appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18); then to the "other women" (Matt 28:9-10); and then on this fascinating walk to Emmaus in this chapter (Luke 24:13-22).

He also appeared to Peter (Luke 24:34) and to His brother James (1 Cor 15:7).

That evening He appeared to the Apostles (Luke 24:36-43), but Thomas wasn't with them. A week later He joined them again, specifically for Thomas (John 20:26:31).

He subsequently appeared to seven of the disciples at that seaside breakfast in Galilee (John 21).

## Luke 24

- 1] Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

The list is in verse 10.

- 2] And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

Not to let Jesus out, but to let them in!

- 3] And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.  
4] And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

Two angels: Matthew (28:2) and Mark (16:5) only mention one of the two, the one who gave the message to the women.

- 5] And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?  
6] He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

A mild rebuke...

- 7] Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

More than once Jesus had told them that He would suffer, die, and be raised from the dead (Matt 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; Luke 9:22, 44; 18:31-34).

- 8] And they remembered his words,  
9] And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

Obedient to their commission. (Are we?)

- 10] It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.  
11] And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

Later Jesus rebuked them for their unbelief (Mark 16:14).

Mary Magdalene asked Peter and John to examine the tomb for themselves (John 20:1-10).

- 12] Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Mary lingered, weeping; Jesus Himself appeared to her (John 20:11-18).

## The Road to Emmaus

- 13] And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

Emmaus is seven miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Furlong = a stadium, a Greek measure of distance equal to 606 feet and 9 inches (Lu 24:13 Joh 6:19 11:18 Re 14:20 21:16). Three score (60) furlongs = 6.89 miles.

- 14] And they talked together of all these things which had happened.  
15] And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.  
16] But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.  
17] And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?  
18] And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

Cleopas (wife was Mary (John 19:25); it is possible she was the companion on the road). He also may be the Alphaeus (Matt 10:34), the father (or father-in-law) of James (“James the Less” (Mark 15:40)), the disciple. If so, James might have been his companion.

- 19] And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

Here is a touch of humor (as if He didn't know!).

- 20] And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.  
21] But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.  
22] Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;  
23] And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.  
24] And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

- 25] Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:
- 26] Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

Notice that He refers to Himself in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. He is maintaining His incognito!

- 27] And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Who wrote the Torah? Here we have it authenticated by the ultimate authority! (As well as the entire Tenach!)

A seven-mile Bible study covering “*all* the Scriptures,” presenting a comprehensive view of the Messiah and His mission.

Gen 3:15... Gen 22... Passover; Levitical sacrifices; Tabernacle; Serpent in the Wilderness;

Isaiah 53. Psalm 22. Psalm 69.

...He is on *every page!*

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” Rom 10:17.

- 28] And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.
- 29] But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.
- 30] And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

Who took charge? It was the duty of the host, not the guest!

- 31] And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

What tipped them off? *His nail prints!* They seem to confirm this view in v.35.

- 32] And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?
- 33] And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

They rushed back to share the news!

- 34] Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.
- 35] And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.
- 36] And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.
- 37] But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.
- 38] And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Why are they “troubled”? Startled, certainly. But there may be something else...

[Why didn't they recognize Him?]

- 39] Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

1 John 1:1; 3:2.

- 40] And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

He still bears the scars... Zech 12:10. Rev 5:6, 9, 12.

- 41] And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

[He never appears after His resurrection without eating!]

- 42] And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.
- 43] And he took *it*, and did eat before them.
- 44] And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

Again: comprehensive testimony of “All the Scriptures”: the Torah, the Prophets, the Psalms.

“The Volume of the Book is written of me” -Ps 40:7.

John 5:39.

- 45] Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,



Understanding is critical.

- 46] And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:  
47] And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.  
48] And ye are witnesses of these things.  
“Witness” is used 29 times in the Book of Acts...

Witnessing is not something we do for the Lord; it is something that He does through us *if* we are filled with the Spirit.

- 49] And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.  
50] And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.  
51] And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

Cf. Mark 16:19-20; Acts 1:9-12.

It is strange that the Ascension isn't given much prominence in the Church today.

- 52] And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

Jesus is in heaven, preparing a home for His people (John 14:1-6).

- 53] And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Luke opened his Gospel with a scene from the Temple (1:8ff), and closed it the same way.

Thus, Luke sets the stage for Volume 2: the Book of Acts.

\* \* \*



# About The Cover Design

*(on the tape cassette albums)*

## The “Front” cover:

The Greek border: *“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).”* The center design element symbolizes the Word of God Incarnate, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

## The “Back” cover: (the “front” to the Jewish reader)

The Hebrew border: *“Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (from the Sh’ma, Deut 6:4-5).”*

The center design represents the Burning Bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim “the Eternal One cannot lie.”

## The Spine:

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha Dove suggesting the New Testament, and the Koinonia House logo at the base.

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