

THE GOOD NEWS
AS COMPILED BY
DOCTOR LUKE

ΚΑΤΑ ΛΟΥΚΑΝ

Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν
περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, καθὼς
παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται
γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου, ἔδοξε κάμοι παρηκολουθηκῶτι
ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε
Θεόφιλε, ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν
ἀσφάλειαν.



By
Wayne E. McMorran
Berean Bible Church
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	Page 8
WHO WAS DOCTOR LUKE?	Page 8
WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS LUKE?	Page 9
HOW DO WE KNOW THAT HE WROTE THE GOSPEL?	Page 10
HOW DO WE KNOW HE WROTE ACTS? . . .	Page 10
WHERE DID LUKE GET THE INFORMATION?	Page 11
 CHAPTER ONE	 Page 12
Luke 1:1-4	Page 12
Luke 1:5-25	Page 19
Luke 1:26-38	Page 33
Luke 1:39-56	Page 44
Luke 1:57-66	Page 50
Luke 1:67-80	Page 55
 CHAPTER TWO	 Page 57
Luke 2:1-7	Page 57
Luke 2:8-14	Page 63
Luke 2:15-20	Page 72
Luke 2:21	Page 74
Luke 2:22-35	Page 76
Luke 2:36-39	Page 82
Luke 2:40	Page 86
Luke 2:41-50	Page 88
Luke 2:51-52	Page 90
 CHAPTER THREE	 Page 92
Luke 3:1-2	Page 92
Luke 3:3-6	Page 92
Luke 3:7-9	Page 94
Luke 3:10-14	Page 95
Luke 3:15-17	Page 98
Luke 3:23-38	Page 102

CHAPTER FOUR	Page 105
Luke 4:1-13	Page 105
Luke 4:14-16	Page 114
THE SYNAGOGUE	Page 115
Luke 4:17-20	Page 121
Luke 4:21-27	Page 123
Luke 4:28-34	Page 127
Luke 4:35-37	Page 130
Luke 4:38-41	Page 133
Luke 4:42-44	Page 136
 CHAPTER FIVE	 Page 140
Luke 5:1-11	Page 140
Luke 5:12-16	Page 145
Luke 5:17-27	Page 153
Luke 5:27-39	Page 161
 CHAPTER SIX	 Page 171
Luke 6:1-5	Page 171
Luke 6:6-11	Page 175
Luke 6:12-16	Page 178
Luke 6:17-19	Page 181
Luke 6:20-26	Page 182
Luke 6:27-36	Page 188
Luke 6:38-42	Page 193
Luke 6:43-49	Page 202
 CHAPTER SEVEN	 Page 205
Luke	Page 205
Luke 7:11-17	Page 212
Luke 7:18-28	Page 215
Luke 7:29-35	Page 222
Luke 7:36-43	Page 225
Luke 7:44-50	Page 233
 CHAPTER EIGHT	 Page 235
Luke 8:1-3	Page 235
Luke 8:4-15	Page 238

Luke 8:16-21	Page 244
Luke 8:22-25	Page 254
Luke 8:26-34	Page 259
Luke 8:35-39	Page 262
Luke 8:40-48	Page 263
Luke 8:49-56	Page 268
CHAPTER NINE	Page 271
Luke 9:1-6	Page 271
Luke 9:7-9	Page 278
Luke 9:10-17	Page 279
Luke 9:18-22	Page 285
Luke 9:23-27	Page 288
Luke 9:28-36	Page 294
Luke 9:37-42	Page 300
Luke 9:43-45	Page 305
Luke 9:46-50	Page 306
Luke 9:51-56	Page 309
Luke 9:57-62	Page 314
CHAPTER TEN	Page 317
Luke 10:1-12	Page 317
Luke 10:13-24	Page 328
Luke 10:25-29	Page 340
Luke 10:38-42	Page 350
CHAPTER ELEVEN	Page 353
Luke 11:1-4	Page 353
Luke 11:5-10	Page 360
Luke 11:11-13	Page 364
Luke 11:14-23	Page 366
Luke 11:24-28	Page 369
Luke 11:29-32	Page 371
Luke 11:33-36	Page 375
Luke 11:37-44	Page 376
Luke 11:45-54	Page 380
CHAPTER TWELVE	Page 385

Luke 12:1-15	Page 386
Luke 12:16-34	Page 395
Luke 12:35-41	Page 401
Luke 12:42-48	Page 406
Luke 12:49-59	Page 411
CHAPTER THIRTEEN	Page 418
Luke 13:1-5	Page 418
Luke 13:6-9	Page 420
Luke 13:10-17	Page 422
Luke 13:18-19	Page 425
Luke 13:20-21	Page 425
Luke 13:22-33	Page 427
Luke 13:34-35	Page 429
CHAPTER FOURTEEN	Page 432
Luke 14:1-6	Page 432
Luke 14:7-11	Page 435
Luke 14:12-15	Page 439
Luke 14:16-24	Page 442
Luke 14:25-35	Page 445
CHAPTER FIFTEEN	Page 452
Luke 15:1-2	Page 452
Luke 15:3-7	Page 452
Luke 15:8-10	Page 460
Luke 15:11-13	Page 461
Luke 15:14-16	Page 463
Luke 15:17-19	Page 464
Luke 15:20-22	Page 465
Luke 15:23-24	Page 467
Luke 15:25-32	Page 468
CHAPTER SIXTEEN	Page 474
Luke 16:14-17	Page 483
Luke 16:18	Page 487
Luke 16:19-31	Page 490

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN	Page 501
Luke 17:1-6	Page 501
Luke 17:7-10	Page 504
Luke 17:11-19	Page 506
Luke 17:20-21	Page 509
Luke 17:22-37	Page 511
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN	Page 518
Luke 18:1-8	Page 518
Luke 18:9-14	Page 523
Luke 18:15-17	Page 525
Luke 18:18-30	Page 527
Luke 18:31-34	Page 532
Luke 18:35-43	Page 533
CHAPTER NINETEEN	Page 537
Luke 19:1-10	Page 537
Luke 19:11-27	Page 543
Luke 19:28-40	Page 550
Luke 19:41-44	Page 554
Luke 19:45-48	Page 556
CHAPTER TWENTY	Page 559
Luke 20:1-8	Page 559
Luke 20:9-18	Page 562
Luke 20:19-26	Page 568
Luke 20:27-38	Page 571
Luke 20:39-47	Page 574
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE	Page 576
Luke 21:1-4	Page 576
Luke 21:5-7	Page 578
Luke 21:8-19	Page 582
Luke 21:20-24	Page 588
Luke 21:25-28	Page 589
Luke 21:29-33	Page 595
Luke 21:34-38	

.....	Page 596
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO	Page 599
Luke 22:1-6	Page 599
Luke 22:7-13	Page 601
Luke 22:14-18	Page 605
Luke 22:19-20	Page 606
Luke	Page 608
Luke 22:24-27	Page 610
Luke 22:28-30	Page 612
Luke 22:31-34	Page 613
Luke 22:35-38	Page 616
Luke 22:39-53	Page 618
Luke 22:54-62	Page 624
Luke 22:63-65	Page 627
Luke 22:66-71	Page 629
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE	Page 631
Luke 23:1-5	Page 631
Luke 23:6-12	Page 635
Luke 23:13-26	Page 637
Luke 23:27-38	Page 644
Luke 23:39-43	Page 651
Luke 23:44-49	Page 654
Luke 23:50-56	Page 658
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR	Page 661
Luke 24:1-12	Page 661
Luke 24:13-27	Page 669
Luke 24:28-45	Page 674
Luke 24:46-48	Page 679
Luke 24:49-53	
.....	Page 682

INTRODUCTION

WHO WAS DOCTOR LUKE?

Who was this man who was responsible for writing over 25% of the New Testament (Luke and Acts)? How do we know he wrote these two books and how do we know he was a doctor? He is mentioned, by name, three times.

Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

Colossians 4:14

Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

2 Timothy 4:11

. . . as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers.

Philemon 1:24

There is one far less obvious reference to him.

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Acts 16:6-9

Up until the time when the "man of Macedonia" appeared to Paul, we find the pronouns "they" and "them" use consistently. Paul wrote about the thing he found out had happened. But now,

Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord

had called us to preach the gospel to them. Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days.

Acts 16:10-12

From here on in this book, it is “we” and “us.” It appears that it was at this time that Paul and Luke met face-to-face and Doctor Luke became Paul’s “beloved physician.”

Luke, then, was a man who spent much time with Paul and got much of the material for the Book of Acts from direct experience. He no doubt got most of the rest of the information directly from Paul.

Paul was not around during Jesus’ earthly ministry so neither he nor Luke observed Jesus’ birth, childhood, or his ministry here on earth. They probably did not observe his crucifixion. For this reason, we shall seek to find out where Luke got the information for his Gospel account.

WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS LUKE?

First, there is the name. The name Λουκᾶς (Loukas) is definitely a Gentile name. This man who wrote over 25% of the New Testament was not a Jew. He was a physician, ἰατρός (iatros). The word is found in six verses besides the one in Colossians: Matthew 9:12; Mark 2:17; Mark 5:26; Luke 4:23; Luke 5:31; and Luke 8:43.

As to the medical practices of the day, we find the following written.

The existence of public physicians in Egypt is well illustrated by . . . the report . . . (of those) who had been instructed by the strategus "to inspect the body of a man who had been found hanged " (Another was

instructed) “to inspect the wound of a certain Mystharion” (He cites) “that those practicing the profession of physician be completely exempted from public services.” Physicians were thus apparently State officials and consequently a tax was levied for their maintenance:

Multon and Milligan, Page 297

There are those who believe that since many physicians had been slaves trained by their owner to act as physicians and since the name “Luke” tends to be the type of name associated with such a slave, he may have been a freed slave.

From the verses we read on page 1, we can gather that Luke, in addition to being a physician, was a very loving man, he was loyal (“only Luke is with me”) and worked along side Paul until the end. He may very well attended to Paul’s physical ailments.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT HE WROTE THE GOSPEL?
HOW DO WE KNOW HE WROTE ACTS?

We don’t for sure. He signed neither copy! Tradition says that he did and there is little reason to suspect otherwise. It is reasonably clear that both were written by the same person. In the prolog to Acts, we find the following statement.

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. . .

Acts 1:1-2

Whoever wrote Acts, wrote a previous account to Mr. Theophilus. We meet this fellow one other place.

. . . it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,

Luke 1:3

So, both accounts were written to the same man and, it would seem, by the same person.

WHERE DID LUKE GET THE INFORMATION?

We have already noted that Luke had first-hand knowledge of some of the events in Acts. He had no such knowledge of the information in the Gospel. So, where did it come from?

Let us begin with what did not happen. We believe the Scriptures were written under the inspiration of God through the agency of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that these men sat at their desks and the Holy Spirit dictated the message to them. They had to go out and seek the information just as Pastor Jim has to seek information for his messages each Sunday.

Some say that Luke got much of his material from Mark. He may well have obtained some information from Mark. On the other hand, they were all writing about the same events so they should sound a bit alike. As we get into Chapter One we shall see more specific information with this regard.

CHAPTER ONE

Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

Luke 1:1-4

We shall study this section in significant detail as it is the basis for the entire book. Luke begins with some very large Greek words. Of course, he was a physician so he should know a lot of big words! John Calvin makes the following comments on these four verses.

LUKE is the only Evangelist who makes a preface to his Gospel, for the purpose of explaining briefly the motive which induced him to write. By addressing a single individual he may appear to have acted foolishly, instead of sounding the trumpet aloud, as was his duty, and inviting all men to believe. It appears, therefore, to be unsuitable that the doctrine which does not peculiarly belong to one person or to another, but is common to all, should be privately sent to his friend Theophilus. Hence some have been led to think that Theophilus is an appellative noun, and is applied to all godly persons on account of their love of God; but the epithet which is joined to it is inconsistent with that opinion. Nor is there any reason for dreading the absurdity which drove them to adopt such an expedient. For it is not less true that Paul's doctrine belongs to all, though some of his Epistles were addressed to certain cities, and others to certain men. Nay, we must acknowledge, if we take into

account the state of those times, that Luke adopted a conscientious and prudent course. There were tyrants on every hand who, by terror and alarm, were prepared to obstruct the progress of sound doctrine. This gave occasion to Satan and his ministers for spreading abroad the clouds of error, by which the pure light would be obscured. Now, as the great body of men cared little about maintaining the purity of the Gospel, and few considered attentively the inventions of Satan or the amount of danger that lurked under such disguises, every one who excelled others by uncommon faith, or by extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, was the more strongly bound to do his utmost, by care and industry, for preserving the doctrine of godliness pure and uncontaminated from every corruption. Such persons were chosen by God to be the sacred keepers of the law, by whom the heavenly doctrine committed to them should be honestly handed down to posterity. With this view therefore, Luke dedicates his Gospel to Theophilus, that he might undertake the faithful preservation of it; and the same duty Paul enjoins and recommends to Timothy,

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPELS, V. 1, John Calvin

Luke begins with Ἐπειδήπερ (Epeideper), a combination of three Greek words, Ἐπει(Epi), which is a preposition meaning “after a time” or “since,” and δὴ (de), meaning “but” and περ (per) which has the idea of “thoroughness.” Wuest expands on this idea with “*Since it is a well known fact of importance...*”¹ Luke begins this document on a very serious tone. He must have had some inkling of where this document would end up. Since what he is about to do has been done before, he is going to do something that will make it different and, hence, important.

“*many have taken in hand*” is a quite literal rendering of the Greek and we shall not comment further on it other than to say that there

¹Wuest, page 125

were, most likely, many gospel accounts in the first days after Pentecost. Only three of these exist to this day (Matthew, Mark, and John) . What these others had done was *to set in order a narrative*. The noun (narrative) is from the Greek διηγέομαι (diagromai) which means, according to Thayer, “*to lead or carry a narration through to the end, relate in full.*”² The important idea here is thoroughness. The verb that leads to this is ἀνατάσσομαι (anotassomai) which is also a very emphatic word meaning “to place things in their proper order.” The two words taken together refer to something that is very precise, both in arrangement and completeness. This we shall find to be true in Luke’s Gospel.

Others had come before Luke and set down these things quite accurately. We wonder why Luke felt compelled to write yet another - we shall have to wait a bit to see. What they wrote about is a real mind boggler - πεπληροφορημένων (peplerophoremēnon)

which is here translated *those things which have been fulfilled among us*. Since the day of the Nativity, many ponderous and important things had transpired and fulfilled!

*So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said,
"It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up
His spirit.*

John 19:30

Not only had Christ’s work on the cross been completed, but the Great Commission had begun in earnest with the word spreading through Jerusalem and all Judea, Sumeria, and to some of the uttermost parts of the earth.

So Luke wished to add his commentary to those already done. He would have to do this in a manner similar to what they had done. This is from *those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word*. He would do the needed research, guided by the Holy Spirit, to produce this new work, the most complete of the

²Thayer, page 148

Synoptic Gospels.

What Luke says next seems a bit egotistical. *Having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first.* The newer translations put it a bit better - *having investigated everything carefully from the beginning,* (NASB). Luke had already done his homework. He had learned much from Paul and, more importantly, he had been able to question people who had actually seen and heard Jesus. He had been a good historian. He had, in fact, been better than a “good historian” since he had the Holy Spirit to guide him.

*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man,
but men spoke from God as they were carried along
by the Holy Spirit.*

2 Peter 1:21

Having done this, he would *write to you an orderly account.* “Orderly account” is from καθεξῆς (katheskes), a compound of κατά (kata) meaning (in this case) “in succession, and ἑξῆς (heskes) meaning “in order.” Hence, he “put things one-after-the-other in succession. This, of course, is an “orderly account.

Luke writes this to *most excellent Theophilus.* The term “most excellent” comes from κράτιστος (kratistos). The term is used by Luke in three other Scriptures.

*Claudius Lysias, To the most excellent governor
Felix: Greetings.*

Acts 23:26

*we accept it always and in all places, most noble
Felix, with all thankfulness.*

Acts 24:3

*But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but
speak the words of truth and reason.*

Acts 26:25

Thayer and others point out that the term can be used as a simple salutary greeting but we suspect that the man to whom Luke wrote this was of some rank. The name “Theophilus” is a Greek name.

It may well be that he was a prominent man in Rome who Paul had reached with the Gospel during his imprisonment there.

We do not know who this man was. Some insist that it was sort of a code name used to protect someone's identity or that it was a "generic name" and the Gospel was meant for all. We have noted this in the citation from Calvin above. Some say a book of the Bible should not, and would not, be addressed to a single person. But what about Paul's letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon? These were addressed to individuals even though a wider audience was intended. Perhaps Theophilus had commissioned Luke to write this Gospel and he published it.

In any case, the name itself means "friend of God," so, if you are a friend of God, this book was written to you. It was written to you *that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed*. This seems like a strange statement, Let's take it "chronologically." He says that Theophilus (or you) had been orally instructed in the Word. The Greek word *κατηχέω* (*katacheo*) is the word from which we get the term "catechism." The Greek word refers to instruction which is done orally. The word is used twice in the following passage.

And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. Galatians 6:6

Theophilus had been instructed, orally we presume, in the principal details of the Gospel story but it has always been the case that we learn much better with our eyes than with our ears. We remember what we see much better than what we hear.

Luke wished Theophilus to be better informed. He says that you *that you may know the certainty* of these things. As we proceed through this book, we should, indeed, know the certainty of the things contained in this book.

Before we proceed to Luke's account, we should answer the question as to how this fits in with the other three gospels. We should also

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, '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." And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time." And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away

my reproach among people."

Luke 1:5-25

Luke begins this Gospel *from the very first*. Unlike the other three Gospels, Luke begins before the birth of Christ and so gives us the story from the very beginning. He begins with three people (and an angel). These are Herod, Zacharias, and Elizabeth. Herod fits in only to affix a time to this narration. There were many "Herods" who were king. The one mentioned here was the fourth in the family line. It had been many years (about 450) since there had been any revelation from God (through the prophet Malachi). Herod the Great (as this Herod was called) ruled from 40 B.C. to 4 B.C. Herod was king only to the extent that Rome allowed him to be with Rome really in control of Israel. While Herod was called an Israelite and professed it, he was not one by birth. To his credit he was responsible for the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem. He was also responsible for erecting pagan temples as well. Since he died in 4 B.C. the narration we are about to take up covers events prior (just prior) to that time. It means that Jesus would be born about 4 years Before Christ (i.e. 4 B.C.)!

The first character in this section was "a certain priest." Not just any priest, the Lord had chosen a certain one. His name was Zacharias or Ζαχαρίας (Zacharias). There had been another important Jewish man by the same name, one of the "Minor Prophets," זכריה (Sachariah). The name means (in Hebrew) "the one whom Jehovah remembered." In this case, the name certainly fits because God chose or "remembered" this "certain priest." He was "of the division of Abijah. The division of the descendants of Aaron is described in 1 Chronicles 24.

*"Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to **Abijah**, the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, the fifteenth to Bilgah, the*

sixteenth to Immer, the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez, the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel, the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. This was the schedule of their service for coming into the house of the Lord according to their ordinance by the hand of Aaron their father, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.

1 Chronicles 24:7-19

Each division took turns in serving in the temple. His wife was also a descendant of Aaron. It was not necessary for a priest to marry a woman from the tribe of Levi so this was a somewhat special couple, both being of the priestly line. Her name was Elizabeth, Ελισάβετ (Elisabet) or אֵלִישֶׁבַע (el-yesheba), literally, “My God is my oath” or, loosely, “ a worshiper of God.”

Luke tells us that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.* Now Job asked the question:

How can a man be righteous before God?

Job 9:2

How then can man be righteous before God?

Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman? Job 25:4

Indeed, we are told:

"There is none righteous, no, not one;

Romans 3:10

We are not to take this in the strict spiritual sense of the above verse. We are to take this statement in the sense that the world would receive it. They, to the extent that it is humanly possible, doing what was right. Luke amplifies on this by stating that they were know for strictly adhering to the many commandments and ordinances of the Jewish Law. We might say they were “fine,

upstanding people.” Their lives were “perfect” (to the extent this is possible this side of heaven) except for one thing.

But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. Throughout the centuries, it has always been considered something of a disgrace or let down not to have any children. In those times it was considered even worse since there was no “Social Security Administration” to take care of their declining years. One had to have children to ensure that someone would be there to take care of them.

Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They shall not be ashamed, When they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127:4-5

They were not only childless but, like Abraham and Sarah, they were advanced beyond the normal child bearing age. If anyone would be well aware of this it would have been Dr. Luke who understood such things. Luke writes that Elizabeth was *στειρος* (steiros), probably the source of our word “sterile.” and that they were both “well advanced in years” (a quite literal translation of the Greek).

So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

“So it was.” One might be tempted to translate this in modern English by saying “Just by chance...” With God, nothing happens by chance and God’s provision was that the division of Abijah was serving in the temple. Moreover, the “lot” fell to Zachariah to burn the incense.

With respect to the casting of the lot, this was something practiced quite commonly among the Israelites.

The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is

from the Lord.

Proverbs 16:33

They believed, in quite rightly so, that this was a way of determining God's will - that is, when no direct means was available. The first casting of lots is recorded in Leviticus.

He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the Lord's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

Leviticus 16:7-10

This casting of lots was ordered by God so one may not question the practice. For this reason we may conclude that it was God who determined that Zachariah was the one whom God chose to enter the Most Holy Place to burn incense. We must consider this in light of the fact that, by 4. B.C. there were many priests and, as such, a priest could be selected for this honor only once in his lifetime.

So, according to God's predetermined plan, Zachariah was to enter the Most Holy Place to burn incense. As he went in, Luke informs us that *the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.* Geldenhuys writes:

Three times a day there were public gatherings for prayer in the temple court or square outside the actual sanctuary. The first and last of these prayer gatherings coincided with the morning and afternoon incense-offering. While Zacharias was engaged in presenting the incense-offering on the golden altar in the holy place, a great multitude of the people were praying in the outer temple court. After everything

had been prepared for the incense-offering, all the other priests had left the holy place and only Zacharias waited there for the sign of the sacerdotal president that it was " the time or the incense-offering ". When the signal was given, he immediately offered the incense on the altar. As soon as the people saw the ascending Smoke of the incense-offering, which was the symbol of true consecration to God, they fell down before the Lord and spread out their hands in silent prayer. For several minutes there follo ~ ed a dead silence in the temple sanctuary and in the surrounding temple-building and courts. To Zacharias, as to every other priest, this was one of the most solemn experiences of his whole life-especially since the privilege of offering the incense, as we have seen, fell to the lot of a priest onJy once in his lifetime.

Geldenhuys "The Gospel of Luke, Page 62

It has been said that, before the priest went in, they would tie a rope on his so that if the Lord were to strike him dead for doing something "unworthy" while in the Most Holy, they could pull his body out. It was a very serious occasion.

This day it was a particularly serious occasion. *Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.* It is no wonder that fear should come upon Zachariah. The presence of this angel may have made him feel he had done something wrong and was about to be struck dead.

"An angel of the Lord." Fifty six times in the Old Testament we find reference to "The angel of the Lord" - a preincarnate appearance of Christ. Occurrences of the term "an angel" are quite few. Here it is an angel - it seems like it wouldn't be right for Christ to announce his own birth (and that of John). "angel" is a transliteration of the Greek ἄγγελος (angelos) and simply means "messenger." It is translated as such when it is obvious that it is a

human messenger. In some cases it is not clear.

"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

Revelation 2:1

The messengers referred to in Revelation 2 and 3 are usually considered to be angels but there are some who hold that they were human messengers sent by the seven churches. There is no linguistic way of telling.

In the case before us, there is no question that this is a divine messenger - an "angel." Later in this chapter we will find an angel by the name of Gabriel appearing to Mary. It is reasonable to assume that this may be the same angel. We shall comment on this when we get to Mary.

But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. The angel announces, "your prayer has been heard." He doesn't indicate, directly, what that prayer was. It is quite apparent what the prayer was.

Then she made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."

1 Samuel 1:11

Many years before, Hannah had prayed the same sort of prayer. Indeed, as we shall learn later, there is a significant parallel to these two. Quite obviously, Zachariah and Elizabeth had been praying, at length, for a son. Now that prayer would be answered. It would be answered in a son whom they should call "John." They didn't name

him “John the Baptist,” that came later.

Why “John?” The name is Ἰωάννης (Ioannes), a derivative of the Hebrew יהוהנן (ihohnan) which means “to whom Jehovah is gracious.” It is found a number of times in the Old Testament, mostly in 1 Chronicles and in Jeremiah. It is fitting that this man who would be the forerunner for the “Age of Grace” would be called “Jehovah is Gracious.”

And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. We note, to begin with, two things about this coming child. First, he would abstain from wine and strong drink. What it does not say is *no razor shall come upon his head* although such as, no doubt, the case.

"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin. All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.

Numbers 6:2-5

Now, normally, a person, an adult person, would make such a vow. This was not the situation in all cases. We have already noted that it was not the case with Samuel whom was thus committed before his birth.

For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

Judges 13:5

It was also the case with Samson (above). And, so it would be with John. Figuratively speaking, it was so with Paul (but not in the outward practice).

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

Galatians 1:15

The angel also says he would be "filled with the Holy Spirit." This may not seem like a remarkable thing. After all, we have:

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

Acts 4:8

Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

Acts 13:9

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:52

When we receive Christ as Savior and Lord today, we are filled with the Spirit. So what was different? This was not the case in Old Testament times. Take Samson for example.

And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

Judges 14:6

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily,

and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house.

Judges 14:19

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands.

Judges 15:14

Three times the Spirit came upon Samson. one can not come to the same place three times without leaving at least twice. So the giving of the Spirit was not normally permanent in the Old Testament. Note also that the Spirit came upon him, not within him. John would be a forerunner of those of us who are now filled with the Spirit.

He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, '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."

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

Malachi 4:5-6

The angel told Zachariah what his son would be the fulfilment of what had been prophesied over four hundred years earlier by the last of the Old Testament prophets.

" And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." Zachariah was not the only one to raise such a question.

Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

Genesis 17:15-17

Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

Genesis 18:9-12

As for Zacharia, he was a πρεσβύτης (presbytes), the Greek term from which we get "Elder." It refers to an older man. His wife was "well advanced in years." We looked at this expression back in verse 7 and will not reconsider it here. She was too old, humanly speaking, to have a child.

And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. There are only two angels mentioned by name in the Scriptures (unless you include "hark, the Herold Angels . . .")

There is Michael who is mentioned in the following passages: Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:21; Daniel 12:1; Jude 1:9; and Revelation 12:7.

"At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

Daniel 12:1

From the above passage, it would appear that Michael had a responsibility of being guardian over the Jewish Nation. As for Gabriel, other than in this chapter, he is mentioned only in the book of Daniel.

And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."

Daniel 8:16

yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

Daniel 9:21

The significance of the name (which means "man of God" in Hebrew) is not as clear as that of Michael. We can get some inference by considering the four passages in which Gabriel is to be found. First:

In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me--to me, Daniel--after the one that appeared to me the first time. . . Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."

Daniel 8:1 & 15-16

Daniel has seen a remarkable vision. It was a tremendous vision for

what was to come. Daniel wanted to know its meaning and Gabriel showed up to give him its meaning.

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans-- in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:1-2

Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

Daniel 9:20-22

Gabriel appears to be a “teaching angel.” He comes when there is an important message concerning the future that is to be delivered to men. So, here, we have the announcement of the forerunner of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist. The last time we shall see Gabriel is when he appears to Mary.

But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.” Here is a serious lesson. Zachariah questioned God’s messenger and was penalized for it. We are not to question God. If we don’t know God’s will, we are certainly supposed to ask God to make it known to us. But when it is made known, we are not to question it.

And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to

them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. The people “waited” for Zachariah. “Waited” does not quite convey the meaning of προσδοκάω (prosdokao) which indicates a degree of impatience. Luke uses the word a number of times in the N.T. Peter uses it three time in one passage.

*looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, **look** for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, **looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;***

2 Peter 3:12-14

The people must have perceived that something special was going on inside since it was taking Zachariah so long to come out. Their wait became such that they *marveled* θαυμάζω (Thaumazo). A rather common word in the N.T. - mostly used in the four Gospels and in Acts. The people were getting quite stirred up. Had God struck him dead? What was he doing?

Because of Gabriel’s punishment for his disbelief, he could not speak to the people when he came out. The people thus *perceived* what had happened. This they were able to do because he “beckoned” to them. The word is διανεύω (dianeuo) and is used only here in the N.T. With out the prefix, νεύω (neuo) the word means “to nod.”

Simon Peter therefore gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking."

John 13:24

And when the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my

It does not necessarily follow that the people were able to perceive precisely what happened to Zachariah, but they must have determined that he had some sort of experience with a divine being. It was later on, of course, that the full details would be learned.

Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people." As Gabriel had promised, she became pregnant. She then "hid" herself for five months. The text doesn't say which five months, we would assume it to be the last five months of her pregnancy. "Hid" is περικρύτω (perikrupto) which is used only here in the N.T. Without the prefix it is found about 15 times where it is translated "hid." The prefix means "around" and so the word would be "to hid on all sides." She kept her pregnancy a secret by remaining away from people.

This passage ends with a song of praise. If you search the Scriptures, you will find many of God's people uttering songs of praise.

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying:

*"I will sing to the Lord,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!"*

Exodus 15:1

And Miriam answered them:

*"Sing to the Lord,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!"*

Exodus 15:21

Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on

*that day, saying:*Judges 5:1

And, of course, we have an entire book in the Old Testament of songs of praise. We, as Christians who have experienced God's grace, need to be more prepared to sing songs of praise to our Lord.

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1:26-38

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city

of Galilee named Nazareth. The first question which comes to mind here is “the sixth month of what?” The sixth month of the year? We can solve the problem if we look ahead a bit.

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. Luke 1:36

It was in the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy. The place was Nazareth. This is shown to the right, about half way between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Luke does not give any particular reason for choosing this city (other than it was where Mary was living). Matthew indicates it was a fulfillment of prophecy. There is a question as to what Old Testament prophecy this might be! Since this is in Matthew and we are studying Luke, we shall not further pursue this.



To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. This time Gabriel visited Mary. It seems strange that we call her that. Why? Here name in the Greek texts is Μαριάμ (Mariam). This is a transliterated word for the Hebrew מרים (Miriam).

The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister

But then, “Moses” should be “Moshe” and etc. So we will leave her be as “Mary.” Gabriel was sent to “a virgin.” There have been, for hundreds of years, those who claim that the virgin birth did not happen and Mary was made pregnant by a man (either Joseph or someone else). Linguistically, we may look at the Greek word, παρθένος (parthenos) (which may be used of both women and men). It refers to a young woman but one cannot say, linguistically, that it refers to a “virgin” (i.e. a woman who has never had intercourse). One may go to the Old Testament.

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign:
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and
shall call His name Immanuel.*

Isaiah 7:14

Here the Hebrew word is עַלְמָה (alma) which has the same sense as the Greek. Some translations, such as the RSV translate Isaiah 7:14 as “a young woman shall conceive.” We must look beyond linguistics to answer this important question.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name

Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." Matthew 1:18-23

*Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since
I do not know a man?"*

Luke 1:34

We shall be examining the passage from Luke a little later. The point is that the text makes it quite clear that she really was a virgin. We shall see more evidence of this as we proceed. It is said that Joseph was "of the House of David." This had to be the case since the Old Testament consistently indicates that the Messiah would be from the line of David. We will say more on this later.

Mary was "betrothed to a man." Since the Greek word is used only of Mary (twice in Luke, once in Matthew) looking at it will not be of much value. In the time this took place, "betrothal" was more significant than today. The Betrothal was more or less equivalent to our modern day wedding ceremony where vows are exchanged. The Jewish "wedding" ceremony, then was more like our wedding reception where the festivities take place.

We may read the Jewish law concerning the betrothal.

"If a young woman who is a virgin is betrothed to a husband, and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry out in the city, and the man because he humbled his neighbor's wife; so you shall put away the evil from among you. "But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. But you shall do nothing to the young woman; there is in the young woman no sin deserving of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so is this matter. For he found her in the countryside, and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her.

"If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days.

Deuteronomy. 22:23-29

We look at this passage of the Old Testament law to establish what "betrothal" meant, but also to establish the virginity of Mary. Had Mary become pregnant by another man, the law would have her stoned to death. This did not happen.

Mary was betrothed to Joseph. We have already commented on his being a descendant of David. We shall learn more about him later.

And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" The angel refers to her as being "highly favored." The Greek is χαρίτω (charitoo). It is interesting to note that the "Rejoice" which precedes this is from the same Greek root. The verb is found only in one other passage.

to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:6

The Roman Catholic Church makes much over the Virgin Mary. Part is, no doubt, based on this passage of Scripture. It is thus interesting that, according to Paul, we are all, as Christians, so blessed! What about the expression *blessed are you among women?* You won't find the phrase in the NIV or NASB. The NKJV has a footnote regarding it. Most Greek manuscripts omit this phrase. Only a few have it and a couple include "and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Bible scholars believe these phrases were added at a later date and are not part of the inspired word. I won't say why

they were added.

But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

The verb ταραάσσω (tarasso) is found seventeen times, all in the Gospels and in Acts. It is usually translated “troubled.” The verb here, however, has a prefix added - the only place this is done. The prefix δια (dia). Thayer comments that “No one of the N.T. writers makes more frequent use of verbs compounded with δια than Luke.”³ The prefix, with verbs like this one intensifies the meaning. Mary was not just “troubled,” she was “greatly troubled” or, more in keeping with the prefix, “thoroughly troubled.”

Not only was she very troubled, she “considered” what manner of greeting this was. Again, the translation is somewhat lacking. The verb λογίζομαι (logizomai) means “to take into account” or “to meditate on.” Again, Luke prefixes it with δια (dia) which intensifies the meaning. She was really puzzled. Then Gabriel calms her by telling her she need not be afraid - God have “favored” her. We have already considered God’s favor to her.

Now, the angel gets to the heart of the matter. *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.* We shall not comment on the Greek words here - the English translation is quite adequate. We shall, however, consider what she was to call this son - Jesus. The name is Ιησούς (Iesous [or Jesous, there is no J in Greek]). We get some idea of the meaning of the name from Matthew.

And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their

³Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. under δια

sins."

Matthew 1:21

We get an even better understanding from the Septuagint.

So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us, and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." And Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

Exodus 17:9-10

This is the first mention of "Joshua" in the Scriptures. The name, in Hebrew, is *יְהוֹשֻׁעַ* (Yashua) which means "Jehovah Saves" or "Salvation of Jehovah." What does this have to do with "Jesus?" The Septuagint has *Ἰησοῦς* - the names are the same, "Jesus" and "Joshua" are the same name, one Hebrew and one Greek. We have already commented on name like that of Mary. This, then, is where the verse in Matthew (above) comes in - *He will save His people*.

Not only will He save His people, Gabriel says the following:

- *He will be great*
- *He will be called the Son of the Highest*
- *The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.*
- *He will reign over the house of Jacob forever*
- *Of His kingdom there will be no end.*

"Great" is from the Greek word which is the source of words such as megaphone, megabucks, etc. There is no need to further elaborate on this.

He will be the Son of the Highest. We need not comment on the Greek word, *ὑψιστος* (hupsistos) other than to say it is the equivalent of the Old Testament term "The Most High God" The Hebrew name (in English) is El-Elyon = "The Most High. It appears first in Genesis:

"Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

Genesis 14:18-20

It appears many times throughout the Old Testament.

Next, He was to have the throne of his father David.

In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. For thus saith the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.

Jeremiah 33:16-18

The Old Testament teaches that the Messiah would be the "son" of David and thus the selection of Joseph and Mary

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

In a somewhat whimsical mood, one might ask "How many girls have asked the same question?" Only Mary had a legitimate question. We shall not comment much on the Greek of this question - the translation here is quite literal. But what does it mean "to know a man" (my wife knows lots of men)?

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the Lord."

Genesis 4:1

And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son--Enoch.

Genesis 4:17

And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed. Genesis 4:25

Now, Adam knew Eve for some time before Cain was conceived. This then can only mean more than “acquaintance.” She says, in modern English, she had not had sexual relations with a man - she was a virgin!

The Holy Spirit would do two things. He would “come upon” her and “overshadow” her. “Come upon” is a rather literal translation of the Greek ἐπέρχομαι (eperchomai). Two other places Luke uses the word are below.

But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils. Luke 11:22

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

From the first verse, it becomes obvious that the word means more than to just “meet with someone.” It means to come upon them in the sense of taking possession of them and controlling them. Then “overshadow” is from ἐπισκιάζω (episkiazō) for which “overshadow” is a fairly accurate (literal) translation. Luke uses this word in the following verses.

*While he was saying this, a cloud came and **overshadowed** them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.* Luke 9:34 NIV

*so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at **least the shadow** of Peter passing by **might fall** on some of them.* Acts 5:15 NIV

The first passage deal with the Mount of Transfiguration where a cloud “overshadowed” Jesus and the two spirits - it literally covered them, engulfed them. The second passage is a bit more descriptive of the intent of the word - it speaks of ones influence coming on another. Thus it is that the Holy Spirit would literally take control of Mary’s life, for a time, it His influence would affect here. She would become pregnant. The words are quite strong.

Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

The angel informs Mary about Elisabeth. If this barren woman who was way past the age of child bearing could conceive and, indeed, was six months pregnant, Mary could become pregnant by the Holy Spirit.

For with God nothing will be impossible. "

Some thirty or so years later, this Child would confirm this statement, not only by His presence, but by what He spoke.

*So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; **and nothing will be impossible for you.*** Matthew 17:20

Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

This is all that God expects of you and me. *"Behold the maidservant (or manservant) of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."* It was God's will for Mary to be the mother of Jesus and that was sufficient reason for her.

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord." And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed

forever." And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

Luke 1:39-56

Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. We first ask what days “those days” refer to. Judging from the first word, “arose” ἀνίστημι (anistemi) which would normally apply to one in a lying position, we would gather she “arose” from being prostrate before the angel, prepared as quickly as possible and left “in those days” immediately following the day when the angel had appeared to her. This is amplified by the statement she went “with haste,” σπεύδω (speudo). This is a very active word. Altogether, the text indicates that Mary was in a state of excitement and hurried, as quickly as possible, to “a city of Judah.”

We do not know what city Zacharias lived in other than in was in Judah. It would have entailed a rather long trip - one which would be, approximately, repeated nine months later. Arriving at the house, she greeted Elizabeth.

And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. “and it happened” or “and it came about” is a fairly literal translation of the Greek. The NIV ignores the phrase altogether with “When.” The phrase does mean something. I believe the best way to arrive at its meaning is to expand it to say “God arranged for this to happen . . .” The babe (John the Baptist) “leaped in her womb.” There is no need to consider βρέφος (brephos) as it is the usual word for an unborn child. We should consider why it “leaped” in her womb. Are we to understand that the unborn John was so happy that he leaped in her womb? While “leap” is a literal translation, it does not mean he actually “jumped in the air.” By the sixth month, the fetus does move about in the womb and is sometimes more active than others. In this case it must have made an unusual movement.

Some would say that John understood what was going on and got so

excited that he did this. According to Mark (and others):

.Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Mark 9:23

We would emphasize, however, “all things are possible with God but not all things a probable.” It is possible that, somehow, John realized what was happening, but not very probable. It was most likely that the meeting with Mary so stirred her than the adrenalin (or other substances in her body) was transferred to John so that he also reacted. The whole statement was given to give us a vivid picture of the emotions experience by Elizabeth.

This is further established by the statement that Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Recall that, back in verse 15, the angel told Zacharias that *“He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.”* It may well be that, as the Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth, the Spirit also filled the babe in her womb. This is, most likely, the real explanation for his leaping!

Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! While this may seem a natural response on the part of Elizabeth, it gives me cause to wonder. From what we have already covered, Mary left to visit Elizabeth as soon as possible after the visit from Gabriel (i.e. within a few days). She has just entered the house and greeted Elizabeth. The greeting most likely being “Peace to you!” (in Hebrew, of course). So, who told Elizabeth that Mary was to be the mother of Jesus? I doubt that Mary had sent an e-mail message to Elizabeth and the postal services in those days was probably much slower than it is today!

God made a number of revelations to His people during “those days” and Elizabeth must have had a revelation from God concerning Mary. I doubt that the halo over Mary’s head had anything to do with it! I shall not comment on the salutation, it is a rather literal translation of the Greek.

But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should

come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

I wonder about the question Elizabeth raises. Why would it be so unusual for Mary to go to her "cousin" (KJV) or "relative," (verse 36). The question is, however, what was their relationship? Luke has told us very specifically concerning Zacharias, *His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.* Elizabeth was of the tribe of Levi. Later we will find that Mary was a descendant of the tribe of Judah. This makes it difficult to determine what the relationship might have been. The word which was used in verse 36, συγγενής (sungenes) = "from the same womb" may be used quite loosely. All of Israel was from "the same womb," namely, Sarah's. The fact that Luke mentions the relationship, however, would indicate that the relationship was much closer than this. Whatever it was, it is not unnatural to visit a relative.

Elizabeth relates to Mary what we have just considered, her internal reaction to the meeting as well as the baby's. Then she makes a statement that seems a bit strange to me. *Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."* It is difficult to know exactly why she said this. Some note that Zacharias questioned Gabriel as was made speechless for a time on this account. Mary, however, did question Gabriel, "How can this be?"

I believe the answer lies in Mark 9:23 which we looked at above. All things are possible "to him who believe." The selection of Mary to be the mother of Jesus depended on her belief. Belief in what Gabriel said? It is more likely a believe that "*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*" The only way one was saved in the Old Testament times was by looking forward to God's promised salvation.

In verses 46-55 (which we shall not again duplicate) we have Mary's "Song of Praise." In older translations it is referred to as the

“Magnificent.” We have previously noted how the people we have met thus far have been quick to break into songs of praise to God. As you continue through the New Testament you find the following.

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Acts 16:25

speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, Ephesians 5:19

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Colossians 3:16

It does not seem proper to do a verse-by-verse study of Mary’s Song of Praise. Such things are not meant for dissecting. Instead I shall make some observations and leave you to do the reading.

Geldenhuis writes,

Mary began to utter praises not when the angel Gabriel brought her the wonderful tidings, but when a woman like herself called her "mother of my Lord" (verse 43). The message of the angel at once assumed for her a living shape when Elisabeth, in whom the promises of the Lord had already been unmistakably realized, saluted her with beatifications. Her spontaneous reaction to this is to sing this beautiful hymn. From the first word of her hymn of praise in the Vulgate translation, this hymn is known as the "Magnificat". From the earliest times it has been used in the praises of the Christian church.

In its form as uttered by Mary it is a beautiful lyrical poem. It is remarkable how genuinely Hebrew it is in

thought and manner of expression, in extolling praise and in worship. It is almost wholly made up of Old Testament quotations. There is an especially close connection between it and the song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. Nevertheless the hymn of Mary is essentially different from the triumphal song of Hannah. While Mary sings her happiness with deep humility and holy reserve, Hannah completely surrendered herself to a feeling of personal triumph over her enemies. Where Mary borrowed expressions from the Old Testament, she gives to the consecrated words a deeper meaning and a higher application. The prophets had often done the same with the words of their predecessors under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

In discussing this hymn of praise, some critics have asked whether Mary had her Old Testament open before her when she uttered the song. They forget that all pious Israelites from their childhood days knew by heart songs from the Old Testament and often sang them in the home circle and at celebrations. Mary was steeped in the poetical literature of her nation, and accordingly her hymn also bears the unmistakable signs of it. Elisabeth uttered her beatification in great excitement (" she lifted up her voice with a loud cry ", verse 42). Mary's hymn, however, breathes a spirit of greater calm. The deeper the joy, the more restful is the heart. Mary's panegyric is far grander than that of Elisabeth, but more controlled. A regal majesty reigns throughout the hymn of praise. It strikes us that Mary in this hymn does not utter a single direct word in connection with the Son promised to her. Nevertheless she assumes throughout that He has indeed been promised her. Her whole hymn is inspired by this fact.

He says *In its form as uttered by Mary it is a beautiful lyrical poem. It is remarkable how genuinely Hebrew it is in thought and manner of expression, in extolling praise and in worship.* It is unfortunate, however, that we can not read (or hear) her song in Hebrew. We do not even have the Hebrew text of it as Luke wrote his gospel in Greek. So we have the English translation of the Greek translation of the Hebrew! This tends to lose most of the beauty. Below is the song from the NIV which, perhaps, will read better in the poetic sense, than the other translations.

*"My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me--
holy is his name.
His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."*

Luke 1:46-55 NIV

Geldenhuy points out that most of her song is woven together of Old Testament passages which, no doubt, is true. It is not possible, however, to say exactly which passages she used. Just as a hymn writer today would take "poetic license" in using the Scriptures in a hymn, so Mary must have.

Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John." But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." So they made signs to his father--what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

Luke 1:57-66

Nine months from the beginning of this Gosepel, we reach the birth of John the Baptist. Elizabeth's "full time" had come. Eight days after his birth they came to circumcise the child.

He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.

Genesis 17:12-14

Circumcision was a very serious act which was to be performed on the eighth day after the birth of the child. Paul “glories” in this fact.

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Philippians 3:3-6

Paul is not really boasting, he is stating that this is what he could say if he were to boast. It was all the more important than John be circumcised because of the special ministry God gave to him.

The custom was the name the child at his circumcision (they didn't have birth certificates in those days!). Precisely what is meant by wanting to name him Zacharias is not known. We know from the various genealogies in the Bible that sons were not, of necessity, named after their fathers.

On the other hand, there are traditions in the naming of children. In doing research on my family, I discovered that the tradition among the Scottish was (or is) this:

SONS

6. Named after the Paternal Grandfather
7. Named after the Maternal Grandfather
8. Named after the Father
9. Named after other relatives (usually).

DAUGHTERS

1. Named after the Paternal Grandmother
2. Named after the Maternal Grandmother
3. Named after the Mother

4. Named after other relatives (usually)

Most likely, the Jews had some similar scheme for naming children. The baby would not have been named Zacharias but after some man in Zacharias' family tree.

Elisabeth said “No!” She was emphatic. The Greek word, transliterated into English, is amusing. Ούχί (Ouchi) (Ouch?). The word for “no” is ού (ou), the word here is much stronger. It should be translated “by no means!” or “not at all!” The NASB has “No indeed!” His name was to be “John.” *So they made signs to his father--what he would have him called.* This seems a bit strange as we were told that Zacharias could not speak, nothing was said about his hearing. From this we gather he was both deaf and dumb. Since the father would have to have the final word, they hand a Postit pad to John (actually, a clay tablet). Zacharias wrote *“His name is John.” So they all marveled.* “Marveled” is a good translation of the Greek, but what does it mean? It is generally used in a good sense. One might replace it with the words “They were amazed!” It does not mean that they thought it wrong, just that it was an unusual thing to do.

Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. Having fulfilled the promise of Gabriel, Zacharias was again able to hear and speak. It was fitting that the first words from his lips were praises to God. Thus it should always be!

The situation reminds me of another man who was punished for his unbelief.

That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted

my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

*For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.
All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as
nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.
No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, "What have You done?"*

Daniel 4:33-35

There has long been a controversy as to whether or not Nebuchadnezzar was a “Christian” (i.e. in the Old Testament sense of believing God). These words certainly would indicate this.

Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him

We need to consider the “fear” that came upon the people at this time. We begin with 2 Timothy.

*For God has not given us a spirit of **fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

2 Timothy 1:7

Paul writes that God has not given us a spirit of fear. Fear, in this passage from 2 Timothy is δειλία (deilia) which refers to a cowardly type of fear - a fear that paralyzes a person into inactivity. The word used here by Luke is φόβος (phobos) which is found in many English words today, agoraphobia (fear of crowds, literally, the market place), claustrophobia (fear of being in a confined place), etc. The word is used to describe a fear which has some basis (even

if the basis is some psychological characteristic). It is a fear that moves into action rather than freeze into a state of doing nothing. The NIV uses “filled with awe.” The KJV says that these sayings were “noised” about the hill country of Judea (where Zachariah and Elizabeth were living). The Greek word simply means to “talk around.” The word most likely spread like wildfire.

Note carefully two things that is said here.

1: *these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea*

2: *those who heard them kept them in their hearts.*

When we began this study, we considered the question as to where Luke obtained the material about which he wrote. Here is an indication of this. All of the events concerning the revelation to Zacharias and the birth of John must have been well known and discussed. They must have been committed to memory according to what we read here.

This section ends with *And the hand of the Lord was with him.* We also noted at the start of this study that the speaking that was done in most of Luke was in Hebrew. The original written accounts were most likely in Hebrew. This statement is in perfect harmony with good Hebrew style. The “hand of the Lord” would be with John as an adult pointing people to the Messiah. Whenever a Hebrew historian would finish up a particular historical section, he would conclude with a note as to the final outcome of the person involved.

Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to

remember His holy covenant, The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: To grant us that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace." So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Luke 1:67-80

We begin a section referred to, and reasonable so, as “The Prophecy of Zachariah.” It is referred to in old texts as the “Benedictus.” Like Mary, John sang a magnificent song. It too, is a quilt work of sayings from the Old Testament. It is really impossible to say today exactly what Scriptures he referred to. As a man steps in the Old Testament Scriptures, he may have, mentally, stitched pieces from here and there together to make a wonderful hymn of praise to God.

As with the Song of Mary, we shall not comment on it verse by verse. The text from the NIV is given below.

*"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come and has redeemed his people.
He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us--
to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,*

*and to enable us to serve him without fear
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

*And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace."*

Luke 1:68-79 NIV

CHAPTER TWO

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:1-7

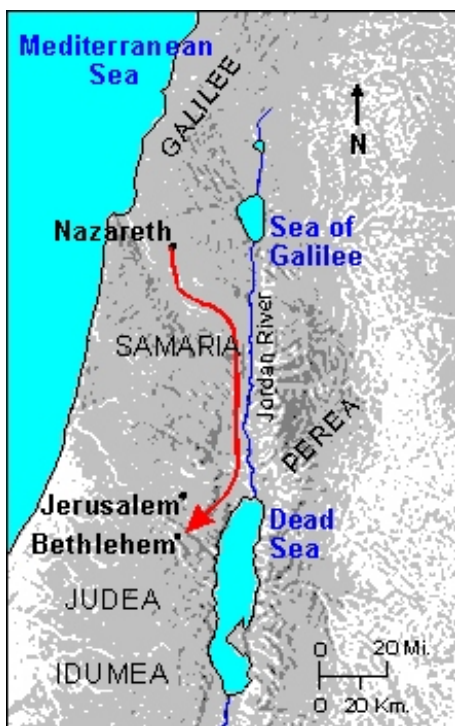
We need comment on only one thing in the first verse. What was the decree issued? The KJV says “taxed,” The NKJV (above) says “registered,” and the NIV and NASB say “census.” Well, there isn’t much difference between registering and taking a census so we shall leave these together. The KJV, “taxed,” however, is wrong. The Greek term is ἀπογράφω (apographo) The last part of the word should be familiar (graph). It means to write. The prefix is a preposition, “down.” In other words, “to write down” which is what “registering” is. The “tax” in the KJV most likely arose from the fact that the purpose of this enrollment was to provide a means of taxing the people. Each person would be required to supply his or her name, occupation, property, and kinspeople.

After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.

Acts 5:37

Luke, in the passage above, describe a census which historians know

took place in about 6 A.D. This is the reason why Luke is careful here to say that this census *first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria*. He distinguishes this census for that of 6 A.D. It was the tradition among the Jews that any enrollment take place in ones native city. Thus Joseph and Mary would have to undertake the long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, as shown to the right. This is a distance of nearly 100 miles.



MAP 2 - Nazareth to Bethlehem

One might ask why God would require them to make such an arduous journey when Mary was about to give birth. It was necessary. Many years earlier, the Prophet Micah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote the following.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Micah 5:2

This was the place the Messiah was to come to and hence the need for the trip. For the words which follow, we defer to the words of Norval Goldenhuys who wrote the following.

Throughout the centuries God had so led the course of history that everything was now prepared for the coming of His Son. The preparatory Old Testament

revelation had been completed long ago; the weary, longing spirit of mankind was in dire need of His coming; His forerunner, John, had already been born; the "fulness of time" had arrived. And at last the promised Redeemer, whose coming had been looked forward to with so much heartfelt yearning, is born. In a few verses - written simply, in a matter-of-fact and natural way-Luke here relates the tremendous and all-important event. The extreme simplicity of the narrative forms the strongest contrast to the stupendous significance of the occurrence that is recounted.

Geldenhuys, "The Gospel of Luke" Page99

Joseph also went up from Galilee, Luke tells us that Joseph went "up." There is no mistake in the Greek text. He went "up" from Nazareth to Bethlehem. On the map (above) it looks like he went "down." Of course, map directions do not mean much. In Israel, you are going "up" if you are going to Jerusalem (or to a city near it) and "down" if you are leaving it. Eight times we read in the New Testament about "going up to Jerusalem (Matthew 20:17-18; Mark 10:33; Luke 18:31; Acts 15:2; Acts 21:4; Acts 21:12; Acts 25:9; Galatians 1:17;) Twice (Luke 10:30-31; John 4:51;) we are told about someone "going down from Jerusalem."

. . . out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. Nazareth appears to be a Hebrew name (it would most certainly be) but the Hebrew form is not known since this town is not mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament. We have no idea of what the name might mean. On the other hand, βηθλεέμ (Bethlehem) is definitely from the Hebrew name בֵּית-לֶחֶם (Beth-lehem) which means "House of Bread" (or, more loosely, "House of Food"). We have already commented on why it had to be this city.

. . . to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. We have commented on the betrothal before. The remainder of these seven verses needs no specific comment - everyone knows the

story of the birth of Jesus Christ. There are some comments in order. She *wrapped Him in swaddling cloths*. In those days there was, apparently, no diaper service and no Huggies. “Wrapped in swaddling clothes” is all one word in the Greek - σπαργάνω (spargano). The word (in any form) is found only here in the New Testament. It is found in the LXX.

*As for your nativity, on the day you were born
your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in
water to cleanse you; you were not rubbed with salt
nor wrapped in swaddling cloths.*

Ezekiel 16:4

There has always been thought that this was not the thing affluent people would do. As we see from the above, it was the normal thing to do. Then there is the manger. I wrote a Christmas hymn about that.

*The way was far, the night drew near.
Soon the sounds of the city they'd hear.
They'd find an inn to spend the night
and that would be the end of their plight.*

*No Room! No Room! No space in the inn!
No Room? No Room? Won't you let Him come in?*

*They found the inn, found no room at all;
Go away, to sleep in a manger stall.
amid the hay and cribs of corn,
is where the Christ, our Savior was born.*

*No Room! No Room! No space in the inn!
No Room? No Room? Won't you let Him come in?*

*The night was bright with angels in flight;
Go See! Your savior is born to-night.
They ran, they sped, to Bethlehem near,*

The babe from whom no crying would hear.

*No Room! No Room! No space in the inn!
No Room? No Room? Won't you let Him come in?*

*He Lives! He Lives! He lives today.
No Sin for you who have found the Way!
Take Him Take Him in your heart today;
He'll come, He'll stay in your heart always!*

*No Room! No Room! No space in the inn!
No Room? No Room? Won't you let Him come in?*

Wayne McMorran, 1997

Well, that was my take on it. Arthur Pink sums it up this way:

(a) He was laid in a manger because there was no room in the inn. How solemnly this brings out the world's estimate of the Christ of God. There was no appreciation of His amazing condescension. He was not wanted. It is so still. There is no room for Him in the schools, in society, in the business world, among the great throngs of pleasure seekers, in the political realm, in the newspapers, nor in many of the churches. It is only history repeating itself. All that the world gave the Saviour, was a stable for His cradle, a cross on which to die, and a borrowed grave to receive His murdered body.

(b) He was laid in a manger to demonstrate the extent of His poverty. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). How "poor" He became, was thus manifested at the beginning. The One who, afterwards, had not where to lay His head, who had to ask for a penny when He would reply to His critics about the question of tribute, and who had to use another man's house when instituting the Holy Supper, was, from the first, a homeless Stranger here. And the "manger" was the earliest evidence of this.

(c) He was laid in a manger in order to be Accessible to all. Had He been in a palace, or in some room in the Temple, few could have reached Him without the formality of first gaining permission from those who would have been in attendance at such places. But none would have any difficulty in obtaining access to a stable; there He would be within easy reach of poor and rich alike. Thus, from the beginning, He was easy to approach. No intermediaries had first to be passed in order to reach Him. No priest had to be interviewed before entre could be obtained to His presence. Thus it was then; and so it is now, thank God.

(d) He was laid in a manger so as to foreshadow the Character of those among whom He had come. The stable was the place for beasts of the field, and it was into their midst the newly-born Saviour came. And how well did they symbolize the moral character of men! The beasts of the field are devoid of any spiritual life, and so have no knowledge of God. Such, too, was the condition of both Jews and Gentiles. And how beastlike in character were those into whose midst the Saviour came: stupid and stubborn as the ass or mule, cunning and cruel as the fox, grovelling and filthy as the swine, and ever thirsting for His blood as the more savage of the animals. Fittingly, then, was He placed amid the beasts of the field at His birth.

(e) He was laid in a manger to show His contempt for Worldly riches and pomp. We had thought it more fitting for the Christ of God to be born in a palace, and laid in a cradle of gold, lined with costly silks. Ah, but as He Himself reminds us in this same Gospel, "that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). And what an exemplification of this truth was given when the infant Saviour was placed, not in a cradle of gold but, in an humble manger.

(f) He was laid in a manger to mark His identification with human suffering and wretchedness. The One born was "The Son of Man." He had left the heights of Heaven's glory and had descended to our level, and here we behold Him entering the human lot at its lowest point. Adam was first placed in a garden, surrounded by the exquisite beauties of Nature as it left the hands of the Creator. But

sin had come in, and with sin all its sad consequences of suffering and wretchedness. Therefore, does the One who had come here to recover and restore what the first man lost, appear first, in surroundings which spoke of abject need and wretchedness; just as a little later we find Him taken down into Egypt, in order that God might call His Son from the same place as where His people Israel commenced their national history in misery and wretchedness. Thus did the Man of Sorrows identify Himself with human suffering.

(g) He was laid in a manger because such was the place of Sacrifice. The manger was the place where vegetable life was sacrificed to sustain animal life. Fitting place was this, then, for Him who had come to be the great Sacrifice, laying down His life for His people, that we might through His death be made alive. Remarkably suggestive, therefore, and full of emblematic design, was the place appointed by God to receive the infant body of the incarnate Saviour.

Arthur Pink, "Why Four Gospels?"

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Luke 2:8-14

If you look at Matthew's Gospel, he relates the account of Gabriel

announcing Jesus' birth (although Matthew doesn't call Gabriel by name). He then relates the entire birth of Jesus to only two verses

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Matthew 1:24-25

The one thing we do learn from this is that Joseph married Mary before they went to Bethlehem. But Luke wrote *to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife* Is this a contradiction? Not if you read this carefully. Matthew says that Joseph *did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son*. In other words, even though the marriage may have been completed for the ceremonial and legal standpoint, it had not really been consummated and, thus, she was in God's eyes, this his "betrothed."

After these two verses describing Jesus' birth, Matthew goes on to relate the story of the Magi. After the Magi, there is a short notice of Joseph and Mary fleeing into Egypt. Other than this, Matthew says nothing about the life of Jesus until He began His public ministry.

Luke tells us nothing about the Magi, but gives us some rather "insignificant" details (not the quotes). Why does Matthew speak about the Magi and Luke does not? Arthur Pink states it this way:

This chapter (Matthew 2) opens as follows, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him." Notice, these wise men came not inquiring, "Where is He that is born the Saviour of the world?", nor, "Where is the Word now incarnate?", but instead, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" The fact that Mark,

Luke and John are entirely silent about this, and the fact that Matthew's Gospel does record it, is surely proof positive that this First Gospel presents Christ in a distinctively Jewish relationship.

Arthur Pink, *Why Two Gospels?*

So, there is the answer to the question of the Magi. Now, why does Luke tell us about the shepherds and no one else does? First, let us note the position the “shepherd” has in the Old Testament. Skipping the many references in the Major Prophets, we have the following selected passages,

Then he blessed Joseph and said,

*"May the God before whom my fathers
Abraham and Isaac walked,
the God who has been my shepherd
all my life to this day,*

Genesis 48:15 NIV

*But his bow remained in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong
By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob
(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),*

Genesis 49:24

Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the Lord said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.' "

2 Samuel 5:2

Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?' " "

2 Samuel 7:7

Also, in time past, even when Saul was king, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and

*the Lord your God said to you, 'You shall shepherd
My people Israel, and be ruler over My people
Israel.' "* 1 Chronicles 11:2

A Psalm of David.

*The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.* Psalm 23:1

*Save Your people,
And bless Your inheritance;
Shepherd them also,
And bear them up forever.* Psalm 28:9

*Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
You who lead Joseph like a flock;
You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!*
Psalm 80:1

Shepherds have always been prominent in the History of Israel. And, indeed, We have the following from the Old Testament and from Matthew.

*"My people have been lost sheep.
Their shepherds have led them astray;
They have turned them away on the mountains.
They have gone from mountain to hill;
They have forgotten their resting place.* Jeremiah 50:6

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Matthew 10:6

*But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to
the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* Matthew 15:24

Luke is not interested in the political history of Israel. He is interested in the humanity of Christ and how He would be the Shepherd for the lost sheep of the world. So, it is natural that the shepherds would be visited by the angels. Others may have been

visited also, but we are not told because this would not be spiritually significant.

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. One might, in a practical way, say that it was natural for the angel to appear to the shepherds. They would be the only ones awake in the middle of the night. Let us consider what Luke tells us about these shepherds.

- they were in the same country
- they were living out in the fields,
- they were keeping watch over their flock
- they were working by night

They were in the “same country” where Joseph and Mary were - they were thus kinsmen of the Messiah (nationally speaking). When we have a new baby, we see to it that our kinsmen know about it.

They were living in the fields - not a great place to live. They would not be like those whom Jesus would meet later.

Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:57-62

They would be the type who would be free to follow Jesus. They were keeping watch over the sheep. They were the type who could obey Jesus' command to Peter.

He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

John 21:16

Finally, they were working at night. They were men who were like Paul.

For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

1 Thessalonians 2:9

nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you,

2 Thessalonians 3:8

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Luke does not name this angel. It would be a good guess to assume it was Gabriel (but we don't know).

The glory of the Lord "shone around" them. The verb is the source of our word "lamp," λάμπω (lampo). *It is found in the following:*

Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Matthew 5:15

and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

Matthew 17:2

Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And

his chains fell off his hands.

Acts 12:7

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6

When you add the prefix εκ (ek) meaning “out” we have the following:

Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Matthew 13:43

Not just “to shine” but “to shine forth.” In our passage, the verb is prefixed with περι (peri) which is “around.” We find it in Paul’s testimony concerning his conversion.

"While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

Acts 26:12-14

It was this same sort of experience the shepherds had. They were engulfed in the glory of the Lord. They were afraid! We have previously looked that the two Greek terms for fear. This, again, is the good word. We have in this verse what I perceive as a Hebraism (i.e. Hebrew idiom which has been carried into Greek).

Literally, the word “fear” is found twice, once as a noun and once as a verb - a Hebrew idiom for expressing something of great magnitude. Literally, they “feared a great fear.” It must have been an extremely strange encounter.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. After telling them to "calm down" (not be afraid) the angel did what angels do best. "I bring you good tidings" is all one word in the Greek - a rather large word. It is εὐαγγελίζω (euangelizo). The middle of the word is the word we get "angel" from. The last part of the word makes it into a verb - "to act as an angel" or, "to act as a messenger" (which is what an angel is). The "eu" in front of it is good (i.e. it means "good"). It is thus "to act as a messenger of good news." That, of course, is what an evangelist is. The news came with "great joy." How can one get any stronger? The phrase "there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior" is good English but it overlooks the emphasis of the Greek. A literal translation is this: "For is born to you this day a savior who is Christ the Lord in the City of David." In other words, "Christ the Lord is more important than where He was born.

This is the first time in Luke's Gospel than we find the name "Christ" Χριστός (Christos). The name comes from the Greek χρίω (chrio) "to touch with the hand." The verb is found several places in the New Testament such as:

*Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has
anointed us is God, 2 Corinthians 1:21*

So, the "Christ" is the "Anointed One." This goes back to the Hebrew term מָשִׁיחַ (Messiah) which means the same thing. I would imagine that the the angel spoke to the shepherds in Hebrew and so would have used "Messiah" rather than "Christ."

And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." The angel announced that there would be a "sign" for them in Bethlehem. The shepherds were Jews - Jews needing a sign. Paul wrote,

*For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after
wisdom; 1 Corinthians 1:22*

We shall see this repeated again and again as we continue through this Gospel. The sign would be the baby in the manger. The fact that He was wrapped in swaddling clothes was not a matter of importance, the location of the baby was.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God All of a sudden there was a “multitude of the heavenly host.” The Greek is στρατιά (stratia), literally, “soldiers.” Throughout the Old Testament there are references to the Lord of Hosts.” Several specific references are below.

So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" Then the Commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

Joshua 5:14-15

Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left.

1 Kings 22:19

The angels are not only bearers of Good News. At times they are fierce warriors. It is like the situation with Elisha’s servant.

And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young

man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Eli~~ah~~ Kings 6:15-17

In this instance, however, the angels were not there to fight but to praise, saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Luke 2:15-20

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven. I have already noted, several times, that "so it was" is not to be taken as "by chance" but by heavenly design. I have also mentioned another point before but will elaborate on it here.

Take the last phrase of 2 Corinthians 9:7, "*for God loves a cheerful giver*" This phrase can be expressed in the Greek with 24 different word orders.

All same about the same thing - all would be translated the same into English. *Some of these twenty-four possibilities are, of course, less likely to be encountered than others; moreover, they are not all precisely equivalent in meaning: the differences in meaning which are reflected by the different word orders above, however, are of the sort which in English would have to be expressed by intonation and*

*emphasis, and by various paraphrases.*⁴ Why this is possible is too involved to go into here. It is important to realize, however, that we lose some of the emphasis and thought in translating into English. This is the case with the above phrase.

A “word-for-word” translation of the Greek is “And it was as went away from them into heaven the angels” This is not very good English. It is not very common Greek. The reason that “the angels” appears last in the phrase is that Luke is shifting his attention away from the angels and focusing on the shepherds. Do not look at the angels ascending into heaven, look at the shepherds standing in the fields alone again. The shepherds decided to do something. They would “go to” Bethlehem. However, Luke does not use the word for “go.” The word for “come” is ἔρχομαι (erchomai). Here the prefix δια (dia) is added, meaning “to come through” or “to pass through.” (as it is usually translated). One might paraphrase this as “Let us pass through these fields and into Bethlehem. Perhaps, in their excitement, the shepherds were not very careful in their choice of words. The entire passage in the Greek indicates a great deal of excitement on their part.

It is of interest that they wanted to see what “the Lord” had made known to them. It was not “the angel” but “the Lord.” In any case, Luke tells us they “came with haste.” The word is σπεύδω (speudo), a word used almost exclusively by Luke (except 2 Peter 3:12) - it kind of sounds like “speed.” This whole passage indicates a state of great excitement among the shepherds. Their actions were successful - they found Mary, Joseph, and the baby. The baby was “lying in a manger,” a fulfillment of the sign promised by the angels.

Upon meeting the Savior face-to-face, they did what all of us should have done. *They made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.* The shepherds did not keep quiet about what they had seen. They made it know to all who would listen. Luke

⁴Goetchius, “The Language of the New Testament, Page 24

says “widely known.” Again, reason why Luke was able to collect this information.

And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. The shepherds were not quiet about what they had heard and seen. This was as it should be. Those of us who have had an experience with the Lord should be vocal about it. We should spread the word as these shepherds did. This, again, is why Luke was able to obtain the information about the shepherds - many had heard it from them first hand and so there would have been plenty of oral records as well as, perhaps, some written ones.

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

But... This is a word of contrast. The shepherds spread the word far and wide. Mary kept them to herself. While it would be natural for a mother to do this, it seems a bit selfish to not share what she knew about Jesus. Of the word “kept,” Robertson says, “*Imperfect active. She kept on keeping together all these things. They were meat and drink to her. She was not astonished, but filled with holy awe. . . . She could not forget. But did not Mary keep also a Baby Book? And may not Luke have seen it?*”⁵

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. The shepherds first action was to tell others. Then, having done this, they praised the Lord. Again. this is what every Christian ought to do.

And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

Luke 2:21

⁵Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the New Testament.*”

We have already discussed the Old Testament institution of circumcision. If you think about it, it might seem strange that the Son of God was circumcised according to Jewish law. Jesus gives answer to this Himself.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil" Matthew 5:17

Jesus fulfilled all that the Mosaic Law required. Jews, today, still do so even though they accept Christ as their Messiah.

Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" Luke 2:22-35

A woman, after bearing a male child, was unclean for 40 days. After this, she was to go to the temple, as explained in Leviticus.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days. She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are fulfilled. . . .' When the days of her purification are fulfilled, whether for a son or a daughter, she shall bring to the priest a lamb of the first year as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove as a sin offering, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her. And she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who has borne a male or a female.

Leviticus 12:1-4 & 6-7

So, as they went to Jerusalem to the Temple according to the law, several things happened (in addition to the sacrifice). First, we have, *And behold*, - not by chance but by God's divine planning. A man named Simeon was there.

There are two others by this name mentioned in the Scriptures.

Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.

Genesis 29:33

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul

Acts 13:1

The name means “the hearing one,” as is indicated in the passage from Genesis above. This particular Simeon is not mentioned anywhere else than here. It is said that he was:

- *just* δίκαιος (*dikaios*)
- *devout* εὐλαβής (*eulabes*)
- *waiting for the Consolation of Israel* προσδέχομαι (*prosdexomai*)
- *the Holy Spirit was upon him.*

First, he was called a “just” man. He was not sinless - the words are not synonyms. This simply means that he observed the Mosaic laws and kept them to the extent it is possible to do so. He was also “devout”. The Greek word is made up of εὐ, a prefix we have seen before, meaning “good,” and from the word for “to receive” or “to take.” In other words, “to take well.” A more fitting definition here is “to be cautious” so as to not do something amiss. He was a man who was careful to worship God in the proper way and with the proper attitude.

Thirdly, he was “waiting.” The root of the verb is “to take with the hand” and the prefix, προσ, (toward). Nearly all of the New Testament passages where this word is found have to do with waiting for the promises of God (Mark 15:43; Luke 2:25; Luke 2:38; Luke 12:36; Luke 23:51; Acts 23:21; Acts 24:15; Titus 2:13; Jude 1:21). The translation says he was waiting for the “Consolation of Israel.” “Consolation is παράκλησις (*paraklesis*) which is from the same root that we get “advocate” or “comforter”,

used in connection (mostly) with the Holy Spirit.

In view of the fourth item, the “Holy Spirit was upon him, we might say that he was waiting for the promise of the day when the holy Spirit would dwell within.

And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. One has to wonder why the Holy Spirit made such a promise to this man. “Revealed” is a very long Greek word - κεχρημάτισμαι (kechrematismai)(a perfect passive form), The word implies that, at some time in the past, the Holy Spirit had somehow imparted this knowledge to him. Wuest translates this as “*It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer*”⁶ The Greek text says nothing about “prayer” The word is almost universally used of a revelation from God (or from Heaven)

Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. Matthew 2:12

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. Matthew 2:22

And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." Acts 10:22

who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was

⁶Wuest, “The New Testament, an Expanded Translation.

about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." Hebrews 8:5

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. Hebrews 11:7

See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven,

Hebrews 12:25

So he came by the Spirit into the temple. The Greek text says he "came in the Spirit," not "by." Wuest correctly interprets this with "And he went in the control of the Spirit."⁷ He also adds (unnecessarily) the outer temple. Only priest could go into the inner temple. This is an example for all of us. We need to let go and let the Spirit lead our lives. Suppose Simeon had decided that it was a good morning to sleep in and not gone to the temple. He would have missed the promised viewing of the Messiah! Of course, if you really believe in the Sovereignty of God you would say this couldn't happen. The point is, we may miss much of the good that God has for us if we are not yielded to the control of the Spirit. Paul said,

Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thesalonias 5:19

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30

And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him

⁷Wuest, "The New Testament, an Expanded Translation."

according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God. It would seem today that the parents of any child would be reluctant to give him into the hands of a stranger; even more so when it was Jesus. There must have been a leading of the Holy Spirit on the part of Joseph and Mary as well. So, he bless the child with the words below.

"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel." There are some odd things in the word order here and also some unexpected words. Let us begin with "Lord" and "servant."

"Lord" is usually κύριος (kurios) through the New Testament, Her, however, it is δεσπότης (despotes) from which we get "despot." Thayer says, in comparing these two words, *"despot" was strictly the correlation of slave δούλος (doulos), and hence denoted absolute ownership and uncontrolled power; Kurios had a wider meaning, applicable to the various ranks and relations in life, and not suggestive either of property or of absolutism*.⁸ This brings us to the second word. It is not the usual word for servant but the word for slave δούλος (doulos), a word Paul often used of himself. Perhaps the reason that Simeon was such a "just and devout" man is that this is how he viewed himself, a slave to the Lord God who had to do his bidding. As such, he received a great reward.

The word order here indicates the important point to Simeon. It is *"Now, letting your slave depart, Master, according to your word, in peace."* The peace comes at the end. What was important was that Simeon was now "departing." Actually, ἀπολύω (apoluo) means "to set free," appropriate words for a "slave." Simeon, like Paul, was a bondsman during his stay here on earth and, now, he would be set free into a whole new world - in heaven. He said he "saw with his eyes" God's salvation. This, of course, is literally true - he saw

⁸Thayer, "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament"

the baby who would be the savior of the world.

We shall not comment on the rest of this praise, it is self-evident. We must comment, however, on what we have commented before. So far in this Gospel, everyone who has come face-to-face with Jesus (or an angel announcing His birth) has broken forth in a song of praise. Oh that we would have the need to do likewise!

As in previous circumstances, Joseph and Mary marveled at what was said and done. But, then, Simeon adds this. *"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."* What he said before is easy to understand. This is a bit perplexing. What does he mean by "the fall and rising" of many in Israel? We have already seen that Simeon as "just and devout" man, but who could tell. Are you a just and devout person? Now that Christ has come and paid the penalty for all of our sins, the distinction is clear. If you have truly accepted Him as savior, you are truly saved (you have "risen") If you reject Him, you are not (you are "fallen"). There is no middle ground.

All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. Matthew 25:32

The last part of Simeon's words are a preface to what the author of Hebrews would write later.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter

of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

Luke 2:36-39

Next on the scene, brought there also by the Spirit, was a woman named Anna. I suppose “equal rights for women” was in affect in those days since we have a women involved as well as Simeon. Luke tells us quite a bit about this woman. First her name was ἄννα (Hanna). Why the English translation of “Hanna” becomes “Anna” I do not know. The Greek word is only a name - a transliteration of the Hebrew name, חַנָּה (Hannah). We all know of Hannah.

Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

1 Samuel 1:1-2

So, she was named after a very famous woman in the Old Testament. He says she was of “great age” (you never tall the age of a woman!) We can computer her approximate age. Luke tells us she had been a wife for 7 years and a widow for 84 years, a total of 91 years. Had she been married at the age of 12 (quite young), she would then have been about 103 years old. She was probably older than that. This was, indeed, a very old age in those days. We would assume

that, like Simeon, God had kept her alive here on earth until she could see the Messiah.

He says she was a “prophetess.” προφήτις (prophetis). There is only one other (so called) prophetess in the New Testament.

Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

Revelation 2:20

There is a male form of the word which is used many times in the New Testament but almost always of an Old Testament prophet. There were five woman called prophetesses in the Old Testament.

Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

Exodus 15:20

Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

Judges 4:4

So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her.

2 Kings 22:14

My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

Nehemiah 6:14

Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and

*bore a son. Then the Lord said to me, "Call his name
Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz;*

Isaiah 8:3

Moses' sister was one, Debora as not only a "judge" of Israel but also a prophetess, There was one we don't know about, Huldah. Now Noadiah was not a prophet for God, she was one against God. Finally, the wife of Isaiah the prophet is called a prophetess.

Luke tells us:

- She did not depart from the temple
- She fasted and prayed
- she did this night and day

Today, we would think of a nun doing this (or, at least some years ago we would have). This does not mean, however, that this is something for today. Anna (Hannah?) was an "Old Testament" prophetess for nearly all of her life. Jesus has come and made a difference. We need not spend our time in some temple worshipping God We worship God in the temple all the time!

*Do you not know that you are the temple of God and
that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

1 Corinthians 3:16

We are God's temple today. Wherever we worship God, we are in His temple! But, of course, she prayed "night and day." Paul says we are to do the same.

pray without ceasing,

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Not that we are to be consciously praying to God - we are to be in a continual attitude of prayer - receptive to God's leading and speaking to us.

And coming in that instant. "Coming" ἐφίστημι (ephistemi) we have see before, when the angels "came upon" the shepherds (Luke

2:9) “Coming in” is not a good translation since she really “came upon” someone or something. Specifically, Joseph and Mary and the baby. “In that instant” is literally, “in the hour” ὥρα (hora), a common idiom for “at that time” or “at that instant.” What “instant?” The instant that Jesus was brought into the temple. She practiced what Paul tells us to practice.

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

2 Timothy 4:2

As with all the others who have met Jesus so far, *she gave thanks to the Lord*. Also, as did the shepherds, *she spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem*.

So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. From this statement, we gather that they remained in Bethlehem until the days of Mary’s purification were over. Then, after going to the Temple, they returned home. This gives rise to a curious fact. There has always been a question as to when the Magi, spoken of by Matthew, reached the baby. Matthew records for us,

And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."

And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:8, 11

If the Magi found them in Bethlehem, it must have been before the forty days were over. Probably, after the circumcision in Jerusalem,

they returned to Bethlehem were they were able to find a house to stay.

And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke 2:40

We have nothing concerning Jesus from forty days after His birth until He was 12 years old - except this one verse from Luke. The “And” Τό δέ (To de) that begins this verse is misleading - connecting it to the previous verse. This verse stands by itself. If one must translate δέ at all here, it should be “Now.” In this one verse Luke tells us that Jesus:

- grew
- became strong (in spirit)
- became filled with wisdom
- had the grace of God upon Him

It seems unnecessary to say that the Child “grew” αὐξάνω (auzano), one would expect that, the same term was used of John the Baptist.. The word is often used of plants (in the Parable of the Sower). But He needs to continue to grow!

He must increase, but I must decrease.

John 3:30

Then we, too, must grow.

we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ

Ephesians 4:14-15

as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

1 Peter 2:2

Secondly, he became strong. “in the Spirit” is not in the better texts and most likely does not belong. The same was said of John the Baptist (Luke 1:80). The word, κραταίωω (kratiaioo), is found in two other New Testament passages.

Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.

1 Corinthians. 16:13

As Jesus became strong, so should we. How?

. . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

Ephesians 3:16

Next, He became filled with Wisdom. James says all we need to do is ask for it. And Paul prayed for Christians,

to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding Colossians 1:9b

~~He had the “Grace of God” upon Him. It seems unnecessary to comment on this other than to point out that, through His work on the cross, we too may have this.~~

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking

Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Luke 2:41-50

Like all other good Jews, Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. The text would tend to indicate that Jesus didn't go until He was twelve, but this seems unlikely - I don't believe they had baby sitters in those days. The time is significant in that this would be the last Passover before Jesus would go through His Bar-Mitzvah. He was still, at that point, a "child."

After the feast, which lasted several days, "they" began their journey back to Nazareth. Who is the "they" referred to? It wasn't Jesus because He remained in Jerusalem. Since the text says that they sought him out *among their relatives and acquaintances*, we conclude that there was a rather large company of people making the journey.

One of the first questions that comes to mind is, "How could they have left Jesus behind?" Suppose you had a large family and went on a trip. Because your family was large, the husband took some of the children in one car and the wife took the others. In this case, it would be possible to travel some distance, each thinking the child was in the other car. This is the way it was then. The women would travel in one group with the girls and small children. The men would go in another group with the older boys. Jesus was right in the middle. He had not yet had his Bar Mitzvah but He was too old to travel with the girls and little kids. So, He could easily have been in either group. Most likely, Joseph and Mary each assumed that Jesus was with the other parent and didn't discover Him missing until nightfall when the two groups would assemble as a family for

the night.

Luke says that it wasn't until after three days that they found Him. You must reckon them as follows: first day = day they left Jerusalem; second day = day they returned, arriving at night; third day = day they looked for Him and found Him. At this point we must bring up an interesting question. Need Joseph and Mary be concerned during this time? You say, "Of course, wouldn't you be!" But, you are forgetting that we are speaking of the Son of God.

I am reminded of the time when Jesus was in the storm.

Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

Matthew 8:23-26

Nothing could happen to Jesus until He allowed it to happen. Of course Jesus would be safe back in Jerusalem! On the other hand, Joseph and Mary were ordinary human beings just like you and I and I am sure they must have had fears. There must be a lesson here. If we have been led by the Lord and continue to be, can anything happen to us that the Lord does not intend to happen?

When they did find Him, He was in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers. This reminds me a bit of Paul.

"I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Young people were schooled in “religion” by sitting at the feet of the elders and, if one was fortunate, at the feet of some great teacher.

both listening to them and asking them questions. It does not seem strange that He was listening to them but it does seem a bit strange that they were answering the questions of this 12-year old. He was no ordinary twelve year old and He was not asking ordinary twelve-year old questions. Luke writes, *And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.* The teachers (and anyone else present) was astonished. Astonished at what? Not His questions but at the answer He gave to their questions.

So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" Mary had to learn a lesson. It was a hard one to learn - she hadn't learned it even when He began His public ministry.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." John 2:4

One can not be too critical of Mary. How many others have been assigned the responsibility of raising the Son of God?

But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:51-52

Luke then covers the next ten to 15 years of Jesus' life the same as he did the first twelve.

CHAPTER THREE

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. Luke 3:1-2

How much easier it would have been had Luke a calendar to refer to. Since He did not, he has to give the dat in terms of who the notable rulers were. Unfortunately, now, some 2000 years later, this dating method is not so precise. From what he says about Tiberius Ceaser, the time would be about AD28 or AD29. Other would reckon it as AD27. AD27 is probably about right. Jesus would have been about 30 years old, or older, at this time

At this time *the word of God came to John*. John, it's time!

And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying:

*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
Make His paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled
And every mountain and hill brought low;
The crooked places shall be made straight
And the rough ways smooth;
And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "*

Luke 3:3-6

So, John began his appointed duty. He announced the coming of the

Messiah, preaching repentance for the Lord was at hand. In doing so, he quotes from Isaiah. He cites Isaiah 40:3-4.

This passage is introduced by,

*"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!"
Says your God.
"Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her,
That her warfare is ended,
That her iniquity is pardoned;
For she has received from the Lord's hand
Double for all her sins."*

Isaiah 40:1-2

It was, according to Isaiah, time for the Messiah to come. It was time for Israel to repent and prepare to meet the Lord. But, in reading the Scripture from Isaiah, it doesn't appear that Christ's coming fulfilled much of these.

This prophecy, like many Old Testament prophecies, looked forward to the coming of Christ as a single event - not two. Later we shall find Jesus in the Temple reading the Prophet Isaiah.

*And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.
And when He had opened the book, He found the
place where it was written: (Isaiah 60:1-2) Then He
closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and
sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the
synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say
to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your
hearing."*

Luke 4:17, 20-21

Part of the reason that there were "eyes fixed upon Him" was that the prophecy did not end at Isaiah 60:2 - it continued. But the prophecy that began verse 3 was for His second coming. He stopped reading at the point where the prophecy with respect to His first coming ended. This is the way with many Old Testament

prophecies.

Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Luke 3:7-9

John started his ministry by baptizing the people (which, of course, is why he was called John the Baptist.) We find no references to baptism in the Old Testament. The Greek verb, βαπτίζω (baptizo) is found once.

So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

2 Kings 5:14

Naaman dipped himself seven times as he was told. He dipped himself seven times in the Jordan. Aside from this, there is no evidence of any sort of baptism in the Old Testament.

Not only was John's baptism a new thing, his message was new as well. Luke gives us the reason why people came to John, *Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* John's message was warning of this and they would do what needed to be done to avoid it. John could see through them. *"Brood of vipers! . . . Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'* He chided them for attempting to obtain "fire insurance" and that, if they were to be

baptized by him, there had to be true repentance.

Further, and as a partial answer to the issued of John's baptism, he informed the people as they claimed, '*We have Abraham as our father.*' That their Jewish heritage would no longer be the means of their salvation. This is strengthened by his words, *For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.* In other words, you people can be replaced and God will (and has) raise up another people for His name. He then adds to this a solemn word of warning, *even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.* Israel's days were numbered (until His second coming) and the time was at hand when being a good Israelite was not sufficient.

If just following the Jewish ritual was not enough, what could be done?

So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

Luke 3:10-14

He had answers for three (representative) groups of Israelites. He singles out the (1) affluent, (2) tax collectors, and (3) soldiers. The affluent should share what they had with the less fortunate. The tax collectors had to become honest (a tough job for a tax collector). The soldier should not exercise his authority for personal gain.

It is interesting that the bottom line for each of these people was

wealth. Give of your abundance, do not collect more than is due, do not take what is not yours. It is also interesting that Jesus would minister to each of these groups of people.

Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" . . . The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Matthew 19:16, 20-22

The rich man could not share his wealth. Later, Luke will tell us about another.

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'

Luke 18:10-13

Tax collectors could make it either (but Matthew did!). Finally, with respect to soldiers, we remember Christ's crucifixion.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.

John 19:23

So, in general, none of these three groups of people would respond. But there were a few that did! There was one rich man . . .

Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.

Matthew 27:57-60

There was one tax collector . . .

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. Matthew 9:9

And there was a soldier . . .

So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"

Luke 23:47

The masses would reject Jesus, the individuals would accept Him.

For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 22:14

Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to

loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

Luke 3:15-17

Apparently, John had a strong ministry. So strong that the people began to wonder if he was the Messiah. Luke says the people were in "expectation." What were they expecting? They were expecting to receive something which John was not going to provide. They would be disappointed if all they saw was John.

John's answer was, *"I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."*

This statement is well attested to. It is found in Matthew 3:11 and Mark 1:8. John cites all of it except the part about the Baptism of the Spirit in John 1:26-27 (which we shall look at a bit later). Luke repeats this in detail.

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Acts 1:1-5

From this passage, we realize that the Baptism of the Spirit did not

occur until Pentecost. But, in addition to this, Luke makes quite a point in the following passage:

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Acts 11:15-18

It was not clear to the early disciples that the salvation of Christ was meant for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews. The fact that Gentiles were being baptized in the Spirit was thus evident to them that the Gentiles were to be included - a deeply profound conclusion!

Gong back to John, he only baptized with water. This is what he was told to do.

John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He

remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' John 1:26-33

According to John the Baptist's testimony, it was Christ Himself who commanded him to baptize with water. It was only for a sign until the real baptism came - with Jesus Christ.

John went on to say, *His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.* We have already noted that Jesus, would indeed, separate the wheat from the chaff, and the sheep from the goats.

And with many other exhortations he preached to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison. When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

Luke 3:18-22

Luke, for some reason, tells us little else about John the Baptist and how he was, eventually, beheaded. Both Matthew and Mark do speak of this. Luke passes this over with a statement about Herod and about having John imprisoned. It would have been a matter of importance for the Jewish believers that Matthew was addressing but of little consequence to Gentiles.

All four Gospel writers speak of Jesus's baptism (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; John 1:32). Luke is slightly more specific and we shall deal only with his description. He says, *And the Holy Spirit*

descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him. What Luke has that the others omit was “in bodily form.” The Greek, *σωματικός* (somatikos) is found in only one other place.

But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

1 Timothy 4:7-8

All four of the Gospel writers have “as a dove.” Note the word “as!” They do not say that it was in this form and that it looked like a dove, only that it descended like a dove would descend. Luke does not describe the form other than it was “bodily.” It must have had the appearance of a man to have a body.

Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathiah, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Judah, the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er, the son of Jose, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menan, the son of Mattathah, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the

son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God Luke 3:23-38

We shall not go through the remainder of this chapter on a word-by-word basis. We can take a representative sample instead.

. . . τοῦ someone . . .

The word “son” υἱός (huios) is only used once in the entire passage, “*being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph!*” Of course, Jesus was not Joseph’s son. Luke says “supposed,” νομίζω (nomizo), a term derived from the Greek word for “law.” In this passage, it would refer to the fact that most people (i.e. their neighbors) would think Jesus to be Joseph’s son. For all practical purposes, during His childhood, Joseph would be his “father.”

From Joseph, the supposed father, we proceed through an uninterrupted list of names, 73 of them, to “the son of God.” If we assumed 20 years per generation, this would be 1460 years. If a generation were 40 years, this would still be about 3000 years. What is going on?

First, let us compare some genealogies. In Genesis 5 and 10 (with the flood in between) we have one genealogy. This covers from Adam to Abraham with 18 generations in between - the same as Luke except that Luke adds one - Cainan. Then from Abraham to David Luke has 12 generations - as does Genesis.

From David to Joseph, Luke has 40 generations none of which match up with the 26 in Matthew. What is going on?

Bishop Ussher, many years ago, concluded that Adam was created in 4004 BC. This date is no longer accepted, believing that it was from 7,000 to 10,000 BC (or earlier). Ussher's work was based (erroneously) on a careful study of the Scriptures assuming a direct father-to-son relation is the genealogies.

The current belief is that the genealogies in the Scriptures are not strictly father-to-son - that many insignificant generations are passed over. A person may (correctly) say the he is a descendant of Abraham Lincoln. This does not mean that Lincoln was his father - there were a number of generations between them which are not significant. We believe this is true of these genealogies.

The fact that Luke's genealogy from Adam to David agrees almost completely with the Old Testament chronology should be no surprise. Luke, at the beginning of this Gospel, told us where he obtained his material and this he obtained, it would appear, from the Old Testament.

That Luke does not agree with Matthew from David to Joseph is natural since Matthew considers the political genealogy of Jesus, showing him to be heir of the throne of David. Luke covers the genealogy from the human line, through Mary. The fact that Luke has forty generations whereas Matthew has only 26 is to be accounted for on the basis of the differing purposes.

Matthew follows the Old Testament example, recalling the significant names in the history between David and Joseph. Luke follows a more direct approach (up to David).

David reigned about 1000 B.C. Dividing 1000 by 40 gives 25 years. Thus, forty generations from David to Joseph is not at all unreasonable. There are a few interesting men in Luke's genealogy prior to David. These are Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, and David.

*Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon,
and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by*

Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse,

Matthew 1:4-5

In this family line was a woman by the name of Rahab and another by the name of Ruth. Neither woman was Jewish. Rahab we know from the book of Joshua.

Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.

Joshua 2:1

and Ruth we know from the book of the same name.

Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion--Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.

Ruth 1:1-4

There would, most likely, be other interesting people in this genealogy if we only knew about them. Luke, thus, shows not only the manhood of Jesus Christ, but that he was a Man for the world, not just the Jews.

CHAPTER FOUR

Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' " Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' "and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' " Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. Luke 4:1-13

After John's baptism, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Luke says two things in one sentence. Jesus was "filled with the Holy Spirit" and He was "led by the Spirit." The two actions go hand-in-hand. If you are truly filled with the Spirit, you, also, will be led by the Spirit. That is the promise we have the Word.

The author of Hebrews reminds us,

*For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted,
He is able to aid those who are tempted.*

Hebrews 2:18

*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot
sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points
tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Hebrews 4:15

The first act that Jesus had to go through in His earthly ministry was that of temptation. It was necessary to provide proof of who He was. He was tempted:

- In the wilderness
- For forty days
- By the devil

We shall consider these in reverse order.

*Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by
God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does
He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted
when he is drawn away by his own desires and
enticed.*

James 1:13-14

God never tempts anyone - not Jesus, not you. It is always the work of the devil to tempt someone. On the other hand, it was the Spirit that led Jesus to where He could be tempted. God does allow us to be tempted - by Satan. How much we are tempted depends on us. Jesus taught us to pray,

*And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.*

Matthew 6:13a

We should pray that we not be tempted. We shall, none the less,

have times in our lives where we are tempted. We still have God's promise.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

1 Corinthians. 10:13

Finally, James gives us a hint as to why both Jesus and you and I are tempted.

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

James 1:12

Then we consider the fact that this temptation was for forty days. The number has significance. It has always been the number of testing (testing not tempting) and judgement (for good or bad).

For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made. . . . And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

Genesis 7:12, 12

Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

Genesis 50:3

So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Exodus 24:18

And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. Numbers 13:25

And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening. 1 Samuel 17:16

And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you." So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. 1 Kings 19:7-8

And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" Jonah 3:4

Beginning with Noah, the embalming of Joseph, through the spying out of the Land of Promise, the testing of Goliath and the testing of Elijah, and, finally, through Jonah, this number is the number of trying people out to see what they are made of. It applies even to Jesus Himself - not only in the wilderness with Satan, but also after His resurrection.

to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Acts 1:3

Last, Jesus went into the wilderness for His testing. Why there? Consider the passages above. In nearly all of them, the testing is in private. Noah and his family were all alone during the forty days. Moses was alone on the top of the mountain. Elijah was alone. Jonah was alone outside of the city waiting for the judgement.

Why? Why is it that we are tested alone. It is not to prevent someone sneaking the answers to us like in school. It is because the

testing of a person is always in private. It is between you and the Lord. It is no one else's business how you fair.

And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. We have no idea what happened during these forty days. We know that He did not eat anything. Beyond that there is no information - He was alone!

And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' Before we look at this first of three temptations, we shall consider the following.

For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.

1 John 2:16

John wrote that there are three things in this world that would keep us from a right relation with God. These are:

- Lust of the Flesh
- Lust of the Eyes
- Pride of Life

This has been so from the beginning.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Genesis 3:6

Eve first suffered from the “lust of the flesh” (the tree was good for food), then the “lust of the eyes” (it was pleasant to the eyes), and “the pride of life” (desirable to make one wise). She was tempted in all three areas - and fell. As we begin this section, we shall see that Jesus is tested in the same three areas.

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

But, as we shall see, He did not sin. We shall also see why He did not sin (besides the fact that He was God in the flesh).

Jesus had been forty days without food. Luke says, specifically, “he was hungry.” He was “ripe” for the “lust of the flesh.” So, Satan suggests that Jesus turn the stones into bread. After all, He is god, He can do anything.

Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Genesis 18:14a

It would have been easy for Jesus to do such a thing. He didn't. Instead His response was from the Scriptures:

*So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that **man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.***

Deuteronomy 8:3

Not only was His response based on God's Word, it is taken in context as well. God allowed the Israelites to suffer hunger in the wilderness for a reason. It was for a purpose, for their learning. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, fasting, for a reason. He was not going to upset that purpose by yielding to the suggestion of Satan. We need to be equipped as Jesus was.

*Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You!*

Psalm 119:11

So, Jesus passed the first test.

" Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' Note the words "showed" here. Satan took Jesus to where He could see all the kingdoms of the world. Test Number Two - the Lust of the Eyes.

From here it gets a bit troublesome. Satan said he would give Jesus authority over all this. This implies that Satan had the authority in the first place. We turn first to the Old Testament.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

Job 1:6-10

The implication of this passage is that Satan had the power to do whatever he wanted on earth - with limits. God set limits for Satan and would not let him touch Job. We thus infer that Satan actually did (and still does to a large extent) exercise authority over the kingdoms of the world.

If we turn to the New Testament,

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matthew 28:18

Note that Jesus says all authority “has been given” to Him. You can only receive something if you do not already possess it. It was the Father who was to do the giving, not Satan whose only power was that which God allowed him to have.

Jesus did not scold Satan for thinking he had the authority to give this. What did Jesus scold him for? Satan wanted Him to do contrary to what God expected of Israel (and us).

You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.

Deuteronomy 6:13

Again, the Lord relied on Scripture to rebuke Satan. Jesus passed test number two.

Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' "and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " And Jesus answered and said to him, *"It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'* Now it gets very interesting. Twice Satan has tempted Jesus to no avail. Both times Jesus refuted him with Scripture. so, now, Satan is going to “fight fire with fire.” He is going to use a little Scripture of his own.

No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent

you shall trample underfoot.

Psalm 91:10-13

Remember that the third area is the “pride of life.” If this promise in Psalm 91 applies to God’s people, it would certainly apply to God’s Son. Can you imagine what it would have been like if Jesus had flung Himself from the pinnacle of the temple and, as He fell, an array of angels swooping down and grabbed Him and saved him? That would surely have made the evening news! Had Jesus been prideful, He might have fell to this suggestion.

Jesus, however, know something that some of us don’t. He replies with more Scripture.

*"You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you
tempted Him in Massah.*

Deuteronomy 6:16

What does this have to do with us? I knew a preacher once who maintained that a preacher (or any other Christian, I suppose) is immortal until it is God’s time to take him home. While this is correct in a general sense, I always asked, “You mean that if you were to go and jump off the Golden Gate Bridge, God would somehow save you?” As I recall, his answer was something like “Well, I guess it would probably be God’s time to take me home.” or something like that.

The truth of the matter is that, God does protect us - up to a point. There is a point beyond which we are tempting the Lord which, according to the above Scripture is wrong.

Jesus passes test number three. *Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.* This passage ends with this one sentence. The devil had ended “every” temptation. We might interpret this as meaning that these three tests tested Jesus in all three areas. We could, however, assume that he tested Jesus in other ways that were not recorded. Either way, the result is the same. Jesus passed the test.

There are two important points yet to be made. Luke tells us that after this, the devil “departed from Him.”

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

James 4:7-10

Two things are needed to get the devil to “flee.” First, you must be in submission to God and, second, you must resist the devil - with a Scriptural backing. This is all well and good, but don’t forget the parting words here, *he departed from Him until an opportune time*. If we are submissive to God, know the Scriptures and are ready to use them against the devil, we can get him to flee from us - until an opportune time. It is not a one-time fight. It is a lifelong battle, as Paul has told us.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:11-12

Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. So 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 to read. Luke 4:14-16

At the beginning of this chapter we read that Jesus was “filled with the Holy Spirit” and He was “led by the Spirit.” He was led into the Wilderness. Now, He returns in the “power of the Spirit.” First there is the “filling,” then the “leading,” and then the “power.”

They had no newspapers in those days but the word still got around orally. thus, on His return, many heard about it. Upon His return, He taught in the Synagogues. Since we shall be seeing synagogues throughout this Gospel, we shall take a break here and see what a synagogue was in the time of Christ. Much of the information below will come from Unger’s Bible Dictionary.

THE SYNAGOGUE

συναγωγή (synagoge) is a compound of συν (sun) meaning “with” and αγωγή (agoge) “a leading”. Hence the term refers to “a bringing together” of people for a purpose. It would be of no particular value to discuss the Hebrew terms for it as the Hebrew term has only been applied in modern times.

Most people, today, have a mistaken impression of the role of the synagogue. Most think of it being the Jewish equivalent of the Church (to some extent, today, it is). Actually, according to Unger, it had a much narrower scope. As only a small proportion of the people could become proficient in the study of the law under the scribes, and as it was desirable that all should have at least an elementary acquaintance therewith, the custom grew up in post-exilic times (about 400 B.C.) of reading the Scriptures in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. It must be understood that the main object of these Sabbath day assemblages in the synagogues was not public worship in its stricter sense, but religious instruction, which to an Israelite was above all instruction in the law. Thus Josephus says (Apion, ii, 7), "Not once or twice or more frequently did our lawgiver command us to hear the law, but to come together weekly, with the cessation of other work, to hear the law and to learn it accurately." Philo

called the synagogues "houses of instruction," in which "the native philosophy" was studied, and every kind of virtue taught. In the New Testament, too, the teaching always figures as the chief function of the synagogue.

It is true that an important part of any church operation is instruction. Pastor Jim instructs us from the Scriptures during the Morning Worship Service. Others do so during other services. We also have times specially devoted to study. However, that is not the only function of the church - its main function is worship which was not a normal part of the synagogue service.

As noted above, the synagogue didn't come into being until around 400 B.C. The origin of these Sabbath day meetings in buildings erected for the purpose must be sought for in the post-exilic period. The first traces of them are "the synagogues of God" (Psa. 74 :8), but their commencement may well be as far back as the time of Ezra. R. H. Pfeiffer and other scholars are of the opinion that the synagogue may have originated in Ezekiel's addresses to the Babylonian exiles (Hist. of N. T. Times, p. 50). Such gatherings in the prophet's house (Ezek. 8:1 & 20:1-3) may well be the forerunners of the synagogue gatherings. In the time of Christ "teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath day" was already an established institution (Mark I :21; 6:2; Luke 4:16, :31 ; 6:6; 13:10; Acts 13:14, 27, 42, 44; 1. ~ :21 ; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4). According to Acts 15:21, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." Josephus, Philo, and, later, Judaism generally, trace back the whole system to Moses, but there is no evidence of a pre-cxilian origin.

3. Religious Community. The system presupposes a religious community. This was an independent organization in towns in which Jews might be excluded from civic rights, or Jews and others had equal rights. In such cases the Jews would be thrown back upon self-organization as a religious community; for whether they cooperated or not in civil affairs, the necessity of independent organization for religious matters was the same. Where Jews only had civic rights, and the local authorities were Jewish, matters

relating to the synagogue were probably under their jurisdiction and direction. In the Mishna, for ex-ample, it is presumed as quite self-evident that the synagogue, the sacred ark, and the sacred books were quite as much the property of the town as the roads and baths.

4. Conduct of Synagogues. The general direction of affairs was committed to elders, while special officers were appointed for special purposes. But the peculiarity here is that just for the acts proper to public worship the reading of the Scriptures, preaching and prayer-no special officials were appointed. These acts were, on the contrary, in the time of Christ still freely performed in turn by members of the congregation.

5. Officials.

(1) The ruler of the synagogue (Gr. ' archisunagogos) had the care of external order in public worship, and the supervision of the concerns of the synagogue in general. This officer was found in the entire sphere of Judaism, not only in Palestine, but also in Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and the Roman empire in general. The Hebrew title ro'sh hokk'nislth, "the minister of the synagogue") was undoubtedly synonymous with the Greek term. This office differed from that of an elder of the congregation, although the same person could fill the offices of both. The ruler of the synagogue was so called, not as head of the community, but as conductor of their assembly for public worship. Among his functions is specially mentioned that of appointing who should read the Scriptures and the prayer, and summoning fit persons to preach; to see that nothing improper took place in the synagogue (Luke 12: 14), and to take charge of the synagogue building. Although it was customary to have but one ruler for each synagogue, yet sometimes more are mentioned (Acts 13:15).

(2) Receiver of alms (Heb. .gobba' i ,r'daqah). This official had nothing to do with public worship as such, and is, therefore, where the civil and religious communities were not separated, to be regarded rather as a civil official. According to the Mishna the collection was to be made by two, the distribution by three persons.

Not only was money collected, but also natural products.

(3) The minister (Heb. [lozzan hakk'nislth, . Gr. hup"etis; Luke 4:20). His office was to bring forth the Holy Scriptures at public worship and to put them away again. He was in every respect the servant of the congregation, haying, for example, to execute the punishment of scourging and also to instruct the children in reading.

(4)The person (Heb. sh'lia[l , rrbbur) who pronounced the prayer in the name of the congregation is also generally regarded as one of the officers of the synagogue.

(5) There were also "ten unemployed men," whose business it was, especially in the post-Talmudic period, to be always present for a fee in the synagogue at public worship, for the purpose of making up the number of ten members required for a religious assembly; but they are hardly to be regarded as officials.

6. Building (Heb. bilh hokk"niseth, house of assembly, . Gr. suna,gogi). Synagogues were built by preference outside the towns and near rivers, or on the seashore, for the sake of giving everyone a convenient opportunity for performing such Levitical purification as might be necessary before attending public worship. The size and architecture of course varied. Archaeological research has shown that in many towns the synagogue was a very important building. This is attested by the gorgeous white limestone structure dating c. 200 A. D. uncovered at Capernaum, apparently built on the site of the one where Jesus ministered. Decorational motifs include garland-carrying boys, lions, eagles, stars, vines and palms. Synagogues also have been uncovered at Chorazin near Capernaum, at Beth Alpha in the Valley of Jezreel, at Bethsaida Julius and at Kopher Bir'im. At Caesarea, Beth-shan, Lydda and elsewhere inscriptional allusions to synagogues have been found. At Corinth an inscription has been recovered reading: "Synagogue of the Jews." This was found on a stone apparently separated from its place in a structure which has disappeared. The synagogue in which Paul preached (Acts 18:4) may have contained this very stone and may have stood on the famous Lechaem Road. Almost all these

synagogues lie north and south, so that the entrance is at the south. As a rule they appear to have had one chief entrance and two smaller side doors. The fittings of synagogues in New Testament times were very simple. The chief was the closet (Heb. tibiiah) in which were kept the rolls of the law and the other sacred books. These were wrapped in linen cloths and lay in a case. A representation of an old silver case for the Pentateuch among the modern Samaritans exists as well as other types of cases. An elevated place (Gr. bima, tribune), upon which stood the reading desk, was erected at least in post-Talmudic times, for the person who read the Scriptures or preached. Lamps were also used; and trombones and trumpets were indispensable instruments in public worship. The former were blown especially on the first day of the year, the latter on the feast days. The large synagogue at Alexandria is said to have had the form of a basilica. It is possible that they were sometimes built like theaters, without a roof, but this is only really testified concerning those of the Samaritans.

7. Where Located. The value attached to these Sabbath day assemblies leads us to assume that there was in every town of Palestine, and even in smaller places, at least one synagogue. In the post-Talmudic period it was required that a synagogue should be built wherever ten Israelites were dwelling together. In the larger towns there was a considerable number of synagogues, e. g., in Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Rome. The different synagogues in the same town seem to have been distinguished from each other by special emblems, as a "synagogue of the vine" in Sepphoris, "of the olive tree" in Rome.

8. Worship. The order of worship in New Testament times was tolerably developed and established. The congregation sat in an appointed order, the most distinguished in the front seats, the younger behind; men and women probably apart (see Matt. 23:6; Mark 12:39; Luke II :43; 20:46). In the great synagogue in Alexandria the men are said to have been set apart according to their respective trades. A special division was prepared for the leper. The chief parts of the service were, according to the Mishna, the recitation of the Shema, prayer, the reading of the Torah, the

reading of the prophets, the blessing of the priest, followed by the translation of the Scripture that had been read, and the discourse. The Shema, so called from its commencing words, sh.mQ' Yl:rrii'el, "Hear, a Israel," consists of Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41, together with benediction before and after. It is rather a confession of faith than a prayer. The custom of praying the first three and last three benedictions of the Shemoneh Esreh at Sabbath and festival worship reaches back to the age of the Mishna. The Shemoneh Esreh was the chief prayer which every Israelite, even women, slaves, and children, had to repeat three times a day-morning, afternoon, and evening. It was the custom to pray standing and with the face turned toward the holy of holies, i. e., toward Jerusalem. The prayer was offered by some one named by the ruler of the synagogue, the congregation making only certain responses, especially the amen. He who uttered the prayer stood in front of the chest in which lay the rolls of the law. Every adult member of the congregation was competent to do this; and might also recite the Shema, read the lesson from the prophets, and, if a priest, pronounce the blessing. The Scripture lessons, from both the law and the prophets, could be read by any member of the congregation, even by minors, the latter being only excluded from reading the Book of Esther at the feast of Purim. If priests and Levites were present, they took precedence in reading the lesson. The reader usually stood (Luke 4:16), but both sitting and standing were allowed at the reading of the Book of Esther, and the king was allowed to sit when he read his portion of Scripture at the Feast of Tabernacles in the Sabbatic year. The lesson from the Torah was so arranged that the whole Pentateuch was completed in a cycle of three years, for which purpose it was divided into one hundred and fifty-four sections.

On Sabbaths several members of the congregation, at the least seven, who were summoned for the purpose by some official, originally, indeed, by the ruler of the synagogue, took part in the reading; each (at the reading of the Torah) to read at least three verses, but not to repeat them by heart. The reading of the law was already followed in New Testament times by a paragraph from the prophets (see Luke 4:17; Acts 13:15). The prophets not being read in course, a choice of them was open, and they were always read by one person, and

that on the chief services of the Sabbath. The second language of Scripture not being familiar to the bulk of the people, its reading was followed by translation into the Aramaic dialect. The reading of the Scripture was followed by a lecture or sermon, explaining and applying the portion read (Matt. 4:23; Mark 1 :21; Luke 4:15; 6:6; 13:10; John 6:59, John 18:20); the preacher sitting (Luke 4:20) on an elevated place The position of preacher was open to any competent member of the congregation.

The service closed with the blessing pronounced by a priestly member of the congregation to which the whole congregation responded Amen. If no priest or Levite was present, the blessing was not pronounced, but was made into a prayer.

Merrill F. Unger, "Unger's Bible Dictionary," "Synagogue"

*And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.
And when He had opened the book, He found the
place where it was written:*

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*

*Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the
attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were
in the synagogue were fixed on Him. Luke 4:17-20*

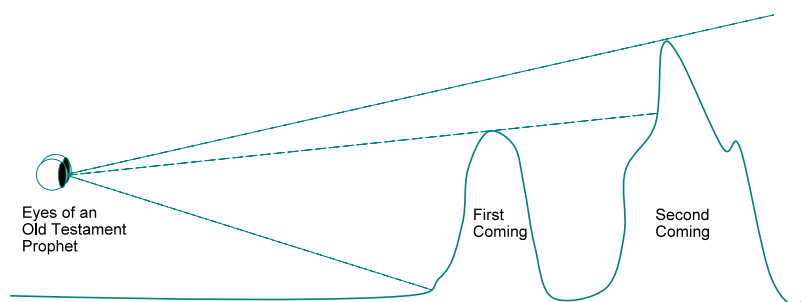
"He found." Jesus did not just arbitrarily pick a passage from the scroll and read it, he selected a particular portion. What He chose

was Isaiah 61:1 and the first part of verse 2⁹. Then he stopped. He sat down.

First, realize that His sitting down did not mean He was done. The custom was to stand when reading the Scriptures, to sit while teaching. Luke tells us that *the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him*. Why? Did they anticipate He was going to teach something really great? I doubt it. They had their eyes fixed on Him because of the very unusual thing He did.

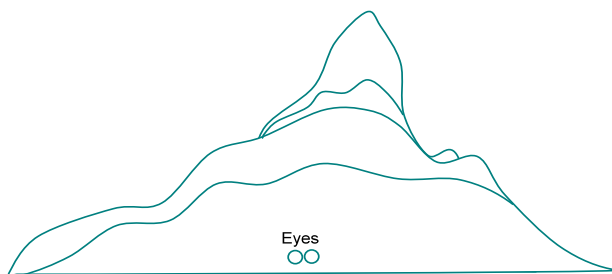
The passage in Isaiah 61 extends from verse 1 to verse 3 (the paragraph does, the subject continues on. Jesus stopped right in the middle of the passage. “Why,” they wondered, “did He stop there?” “What could He possibly teach were He had read only a portion of the passage?”

What they did not understand is what the Old Testament Prophets did not understand and, indeed, many Christians today do not understand. They say a picture is worth a thousand words so here are two thousand. The two comings of Christ are like two mountains off in the distance, as shown below.



⁹Some note that “To set at liberty those who are oppressed” came from Isaiah 68:6. This seems unlikely since he was reading from a single place in the scroll and the line must have been in that scroll.

When viewed from the eyes of the prophet,



the two comings appears as one continuous event - the two aspects running together. Thus, the last part of verse 2 and verses 3 and 4 all refer to the second coming. Christ had to stop where he did in order to teach what He was about to teach.

And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' " Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

Luke 4:21-27

"Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." Had he read the

whole passage, He could not have made this statement because not all of it would have been fulfilled. Everything that Jesus read from that passage was, literally, fulfilled with his birth and ministry.

Note that Luke says to them, *And He began to say to them.* The inference is that He did not complete what He had intended to say or teach. The inference in what He said was that He, Himself, was the fulfillment of that prophecy. The Greek is emphatic that He was claiming to be the fulfilment of this prophecy - that He was the Messiah.

The Jews gathered in that synagogue were no different than people everywhere. They were also typical of many Christians who, upon hearing a message, say “What a great message that was, it was delivered with such force and enthusiasm .” Then, as they begin to think about what was actually said, they begin to have doubts and realize that some of what they heard was not really in accordance with the Scriptures. Unfortunately, there are also many Christians who never reach that second phase.

So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. They were excited at His presentation. They were enthralled by His delivery - his “gracious” words. They were especially impressed since they realized, *Is this not Joseph's son?* He was just the son of an uneducated carpenter.

Knowing what was to come next, Jesus continues with the words, *"You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'"* He knew that when they began to think about the implications of what He had said, there would be a change of heart.

We did not know where the proverb “Physician, heal thyself!” came from - it is not in the Scriptures. There is a parallel later in the Scriptures.

"He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the

cross, and we will believe Him.

Matthew 27:42

The next words are somewhat similar to what we will see much later.

The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

John 20:25

They had heard what Jesus had done in Capernium. We have not in this series of lessons. This is because Luke omits John 1:19 to John 4:54. We shall not consider here why John would have included the additional material - we are not studying John's Gospel. ¹⁰

Jesus continued, *Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'* " Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. They were like many today. Unless they could see physical proof that Jesus was the Messiah, they would not accept Him. What was the difference?

Apparently, in Capernium, The people accepted Jesus because He worked miracles and because He was unknown to them. Luke skips over some of Jesus's earlier ministry and will come back to it later. The probable reason is that he wants to show how the ties with His home were broken and His ministry to the rest of the world began.

But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman

¹⁰Apparently, this material in Luke is not in strict chronological order - it is in some way a logical progression of Jesus' Ministry.

who was a widow.

Jesus now refers to the following:

"Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."

1 Kings 17:9

What does this mean? First it says "Arise, go." Elijah was sent from his home to another place, a place which belonged to the Sidonians. Elijah was not accepted in his own country.

And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." Were there no Israelites with leprosy to cleanse? Of course there were. But it was only a foreigner who accepted the healing. Where was Naaman?

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy." And Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus said the girl who is from the land of Israel." Then the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So he departed and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

2 Kings 5:1-5

He was in Syria. He had to travel all the way to Israel for healing. The people living in Israel couldn't be bothered. And so it was with those in Nazareth. If this "home-town" boy couldn't do something of a miraculous nature, they weren't interested.

It is sad, but I suppose natural, that when a visiting speaker comes to the church, the members of the congregation say “how wonderful this speaker is,” and “I wish our preacher could deliver messages like that!” The situation is this - this visiting speaker has given this same message over and over and over again. He has polished it to the nth degree. No wonder it is good. Our preacher, on the other hand has to give a new message every week. He can not possibly deliver as polished a message.

So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way. Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority. Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!"

Luke 4:28-34

They wanted to see a miracle before they would believe. Jesus had said, in effect, He was going to perform none for them - they had to accept Him for who He was. It is not surprising that they were *filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city.*

But Luke tells us one additional and important thing. *They led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.* In spite of all the people there ready to throw Him over the cliff, He passed through their midst. This is somewhat similar to what we shall see much later.

After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either. Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. Mark 16:12-14

Jesus had a way of going from place to place regardless of the plans of men. He, indeed, performed a miracle in Nazareth by escaping from the clutches of the crowd.

Having left Nazareth, he returned to Capernaum (actually, this may refer to a previous visit to Capernaum). There *they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority*. They demanded no miracles, they simply listened to what He had to say.

Unlike Nazareth, there were opportunities for miracles at Capernium. Now *in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!"*

We have the first occurrence in this book of a demon (or demons) and a man so possessed. Let us, at once, consider whether people are actually possessed by demons or are just mentally ill. Luke, the physician, says the man "had a spirit of an unclean demon." We assume Luke is correct and that the Bible is correct and, therefore, the man really was possessed by a demon.

The words coming from the man's mouth are "Let us alone!" What is meant by the plural here? It could mean one of two things - her was possessed by more than one demon (which is not indicated in the text) or that the man and the demon spoke as one.

It should come as no surprise that one can be filled with a demon or unclean spirit. Consider the following passages,

Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.

Daniel 6:3

And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:41

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

Luke 1:67

So far, we have seen people possessed by a spirit - the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Bible we continue to see this.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

Acts 2:4

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people,

Acts 4:8

And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:31

But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him,

Acts 13:9

And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:52

If one can be filled with the Holy Spirit, why not some other spirit. Paul wrote,

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

There are other spirits besides the Holy Spirit. Angels are spirits (both good angels and bad ones). The bad ones are demons. If a person can be possessed by a good spirit, I see no reason why he can not be possessed by an evil one (no both at the same time).

Let us alone! What have we to do with You? According to Geldenhuys, the expression used here “What have we to do...” is a Hebrasm used to indicate two parties have nothing to do with each other. We need not know any Greek to figure that out - good and evil never are associated together.

Did You come to destroy us? Did He? As we shall see, he did not come to destroy the man who was possessed. But was Jesus going to destroy the evil spirit? Later we shall see some evil spirits pleading for Jesus to allow them to enter a herd of swine rather than to be destroyed. Jesus granted their request - and then had the swine run into the sea and drown! We would assume by this that the demons perished along with the swine.

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him. Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out." And the report about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Luke 4:35-37

Jesus' rebuke was a bit more strong than “Be quiet” would suggest.

Wuest, in his translation has “Your mouth be muzzled.”¹¹ We might have said “shut up” or “shut your mouth!” The demon obeyed Him - as it had to! But, in the process, the demon hurled the man to their midst (and, presumably, to the ground). Luke says it “did not hurt him.”

The question at this point is whether the demon had compassion on the man and did not hurt him or that Christ prevented the demon from hurting the man. The implication in both the text and the Greek itself is that Christ prevented the man from being injured in spite of what the demon would have done.

We now have an interesting question to answer. The demon said, “*I know who You are--the Holy One of God!*” If this demon was willing to proclaim that Jesus was the “Holy One of God” (i.e. the Messiah), why tell him to keep his mouth shut? I suppose this is a moot question as the demon was, apparently, destroyed when it came out of the man. Yet, why silence him?

At a much later time there were those who were preaching Christ for selfish reasons, Paul wrote to leave them alone.

*Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife,
and some also from good will: The former preach
Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing
to add affliction to my chains;*

Philippians 1:15-16

Paul did not say to close their mouths. But whatever these preachers motives were, we are not supposed to think that they were under the power of Satan. God does not need Satan to perform His works. He does not need Satan to perform His works. Finally, Satan would never further the Kingdom of God, far from it.

¹¹Wuest, *An Expanded Translation*, page

Having done this, the people begin by saying, *What a word this is!* (Τίς ὁ λόγος οὗτος) The translation has an extra letter, “a.” They said, “what is this word?” Part of the answer comes from John.

In the beginning was the Word (λόγος), and the Word (λόγος) was with God, and the Word (λόγος) was God. John 1:1

They were not marveling at the act, they were amazed at the person who spoke these words - Jesus. The words “authority and power” when used together in the Scriptures denote absolute headship - command over all. Why did Luke choose to tell us of this event next? To prove to us, as well, that Jesus was who He said He was, the one with absolute Power and Authority over all.

What was it that happened as a result? Something was spread around the region. What?

And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Acts 2:2

and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word should be spoken to them.

Hebrews 12:19

The Greek word, ἦχος refers to a loud noise. The phrase means that, if it were to happen today, the news would be in full page letter on the front page of all the newspapers. Everyone heard what He had done. He had accomplished His purpose in letting people know that He had all power and authority.

Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and rebuked the

fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them. When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

Luke 4:38-41

Having demonstrated power over spiritual ills in the world, Jesus now is going to show that he has power over physical ills. Before we proceed, we might note that some commentators take the time to point out all of the Greek medical terms Luke uses in this chapter. It stands to reason he would, being a physician.

I am tempted to say that to heal ones mother-in-law is the wrong thing for Jesus to be doing - but this is just in jest. Perhaps you didn't even know that Peter had a wife. Paul must also have had a wife to be a member of the Sanhedrin. We do not know what might have happened to Paul's wife. We also do not know what happened to Peter's wife after he became one of the Twelve. There is no mention of her. It is said by at least one of the early church writers that his wife helped him in ministering to women.

In Clement's writings he writes,

JOURNEYINGS

And when we had come to our lodging, my mother began to ask of me what had become of my father; and I told her that he had gone to seek her, and never returned. But she, hearing this, only sighed; for her great joy on my account lightened her other sorrows. And the next clay she journeyed with us, sitting with Peter's wife; and we came to Balaneae, where we stayed three days, and then went on to Pathos, and afterwards to Gabala; and so we arrived at Laodicea, where Niceta and Aquila met us before the gates, and kissing us, conducted us to a lodging. But Peter,

seeing that it was a large and splendid city, said that it was worthy that we should stay in it ten days, or even longer. Then Niceta and Aquila asked of me who was this unknown woman; and I answered: "It is my mother, whom God has given back to me by means of my Lord Peter."

Clement, Book7, Chapter 23

(Of course, Clement is not part of the inspired word). There is some evidence to support this in the following Scripture.

Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

1 Corinthians. 9:5

While I may be pushing it a bit, it would appear that a church does not call a man to be its pastor - it calls a man and his wife to the pastorate so that both may minister - this, I believe, is the way God intended it to be.

Anyway, the mother-in-law was sick with a "high fever.

Matthew and Mark also record this.

*"Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever. Matthew 8:14
But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. Mark 1:30*

Luke, however, does not say the same thing. He says she *sick with*

a *high fever*. If you or I visited someone who was ill we would describe their condition in general terms. But, a doctor would be more specific, using medical terms. This is the case with Dr. Luke who observed she had a “great fever.” The tense of the verb (“had”) here indicates that she had had this for quite some time, not just a one day occurrence.

So He stood over her and rebuked the fever. It is understandable that He rebuked the unclean spirit. But how does one “rebuke” a fever? “Hey you bad fever, you go away!” - I don’t think so.

Jesus uses this word in other such ways.

And He said to them, "Why are you timid, you men of little faith?" Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and it became perfectly calm. Matthew 8:26

And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. Mark 4:39

And they came to Him and woke Him up, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And being aroused, He rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm.

Luke 8:24

I believe that the same word is used to indicate that Jesus has the same power over the physical worlds as He does over the spiritual world. He had cast out a demon, now he casts out a “great fever.” He has power over both realms.

It left her. And immediately she arose. Note the word “immediately.” The Greek word, *παραχρήμα* is equivalent to our idiom “on the spot.” She did not recover gradually. She did not regain her strength over time. She was healed instantly, on the spot, and had her strength restored so that she was able to serve them.

When the sun was setting, Remember two things. He had been in a

synagogue for the service there - meaning it was the Sabbath. Secondly, the Sabbath day ended at sundown.

One was not allowed to work on the Sabbath which would include the bearing of sick people. So, when the Sabbath was ended, *all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God!" And He, rebuking them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.*

It is not necessary to go over this passage in detail. The importance of the passage is to show that what we have just seen in detail (the casting out of the demon and the fever) occurred over and over again - far into the night. This is somewhat equivalent to what we read in the Scriptures.

Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. Deuteronomy 17:6

But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' Matthew 18:16

By doing the same acts over and over again, Jesus really proved that He had power over both the Spiritual world and the physical world.

Now when it was day, He departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them; but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." And He was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee. Luke 4:42-44

Way into the night Jesus had cast out demons and healed the sick -

Now when it was day. . . Mark writes,

Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Mark 1:35

Luke does not say why Jesus went to a deserted place - we might have guessed. Mark spells it out. He needed to pray. He needed to pray by Himself. We have prayer meetings in various places where people go to pray. We are supposed to have a “family altar” where the family can pray together. In fact, the scriptures tell us.

Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:19-20

However, there are also times when we need to have a “one-on-one” session with God. We need to pray by ourselves.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Matthew 6:6

so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Matthew 6:18

Others have done so.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early

days. . . . So they answered and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

Daniel 6:10 & 13

Daniel went into his "closet" and prayed three times a day.

And the crowd sought Him and came to Him, and tried to keep Him from leaving them. The Greek indicates that the crowd went to great lengths to find him as we are told He went to a deserted place. No one knew where he was, they had to seek Him. Having found Him, they tried to get Him to return to Capernium and continue His work there.

Funny - at Nazareth they tried to get rid of Him. At Capernium they tried to keep Him. It is still so today - some will reject Him, some will accept Him.

But Jesus said, *I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.*" One might wonder why He did not stay at Capernium until all of the demons had been cast out and all the sick had been healed.

The following verse is a bit out of context but I include it anyway.

For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always.

Mark 14:7

The situation here is one which I have pondered for a long time. Why spend thousands of dollars to reach the unreached in America where all one has to do is attend a church, turn on the TV to a Christian channel (or a radio) and hear the Gospel when, for the same amount of money and effort, many in foreign lands could be saved?

And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 19:10

In harvesting the field, the Israelites were to take what was ripe and available to them. They were not to go back again and again to get the last few grains. They would go to the next field to reap a harvest.

Jesus would not remain but had to go on to other places where He had not yet been. There is a question as to the proper translation of verse 44. The KJV (and NKJV) have “Galilee” while the NASB and the NIV have “Judea.” Some Greek texts have one, some the other. It seems more reasonable that he meant all Judea because, indeed, He did minister in all Judea. On the other hand, He ministered for quite a time in Galilee before going to the rest of Judea. In fact, we will not get out of Galilee until we reach Chapter 10.

CHAPTER FIVE

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him. Luke 5:1-11

So it was. “So” is from the Greek coordinating conjunction δε (de). It is a more intensive connective than the more common και (kai). It connects the first part of this chapter closely with the close of the previous chapter. There we read that the people clung to Him and did not want Him to leave Capernium. We read that word about Him was spread far and wide. So - so it was that the multitudes continued to press about Him.

He had passed from Capernium to the Lake of Gennesaret. Luke, being a very learned man, refers to it by its more proper name. Matthew and Mark refer to the town (or region of that name.

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. Matthew 14:34

When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there. Mark 6:53

This was a region on the Northwest shore of the “Lake” more commonly referred to as the Sea of Galilee. He saw two boats. One might miss the significance of this except by using a very handy book called “*A Harmony of the Gospels*” by A. T. Robertson. In this book, the Scriptures of the four Gospels are written in one, two, three and sometimes four columns, placing each account as it appears in the four Gospels together (chronologically).

Here, the parallel passages are found in Mark 1:16-20 and Matthew 4:18-22. These two read about the same so we shall take Mark.

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him. Mark 1:16-20

Luke’s account is much fuller, as you can see. We would assume that one of the two boats was that of Simon and Andrew, the other boat belonged to James and John. Matthew and Mark give us an account of how it was that Peter and Andrew and James and John became disciples of Jesus (4 of the 12). But Luke adds to the

account to let us know how it came about.

By this time word about Him had spread to the point that the multitude was “pressing” about Him. The Greek word is ἐπίκειμαι (epikaimai), with one exception, is used only by Luke. First,

Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up. Acts 27:20

It is a powerful word as evidenced by the above.

Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 1 Corinthians. 9:16

Here it is used in a more symbolic way. Jesus was in a very uncomfortable position of having people physically pushing against Him and jostling Him to the point where He could not conduct His ministry.

There are many good preachers like that today. They find it difficult to have an effective ministry when people are constantly pressing at them with minor concerns and just plain foolishness.

Jesus solved the problem by borrowing Peter and Andrew’s boat. By having the boat moved away from the shore, he could minister without being jostled.

And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. One must wonder if He sat down because it was hard to stand in the boat (it isn’t) or because of the custom in the synagogue of sitting while teaching. Luke does not indicate what results this teaching had. That is not the focus of this narrative.

When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into

the deep and let down your nets for a catch." What was Jesus' reason for saying this to Simon? Was this Jesus' way of repaying Simon for the use of his boat? Was this for another purpose yet to be seen? In any case, Simon's response was, "*Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing.*" I am not a fisherman but I presume that in that part of the world, fishing is best done at night so they would fish at night and sleep and do other chores during the day (*the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets*) So Simon was surprised because fishing is no good in the day time and, besides, the fishing at that time was not yielding anything.

If we assume these events are in chronological order, Simon's mother-in-law had already been miraculously healed - so couldn't the Lord work another miracle? How quick we are to forget what the Lord has done for us in the past. We must not be too critical of Simon because he did say, "*nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.*" He was willing to obey even though he had doubts about the outcome.

What was that? There were two. First, *when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.* This is almost comical - I can just see these fishermen with fish up to the gun'els of the boats and water splashing into the boats and wondering what to do. They had never before had to worry about catching too many fish. I think the Lord had a sense a humor. He could had just given them a real good catch but I think He wanted to showing these doubting fishermen more than that.

The other thing that happened was with respect to Peter. Luke says *he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"* Why this response? It is a natural response. When someone gives you much more than you deserve, you are uncomfortable. A small gift is fine, but something truly extraordinary is too much - it was too much for Peter.

Luke gives us Peter's words. But he also says, *all who were with*

him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Luke does not tell us what they said or did but he indicates that they were of the same mind set as Simon.

A partially filled boat load of fish would have been adequate compensation for the use of Simon's boat. So there must have been another reason for the great catch. There was! Jesus had an object lesson for them.

"Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

What they had seen with respect to fish they would soon see with respect to men. They were to become fishers of men. This is, of course, where all of the similes of being "fishermen" started.

Some of us are called to be "full-time" fishermen (of men), some are called to do this in addition to our secular work. It is interesting what John records of an event after Jesus was crucified.

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. John 21:3-7

Apparently, Peter and the others still had their boats. How much they may have used them during Jesus's three years of ministry is not

known - probably not much.

So, now Jesus has one-third of His twelve Apostles.

And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him. And He charged him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded." However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 5:12-16

I've commented on it before but I will comment on it once more (at least). There are two Greek phrases Luke uses time and again (as do other authors). One I mentioned in the last section. These are:

Καί ἐγένετο (Kai egeneto) and ἐγένετο δέ (egeneto de).

	Καί ἐγένετο (Luke 5:12)	ἐγένετο δέ (Luke 5:1)
KJV	And it came to pass when	And it came to pass
NKJV	And it happened when	So it was
NASB	And it came about that while	Now it came about
NIV	While Jesus	One day

First, the KJV makes no distinction between the two phrases. The NKJV uses "so" for one and "and" for the other while the NASB

uses “now” and “and.” The NIV brushes these phrases aside and uses the more modern English “One day” and “While.”

In the past section, I noted that the expression at Luke 5:1 is a more restricted connective while that at Luke 5:12 is a common “and.” The reason I mention any of this at all is that most translations make more of these connectives than they deserve. “And it came to pass” sounds rather fortuitous like this was just an accident. Nothing in God’s plans is by accident. So, when you run across these phrases at the beginning of a section, keep this in mind.

We do not know when this “came to pass.” We do not know where other than in “one of the cities.” which should be taken to mean “one of the cities of Galilee.” “Behold” we have seen this word before. God arranged for this situation to come about. Here we have a man who was “full of leprosy.” This account is also found in Mark 1:40-45 and Matthew 8:2-4. The account in Matthew is much abbreviated as it takes only 3 verses. The other accounts say the man had “leprosy” which Luke says he was “full of leprosy.” (a rather literal translation). Luke observes that this man didn’t have a little bit of it, he was full of it.

Strange this man was even there!

Now the leper on whom the sore is, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare; and he shall cover his mustache, and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!' He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Leviticus 13:45-46

But then, Luke wrote “behold!” That’s why he was there. Note what this man did and said. *he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing.* First, he assumed the position of prayer to make his request known. I am not looking at the physical position (falling on ones face) but ones spiritual position. The he begins with “if you are willing.” We would all like to be cured for

various diseases and hurts. We will be healed from some but not from others. If the Lord allows us to have an affliction, He may not be willing to remove it.

Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. Philippians 4:14

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians. 12:7-9

Paul had an affliction which the Lord chose not to remove. We can not be presuming with the Lord. In fact, The Lord Himself said,

"Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." Luke 22:42

The Lord does not wish us to suffer but, sometimes, there is a reason for it and the Lord allows it. *Then He put out His hand and touched him.* Jesus, according to the Law, should not have done this.

the person who has touched any such thing shall be unclean until evening, and shall not eat the holy offerings unless he washes his body with water. Leviticus 22:6

The above verse does not mention lepers specifically, but we have,

"Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge,

and whoever becomes defiled by a corpse.

Numbers 5:2

This shows that lepers fall into the general category of “unclean” things. Two unlawful things have been done thus far. What is going on? Since this question is to come up a number of times, let us answer it now.

And He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

Mark 3:4

And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm, to save a life, or to destroy it?"

Luke 6:9

And Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"

Luke 14:3

The passage in Mark says “they kept silent.” The other passages have the same thing in the verses that follow them. The Law of Moses and, indeed, any law in the Bible is meant to be a guiding principal. We are to attempt to follow the general laws (technically, we are not subject to the “Laws of Moses”). But there is a greater law - in fact, two of them.

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 22:36-40

This must be our guiding principal in our Christian walk. We must

obey these two laws even if it means violating some other law of the Scripture, some other church law, or (within limits) any law of the land.

I say “within limits.”

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Romans 13:1-7

Paul tells us to be careful in obeying the laws of the land because God is in control of those who make these laws. One, as a Christian, should not violate the laws of the land unless they are in direct opposition to the laws of God. Jesus was very circumspect in this.

"Tell us therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? "Show Me the coin used for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription

is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." **Matthew 22:17-21**

. . . saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him. "Cleansed" is from καθαρίζω (katharizo) which is the source of our word "catharsis" which usually refers to a cleansing of the bowels but really refers to any type of cleansing of the internal body. The verb (naturally) is passive and in the imperative voice. Jesus commanded the leprosy to come out of his body - and it did. He was cleansed immediately as in the previous cleansing.

And He charged him to tell no one, Now, previously, Jesus commanded the unclean spirits not to say anything and we gave explanation for that. Here this innocent man who has been cleansed is charged to tell no one what happened. Why? Mark says,

However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction. **Mark 1:45**

Jesus did not need the fame. Jesus did not come to heal physical disease but to proclaim the Good News. We have already seen this.

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*

Luke 4:18-19

Mark says, later,

Then He commanded them that they should tell no one; but the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it.

Mark 7:36

But Jesus did say, "*But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.*" Leviticus 14 describes the process. I shall not cite the entire passage here. The point is what we have just mentioned - we are to follow the laws of the Lord and the laws of the land to the extent it is possible to do so. Jesus had to break the law by touching him. There was no reason for him not to obey the laws relative to the ceremonial cleansing and so Jesus commands him to do so.

However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed. We have already seen, from Mark, why the word spread so quickly. The result was as predicted. The word "withdrew" is somewhat surprising. It is from ὑποχωρέω (hypochoreo). It is used only by Luke and only here and in the following:

And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

Luke 9:10

If you remove the prefix (hypo), you have χωρέω (Choreo). It is found quite often in the New Testament (but nowhere in Luke). And example is below.

And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

Acts 1:4

It is sometimes translated “seperate” which is similar to “depart.” With the prefix which, generally, means “under” we might have “to depart under.” What it really means, in colloquial English, “to go underground.” He would hide Himself. The verb is a participle which gives this the sense in the NKJV translation “often

We have this verse translated in various ways such as below.

”But He Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray. Luke 5:16 NASB

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. Luke 5:16 NIV

If Jesus had to slip away often to a solitary place to pray, how much more do we need to do the same thing. Of course, Jesus was under much pressure, especially now that the crowds knew what He could do. So being under pressure, it was needful for Jesus to do this. We don’t have any pressures to bother us do we???

Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus. When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to

them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!" After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me."

Luke 5:17-27

Now it happened on a certain day. We need not comment on these terms again - this was something that God had arranged.

By this time, He had attracted a lot of attention - not only among the people in general, but also among the *Pharisees and teachers of the law*. They had come from all over Israel to hear what this man had to say. At the point we do not know what attitude they had toward Him - but it would soon change.

Before we proceed, let us consider these two groups of people. Who were they?

PHARISEES - This is a transliteration of the Greek word Φαρισαίος. Actually, it is a Hebrew word, פְּרִישִׁין (Pharisiin) meaning to “separate.” They were to the Jewish faith as some Christians who are “so heavenly minded they are of not earthly value.” - “the Holier than thou” bunch. Today, the Christian equivalent would be to on the extreme right.

TEACHERS OF THE LAW - This is a pretty literal translation of the Greek and describes them quite well.

The term is used by Luke only in this chapter. Paul uses it once.

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

1 Timothy 1:3-7

This is, of course, a reference to Christians rather than Jews. Together, the Pharisees and the “Teachers of the Law” made quite a team. One might look to these two groups as being really good people, devoting themselves to learning the “Holy Scriptures.” Paul wrote,

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians. 13:2

We have already noted in Jesus’ temptation, that Satan knows the Scriptures very well - but that does not win him any points with God. The two groups of men may have been well educated in the Law but that didn’t make them any better in the sight of God.

And the power of the Lord was present to heal them. This sentence makes no sense. Was the power of the Lord present to heal these two groups of men? The answer is that the translation is wrong in here (as it is in the KJV. The NASB translates it correctly.

And it came about one day that He was teaching; and

*there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present **for Him to perform healing.***

Luke 5:17 NASB

Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed. “Then behold!” We need not comment on this again. Jesus has healed several with various diseases, now we have one who is paralyzed. It is interesting how willing people are to help their friends who are diseased but reluctant to help those who are perishing in their sins.

a man “whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him.” They may have brought this man a great distance and tried hard to get him into the house. What would you have done? “Well, sorry, we can’t get you in!” Not them. *They went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.* Before we go on there is something we need to understand.

*Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop,
Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.*

Proverbs 21:9

In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back.

Luke 17:31

The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.

Acts 10:9

In that part of the world, and in those days (still, today, I suppose) the housetop (or roof) was a place to be occupied. There were usually stairs on the outside of the house leading up to the roof so it was not at all strange that they went to the roof. It was a bit stranger

for them to pull back some of the roof tiles. Anyway, after having done all of this, they let the man down on ropes so he would lay before Jesus - must have caused quite a stir.

Through this process, these friends of the lame man were able to bring him face-to-face with Jesus. How many, today, would go to such extremes to bring a friend or acquaintance to such a position? How many of us today have the faith that, having done this, Jesus would heal the man and cleanse him from sin?

When He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you. Note the pronoun "their" It was "their" faith that caused his sins to be forgiven. I bet you thought that to have your sins forgiven you had to have the faith - not your friends!

And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

James 5:15

James, here, says the same thing - pray for a friend and he will be forgiven (healed too).

If you wish to get technical,

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9

It is not our faith nor the friend's faith - it is a gift of God! But, being practical, we must say this. We assume that when Jesus saw "their" faith, "their" includes the faith of the paralyzed man. And so the Lord is rewording the faith of all. The KJV and NKJV have "Man" your sins are forgiven while the newer translations have "friend." "Man" is the literal translation but a literal translation is not proper here (it being too impersonal).

Now, something is wrong here! They wanted the man to be cured of his paralytic condition - Jesus, instead, forgave his sins. Geldenhuys says the following.

20 The men had an exceptional faith in Jesus, otherwise they would never had taken all the trouble. The Lord, through His perfect insight into human life, realised immediately that the sickness of the paralytic was closely connected with the sin of which he was guilty. For this reason He first comes down to the root problem and says: " Man, thy sins are forgiven thee! II In other cases Jesus showed plainly that He did not accept the opinions that were current at the time, to the effect that all cases of physical disease were associated with sin (cf. John ix. 3). In this particular case, however, sin did indeed lie at the root of the paralysis.

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE, Page 188

This raises some questions:

1. Are **all** illnesses and infirmaries the result of sin?
2. Are **some** illnesses and infirmities the result of sin?
3. Are **any** illnesses and infirmities the result of sin?

The answer to the first question is to be found in the reference from James on the previous page. . . .*the Lord will raise him up. And **if** he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.* If word "if" tells us that the man who is cured might have sin connected with it but not necessarily. Not all illnesses are the result of sin.

We can not really say that no illness is the result of sin. In Chapter 1, we read

And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. "And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take

place, because you did not believe my words, which shall be fulfilled in their proper time." Luke 1:19-20

But the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand and grasp it by its tail"-- so he stretched out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand-- "that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you." And the Lord furthermore said to him, "Now put your hand into your bosom." So he put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous like snow. Exodus 4:4-6

In both of these cases, the infirmity was short lived but it was the direct result of sin or disbelief. We should probably assume that, in a few special cases, illness is the result of sin - but only special cases.

Now, there are those who say that "so and so got Aids because he is a homosexual." It is likely true. In a sense one may say this is the result of sin, as is lung cancer for smokers, liver problems with alcoholics, etc. God does not "zap" these people with these diseases because of the "sin" but rather they obtain these illnesses because they put into their bodies what God did not intend to have put in. One could say (a non-Christian would say), "This is just the results of Mother Nature!"

If Geldenhuys is wrong, then, why did Jesus cleanse this man's sins and not the others? Why is this account different than the previous ones? There is another difference here. *There were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem* You see, when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8). Jesus did not have to forgive sin to prove to Peter that He was, indeed, the Messiah, "Lord." In the previous instances, He did not have people present who would doubt who He was once he performed a healing or casting out of a demon.

Now he has skeptics present and so He goes one step further and forgives the man's sins.

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" What they said was correct - only God can forgive sins. So, then, who was this man? If He had, indeed, forgiven this man's sins, He must have been God in the flesh. Otherwise He was what they accused Him (privately) of - a blasphemer. βλασφημέω (blasphemeo) is a compound of βλάπτω (blapto) and φήμη (pHEME).

The first part, βλάπτω (blapto) was found in the previous chapter.

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him.

Luke 4:35

The compound, then, refers to "hurtful speech." Some have noted that this word, by the time Luke used it had obtained the status of "Biblical Greek" meaning that it had a specific usage in Hebrew and Christian literature.

But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? There is a thought here than can easily go unnoticed. Can you "perceive" what others are thinking? I assume not very well. But Jesus could.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

Jesus, being God in the flesh could tell exactly what these Pharisees were thinking. This being the case, He asks, "*Which is easier, to*

say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? Which is easier? If I were to say to someone "your sins are forgiven," would you be able to prove me wrong? How could you prove they were not forgiven? If I were to say "Rise up and walk!" it would be easy to prove that I was a blasphemer - because the man would not be able to do so. Because the Pharisees refused to believe, Jesus would do something they could not disbelieve.

They ought to have believed based on the fact that He could tell what they were thinking!

But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. As before the healing was complete and immediate. He was no longer paralyzed. Incidentally, the Greek is παραλύω (paraluo) which, literally translated is "loose on the side." Which translates, in medical terms, to the fact that he had no feeling or movement in his limbs (perhaps just his lower limbs). Luke, the physician, uses a more technical term than Matthew or Mark and uses a "periphrastic past perfect participle" here which indicates that this man had been taken with this infirmity at some point in the past and was currently still suffering from it. It was not just a "temporary" condition that suddenly went away,

And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!" We need, first, to determine who "they" were. I would assume that this refers to the people in the house in general. I would not assume that it applied to the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law specifically.

After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his

own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days." Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.' "

Luke 5:27-39

He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi. We must read this sentence as it was meant to read. After the previous events, Jesus went out and "saw" a great number of people. When Luke writes he "saw" a tax collector, it must mean that He focused His attention on him.

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

Jesus went out and saw the heart of this tax collector. Let us take a look at him now. First, we are told, he was a “tax collector,” *τελώνης* (*telones*). The Greek is a compound word which, literally translated, would be a “farmer of taxes.” “Tax collector” is a better and more descriptive term. These people were also referred to as “Publicans” which is incorrect. They were the employees of Publicans. They were not liked any more than members of the IRS.

They were hated because:

- they collected taxes
- they often collected more taxes than required and kept the difference.
- they collected taxes which went to Rome, not to Israel - taxation without representation.
- they were sometimes rather brutal in their collecting.

Four times in Luke’s Gospel (and several times in the others) we find the expression “tax collectors and sinners.” (or “Publicans and sinners”). This would give one an idea of the esteem that tax collectors had among Israel. We shall comment later on why Jesus “saw” a tax collector.

Then we are told his name was “Levi.” At this point it would be good to consider the fact that some of the Twelve had more than one name. So far we have met four of them:

1) Simon. This was his given name. He is also called Peter. He became known as Peter because that is what Jesus named him.

Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew Luke 6:14

This is recorded in Matthew’s Gospel.

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18

Many times (5) Luke points this out (Acts 10:5; Acts 10:18; Acts 10:32; Acts 11:13)

2) Andrew, 3) James, and 4) John - these three apostles had only the one name. John, however, is described by another name in his Gospel - "The Disciple whom Jesus loved." (John 13:23; 20:2; 21:7; 21:20). John gave this name to himself. Why? We are not studying John's Gospel (a sneaky way of not answering the question).

Now we come to 5) Levi who is also referred to as Matthew which was his given name. He is only called "Levi" (his surname) here and at Mark 2:14. It would seem that, perhaps, Jesus changed his name also since "Levi" appears only at his first appearance. (note that there were those with the name "Levi" in the Old Testament.

Matthew (or Levi) was *sitting at the tax office*. This would have been an office set up by Rome in Capernium. It is interesting to note that most of Matthew's "clients" would have been fishermen who fished the Sea of Galilee. This certainly would not have made him popular with the first four disciples.

Seriously, if I were to assemble a group of disciples together to accomplish a task, I would not have selected men who would have disliked each other as this - I am not the Lord. The Lord can change men's hearts and He does so. If we are the Lord's "brothers and sisters," should we not be willing to do likewise?

And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. The first thing Matthew did was to "leave all." This is a pretty strong statement. The word "leave" is a word that has the usual meaning "forsake, leave for good." He left "all." He had a very lucrative profession which he willingly and without hesitation, left. We must assume that this man had heard Jesus' teachings before and believed them.

If he had heard the teaching and believed it, why was he still sitting in his tax office and not already following Jesus? We could spend a

long time with this question. First, there needs to be a call to action. This is generally true of most people. Perhaps you have a friend who was studied the Bible and believes that it is true but no one has challenged him or her to accept the teaching and follow Christ. If so, you are the one to issue the challenge just as Jesus did with Matthew, There are, without doubt, others in the same condition that you do not know but come in contact with once in a while - you could issue the challenge to such a person! For Jesus, it took only two words, "Follow Me." For us it might take a few more words of explanation since we are not Jesus.

There is yet another part of the answer.

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 2 Timothy 1:9

For a man or woman to be saved, there has to be a call. There must be the calling of the Lord.

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

1 Corinthians. 1:2

So, Levi was waiting for the "call." Having received it, he immediately followed Jesus and never turned back.

Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. There is something here that doesn't sound very good. He gave a "great feast." He must have been a very wealthy man. How did he become so wealthy? I'll let you answer this question. But, he "left all." I assume he did not leave "all" immediately. He still had a home and food. I assume that, shortly after this, he left the rest. Whether he

just “left” it or sold it and used the money for the Lord’s work, there is no way to decide.

What is important is why he gave the feast. *And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.* It doesn’t say who the “others” were, probably associates of the tax collectors. It seems natural that he would invite tax collectors. It is natural. Just as it is natural for you to invite the people you work with every day or have some similar acquaintance with to come to dinner (or dessert, or some other excuse) to hear Jesus’ teachings.

It would not have made sense for Matthew to invite a bunch of fishermen to the meal as they have nothing (absolutely) in common. We are to reach out to those with whom we have common connections. There are a few Christians who can go out and the street corner and evangelize, but, for most of us, we must stick with “friendship evangelism” as did Matthew.

And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

The KJV (and NKJV) here have mixed this sentence up. In stead of “*their scribes and the Pharisees,*” it should read, “*the Pharisees and their scribes*” so there is no confusion as to whom the scribes belonged.

Well, there it is, “tax collectors and sinners.” I’ve know people who were “so heavenly minded they were no earthy good.” They are very “holy” Christians who will not associate with “sinners.” Now, the Scriptures teach we are to be separate,

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

*"I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people."*

Therefore

*"Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you."*

2 Corinthians. 6:14-17

We are to be separate in the sense that we do not return to their ways and do the things we used to do before we were saved. We must, however, associate with the unsaved if we are ever to lead them to the Lord. But, I don't know why I am telling you this because Jesus said, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

"Well," you say, "that's ok for Jesus to do but not me!" Not according to Luke.

*The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that
Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in
which He was taken up, after He through the Holy
Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom
He had chosen,*

Acts 1:1-2

The Gospels tell us what Jesus "began" to do and teach. It was then up to His disciples to continue the work and, eventually, up to you and I to complete it.

Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?" Matthew says,

*"Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying,
"Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your
disciples do not fast?"* Matthew 9:14

which indicates that some of John's disciples asked the same question. It is important, then, to see what the answer is and its interpretation. Let's begin by looking at what Jesus said! *And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days."* While His answer is in the form of a metaphor, the meaning is fairly plain. While Jesus was with them in the flesh, they needed to take advantage of the time to fellowship with Him. When He went away there would be plenty of time to fast and pray.

So, then, what should we be doing? Should we be "eating and drinking" or "fasting and praying?" There are many Old Testament instances of people fasting. Instances in the New Testament are few. The only ones applied to Christians are:

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:2

So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Acts 14:23

Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians. 7:5

The newer Greek texts omit the "and fasting in the last reference. Paul, in describing his experiences said:

in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; 2 Corinthians. 6:5

in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness-- 2 Corinthians. 11:27

Finally, we have the words of Jesus,

"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:16-18

Note that nowhere are Christians told to fast. In all of the above passages, it appears to be an option that Christian's chose. In Paul's case it is not sure that the "fasts" were by choice and not necessity. Indeed, the passage in Matthew indicates that fasting is something that is completely between you and the Lord. If you feel the need for it, do it. If you see no need to fast, there is no command to do so.

Jesus said the disciples would have time later for prayer and fasting. They did between the time of His betrayal and His resurrection. But now, we have,

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Colossians 1:27

Christians, again, have the "Bridegroom" with them, in fact, within them so there is no need to mourn with prayer and fasting.

There was much fasting in the Old Testament, why not the New? Jesus goes on to explain that.

"No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. This makes sense (especially in the days before man-made fabrics and pre-shrunk clothes. If you sew a new piece of fabric on an old garment that has already shrunk, the new piece will shrink and draw up the old piece - not very satisfactory. And, of course, if you cut the new piece out of another garment, you ruin it as well.

Well, what does this have to do with anything? Christianity was to be a completely new relationship with God. There was no clue about it in the Old Testament. In fact it was a mystery. Jesus is saying, in effect, "Do not mix the old Judaism with the New Christianity." The things that were a part of Judaism were not to be a part of Christianity. He also said, *"no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved"* Again, do not mix the Old with the New.

But, finally, *And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'* " There were skeptics in the crowd - especially the Pharisees. They would not believe Jesus' teaching. They would be the ones who thought that *'The old is better.'*

CHAPTER SIX

Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands. And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." Luke 6:1-5

Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first. This is rather strange wording. Most Greek texts omit the word δευτερόπρωτος (deuteroprotos) which, literally translated is “second-first.” It is a strange word - if a valid Greek word at all. If the texts which include it are correct, what was the “first?” There are as many opinions as there are scholars who have commented on it. I will add another. John, in John 5:1-47, describes a lame man whom Jesus healed on the Sabbath. This is the first case where Jesus did something that the Pharisees said was not proper to do on the Sabbath. Here, then, we shall be looking at the “second” Sabbath where Jesus does something contrary to Pharisee’s beliefs. While this seems plausible, it also seems like something some scribe may have added after-the-fact and why it is not in most Greek texts.

He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them. Now, let us be sure we know what Jesus did that was not wrong.

When you come into your neighbor's standing grain,

you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

Deuteronomy 23:25

It was lawful to pick from someone else's field so long as you only took what you needed at the time and did not actually reap in the field. This was exactly what Jesus was doing.

They ate them *rubbing them in their hands*. This is the key to the whole passage. The late A. T. Robertson wrote,

Rubbing them in their hands (psochontt's tais chersin). Only in Luke and only here in the N.T. This was one of the chief offences. " According to Rabbinical notions, it was reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food all at once" (Plummer). These Pharisees were straining out gnats and swallowing camels!

A.T.Robertson, *Word Pictures in the N.T.*

And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" God had given rather strict laws governing the Sabbath, even as part of the Ten Commandments.

but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Exodus 20:10-11

There is a rather severe example recorded in Numbers.

Now while the children of Israel were in the

wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him. Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." So, as the Lord commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.

Numbers 15:32-36

So, God (under The Law) took the Sabbath very seriously. There were many things which could not be done on the Law. So, you might assume, the Pharisee were only interested in following the Law of Moses. Not so! Luke records for us the following:

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

Acts 1:12

The “Sabbath Day’s Journey” is based on an Old Testament command.

See! For the Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. "

Exodus 16:29

It was, specifically, 2000 cubits (about 3000 feet or 0.6 mile). You won't find this in the Scriptures - it is a product of Pharisaic thought. But, beyond this, one could establish one or more “Sabbath homes” that were not more than 2000 cubits apart and thus travel, legally, as far as one wanted. So, the Pharisees not only amplified on the law but also found ways around it!

But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" Jesus refers to an incident in

Now therefore, what have you on hand? Give me five loaves of bread in my hand, or whatever can be found." And the priest answered David and said, "There is no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread, if the young men have at least kept themselves from women." Then David answered the priest, and said to him, "Truly, women have been kept from us about three days since I came out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in effect common, even though it was sanctified in the vessel this day." So the priest gave him holy bread; for there was no bread there but the showbread which had been taken from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day when it was taken away. Samuel 21:3-6

Jesus' response is a bit more full in Mark.

And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27-28

In other words the Sabbath was created for our own good. Just as laws such as:

'You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

Leviticus 19:19

Each of the laws God gave Moses had a practical reason and the Sabbath was no exception. But, in observing any law, one has to determine which is the greater good. Is it better to obey the law than to do something which is far more important than something the law was meant for? If you find a man beside a country highway bleeding to death and put him in your car to take him for medical help, is it better to obey the speed limit or to get to help as fast as is reasonably safe?

Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood. Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?" And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Luke 6:6-11

Now it happened on another Sabbath, also. At this point we shall no longer comment on this wording except for the "also." I do not know where the "also" comes from - it is not in the other translations. Never-the-less, it ties this to the Sabbath problem of the previous passage. There we are not told what the final reaction of the Pharisees was. As time goes on, these Pharisees came to expect this sort of thing more and more and were better prepared to protest against it. Jesus was always one step ahead of them.

So, as was His custom, he was in the synagogue on the Sabbath,

teaching. This time there was a man with a withered hand present. His *right hand was withered*. Now, for Gail and I who are left handed, that wouldn't be so bad but for most people, this is bad. Withered is from ξηρός (zeros) which means "deprived of its juices." Of the three Gospel narratives, only Luke notes that it was his right hand - the careful study of a physician. What the medical condition of the hand was, I do not know but, apparently, it was useless to him. The fact that it was the right hand is significant,

*He has cut off in fierce anger
Every horn of Israel;
He has drawn back His right hand
From before the enemy.
He has blazed against Jacob like a flaming fire
Devouring all around.*

Lament 2:3

Most people can get along somewhat without the left hand but the right hand is essential. *So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him.* As noted before, the Pharisees increasingly looked for ways to trip him up. *But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here.*

This time he did not forgive the man's sins (i.e. it is not recorded here). *"I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?"* What answer did the Pharisee give? If they said "Yes!" then they would be able to find no fault in Jesus. If they answered "No!" they would be at odds with common sense and the purpose of the Sabbath (as noted previously). So, what did they say? Mark says, "But they held their peace." (Mark3:4). Luke says nothing but the inference in the expression, *"and when He had looked around at them all,"* says it all. The inference in the word περιβλέπω (periblepo) is that he went around the room at looked each Parisee in the face, waiting for an answer. There were none. *He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the*

other. The hand was restored, immediately, as before. There is something here, however, that has been present before but is more evident here. "*Stretch out your hand!*" The verb is ἐκτείνω (ekteino) which is used several places in the New Testament. The adverbial form of this is found below.

To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews.

Acts 26:7

The first step in each (or most) of these healings was on the part of the one to be healed. It may have been painful for him to do so. At least, it took an act of conscious will. We have to act first, then He will act. We have to move in faith and then He will complete the work. *And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.* Note the last part carefully. In previous cases we were not told how well the person was healed. There was nothing to compare the healing of the paralytic with, Here, however, Luke tells us expressly that his hands was healed "as whole as the other." It was "as good as new." Not all Greek texts say this, but the fact is true,

But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus. "They" were the Pharisees. "Rage," ἄνοια (anoia), with out the alpha (a) is "to think" and the "a" means "not." In other words, it means "without understanding - folly." But they were "filled" with this. Only Luke makes note of this. It was at this point that they began to make specific plans on how to rid themselves of this person. Luke puts it nicely, "what they might do," while Matthew and Mark tell us they wanted to "destroy" him (Matthew 3:6, Mark 12:14).

Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: Simon, whom He also

named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

Luke 6:12-16

As we have noted many times before, Jesus Himself had to take time to pray. On this occasion He prayed all night to God (His Father). How often have you prayed all night? If you ever have, it must have been because you had something very important to pray about. You may have had a very crucial decision to make and need the Lord's guidance. Jesus did. He had to make twelve decisions the following day. Up to this point, there were, no doubt, many people (i.e. disciples) who followed Jesus. But it was now time to select from this group twelve who would be His Apostles (often referred to, simply, as "The Twelve." He named (i.e. appointed) them to be Apostles. The word is a transliteration of the Greek word, ἀπόστολος (apostolos). It comes from a compound of the preposition, ἀπό (apo) which means "away from" and the verb which is found in two of Paul's epistles.

And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

2 Corinthians. 8:19-20

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

Together, we have "one sent," thus, "Why was Peter like a penny?" They were both "one sent (cent)." A modern term would be "Ambassador." Up to this time, all followed Jesus. Now it was time to send some out ahead of Him to "prepare the way." There

would be others so sent. Paul was one of them.

*Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

2 Corinthians. 5:18-20

So, here we have a roster of those who, after an entire night of prayer, Jesus selected. It may be instructive to list these Twelve in a table as seen on the next page:

Luke 6:12-16	Mark 3:13-19	Matthew 10:1-5
Simon (Peter)	Simon (Peter)	Simon (Peter)
Andrew	James (John's Brother)	Andrew
James (John's Brother)	John	James (John's Brother)
John	Andrew	John
Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew
Matthew (Levi)	Matthew (Levi)	Thomas
Thomas	Thomas	Matthew (Levi)

James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)
Simon the Zealot	Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus
Judas (son of James)	Simon the Canaanean	Simon the Canaanean
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

There is yet another list in Acts 1:13 which is slightly different than these, we will not go that far. Four of these play no written role in Jesus' ministry: Bartholomew, Thomas (except in his doubts), James, son of Alphaeus) and Judas, son of James. We say "no written role" because nothing further is recorded about their work. That does not mean that they were of no account - simply that their word was not recorded for us.

Let us take a quick look at the order. Peter is always first. In 2 of the 3, Andrew is next - he was the second one called. In Mark, James and John proceed Andrew. This may be because Mark made a great deal about James and John being brothers. *to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"* (Mark 3:17b,18a)

The next four are almost identical (Thomas and Matthew being switched in Matthews account - perhaps he was modest)

When we get to the last four James, son of Alphaeus in first and Judas Iscariot is last (for obvious reasons). As far as the other two are concerned, we have some apparent contradictions. (Acts 1:13 agrees with Luke (same author) except that Judas Iscariot is no longer with the group. According to Bible scholars, Thadaeus must have been the surname of Judas Labbaeus (son of James) with Labbaeus a variation of Thadaeus. This leaves us with the conclusion that Simon the Zealot was a Canaanean.

One final comment is in order. Why, after an entire night of prayer, did Jesus select Judas Iscariot? Later, Luke will tell us why.

saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "

Luke 24:7

Judas was part of God's overall plan and an essential part of the group.

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.

Luke 6:17-19

Having selected the Twelve, He, along with them, chose a suitable place to deliver what is now referred to as the Sermon on the Mount.

This is a bit troublesome when Luke writes, *And He came down with them and stood on a level place*. This "sermon" is recorded here and in Matthew. Matthew's account is much longer (three chapters, 5-7) than Luke's. It starts with the following:

And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

Matthew 5:1

Here it is clearly the Sermon on the Mount. Luke says "level place." πεδινός (pedinos). He doesn't say he descended into the valley below, only that He descended to a place where it was level enough for His discourse.

According to Luke, before He began His discourse, He continued doing what he had been doing - healing the sick and casting out demons. Do you believe in "Soup Kitchens?" Do you think missionaries should spend valuable time taking care of the medical

needs of natives when they should be teaching them the Gospel?

If you think this way, you must not think the same way Jesus did! It is pretty hard to speak with someone and make much of an impact when they are starving to death (or just plain hungry). It is pretty hard for someone to concentrate on what you are saying when you are in pain or tormented by a demon (actual or imagined). Jesus took care of the people's physical needs first so they could then concentrate on what He would be saying concerning their spiritual needs.

Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

"Blessed are you poor,

For yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now,

For you shall be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now,

For you shall laugh.

Blessed are you when men hate you,

And when they exclude you,

And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,

For the Son of Man's sake.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!

For indeed your reward is great in heaven,

For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich,

For you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full,

For you shall hunger.

Woe to you who laugh now,

For you shall mourn and weep.

Woe to you when all men speak well of you,

For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Jesus begins with what are referred to as “The Beatitudes.” which refer to the blessings we may receive as Christians. While I have adopted the policy of confining this study to what Luke has to say, at this point I feel that a broader look is warranted.

The Beatitudes are found in two places, here and in Matthew. Luke has four Beatitudes, Matthew has eight. Luke has four “woes” (the opposites of the Beatitudes, Matthew has none. Of course, we have noted many times, the Gospels complement each other and are not meant to be identical. But there is more to it than we have noted thus far.

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Matthew 5:3-10

It is important to note some specific differences in the first (as well as the others).

*"Blessed are you poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God*

and

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*

Luke say “you poor” while Matthew has “the poor.” The words in both Greek texts are identical (“the poor”) However, the words “for yours” and “for theirs” are definitely different - the reason for “you poor.” But Matthew adds “in spirit!”

Before we comment on this one Beatitude, let us compare them all.

Luke	Matthew
“you poor”	“the poor in spirit”
“you who weep now”	“those who mourn”
	“the meek”
“you who hunger now”	“those who hunger and thirst for righteousness”
	“the merciful”
	“the pure in heart”
	“the peacemakers
“when men hate you - exclude you - revile you - and cast out your name as evil - for the Son of Man’s sake”	“those who are persecuted for righteousness sake”

There is an interesting correlation here. Five of the Beatitudes in Matthew have no spiritual connotation added to them (meek, mourn, merciful, pure, and peacemakers). The others have qualifiers - (the poor in spirit, hunger for righteousness persecuted for righteousness)

All those with spiritual qualifiers are those listed in Luke. I would take this to mean two things (1) Luke thus interpreted these as the most important, and (2) Luke intended them to be applied spiritually although he does not say so explicitly.

But, we have yet to consider the difference between “you poor” and

“the poor.” Note that Luke says, “*Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples.*” Luke also says there was “*a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him.*” Lifting His eyes toward His disciples would indicate His words were meant especially for them. The fact that others were there to hear him indicates that His words also applied to them in a more general way.

From this I conclude that Luke has what was especially addressed to His disciples while Matthew has the words meant for the crowd as a whole. We shall proceed on this assumption.

Let me rearrange these words a bit.

*"Blessed are you poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God.
But woe to you who are rich,
For you have received your consolation.*

*Blessed are you who hunger now,
For you shall be filled.
Woe to you who are full,
For you shall hunger.*

*Blessed are you who weep now,
For you shall laugh.
Woe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and weep.*

*Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,
For the Son of Man's sake.
Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward is great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the
prophets.
Woe to you when all men speak well of you,*

For so did their fathers to the false prophets

You see, the woes are just the complements of the blessings. The common thread through all of them is that our *reward is great in heaven*. We should not look for blessing here on earth, we should look forward to those we will receive in heaven. In Matthew have the following advice.

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 6:31-33

In the four items which Luke covers, three have to do with lack of physical things (poor, hungry, weeping). The fourth has to do with mental things (hatred, reviling, making you out as evil). Both Matthew and John speak of persecution we may face.

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For

assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Matthew 10:16-23

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

John 15:18-20

We will not comment on these other Gospels in detail. The point is they all indicate that, in this life, we can expect persecution. Luke also points this out (Luke 21:7-12) and we shall cover it when we get there. The fact that there are extremist Muslims who want the Christians and the Jews dead now may indicate that the time is not very far off when we, as Christians, will face persecutions. To some extent, we already have.

"But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what

credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 6:27-36

Now, we come to some words which, today, may be a bit difficult to understand. *"But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also.* Let's break this statement down

- *Love your enemies*
- *Do good to those who hate you*
- *Bless those who curse you*
- *Pray for those who spitefully use you*
- *To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also*

Have you prayed for Bin Ladden lately? - for the Talliban? Do we say, "ok, you got the World Trade Center, would you like the Empire State Building next?" Paul taught similarly,

Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Romans 12:20

Actually, Paul did not make this up.

*If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;
For so you will heap coals of fire on his head,
And the Lord will reward you.*

Proverbs 25:21-22

This is all God's Word. We should either obey it or find some reason why it does not apply.

The first, "Love your enemies" is not so hard, in theory at least. There is the old saying "love the sinner, hate the sin." So, I guess we could still love the Taliban while we are bombing them to pieces. It is hard to see how bombing them can be considered "doing good for them." To find an answer to these questions, we must look to the "whole counsel of God." American's have fought many wars: The Revolutionary War, World War I, World War II. I don't know of any Americans, even Christian Americans who think we should have not fought these wars (we have fought some questionable wars).

Now there are have other battles.

"When you go near a city to fight against it, then proclaim an offer of peace to it. And it shall be that if they accept your offer of peace, and open to you, then all the people who are found in it shall be placed under tribute to you, and serve you. Now if the city will not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. And when the Lord your God delivers it into your hands, you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword. But the women, the little ones, the livestock, and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourself; and you shall eat the enemies' plunder which the Lord your God gives you. Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations. But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the Lord your God has commanded you, lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have

done for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 20:10-18

As far as the Talliban are concerned, we offered them peace (by turning Bin Laddin over to us) and they refused it. In these cases (above) not only were the leaders to be killed, byt the women and children also. This seems rather bloodthirsty. It had to be because they would have correubted (and actually did) the Israelites if left to practice their idolatry and convince Israelites to do so also.

We could say, we have to protect Christianity against Islam. Regardless of how “peaceful” Islam is stated to be, it is still anti-Christianity.

Now, that was the Old Testament. I find no commands in the New Testament to fight a war (except in Revelation). Paul writes:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly place.

Ephesians 6:10-12

Our battle is against Satan and his followers. Nowhere in the Scriptures is the Christian (or anyone else) instructed by the Lord to fight and kill anyone. What is true of the individual is not true of a nation. When Israel was to enter the Promised Land, it was to destroy man, woman, and child among the Amorites, Hittites, etc. This was a command to the nation, not to any individual. In the New Testament, Jesus speaks about “Nation rising against nation” (Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10). The Sermon on the Mount was given to individuals, not nations.

So, back to the points

- *Love your enemies*
- *Do good to those who hate you*
- *Bless those who curse you*
- *Pray for those who spitefully use you*
- *To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also*

None of these things is easy to do. We have already noted that doing these things will “heap coals of fire” upon their heads. Nothing is so frustrating as when we do something evil to another person and they repay it with kindness.

I believe that doing these things not only has an effect on the other, it has an effect on us. Doing contrary to these things does not do our emotions any good. The best mental health is to practice positive things.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

Philippians 4:8

Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. How often do you practice this? If you do this, I would like \$1000 now - ok? Let us look further.

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

This is the Golden Rule but not stated the way we usually hear it - “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” The Jews had it the other way around, “Treat your enemies as they treat you.” This is a real simple statement but very profound. What would happen if everyone in the world did this? Make sure, however, do not rephrase this - “Do unto others as they do unto you.” The words are “*as you want men to do to you.*” Jesus elaborates on this.

- *But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to*

you? For even sinners love those who love them.

- *If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.*
- *If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back*

Note the word “sinners!” Loving one another is not enough, doing good things for one another is not enough. lending things to each other is not enough. Everyone does that. It is when you, as a Christian do these things for those who are not Christians (i.e. sinners) that they count for anything.

If we continue on, we can add Jesus’ words to the three items listed above. The result is as below.

- *But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?. But love your enemies*
- *If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you?. But . . . do good (to your enemies)*
- *If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? But. . . lend (to your enemies).*

Why should we do these things for our enemies? Jesus said that *your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High.*

I guess my reward will not be great! I can, maybe, love my enemies “love the person, hate the sin,” but do good for them and lend to them? No way! I am not very likely to do this. Are we really supposed to do this? Geldenhuis writes,

Never before or after Jesus did anyone lay down such high standards of how one should live in thought and action towards God and one's fellow-men. His law is nothing less than absolute perfection in love. No human being in this life has ever perfectly fulfilled this demand or will ever here be able to do so. But, God be praised, the Saviour Himself accomplished this perfectly in actual practice. He is not only our

perfect Lawgiver but also our perfect Example. And He longs to shape us, too, in true righteousness and love through His Spirit. According as we place ourselves more and more at His disposal and live in His power, more and more do we reflect His image and are enabled in our daily life to fulfil more and more the principles of the sermon on the mount. What a revolutionary and blessed metamorphosis of the life of mankind would be brought about if everyone were to live according to His law of love !

Geldenhuys, The Gospel of Luke, Page 215

I can not live up to this standard; you can not live up to it. No one can. That does not mean we should not try to do our best. We should keep these directions from our Lord in mind and strive for them. Jesus sums it up with *For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye.

Luke 6:38-42

Next, Jesus says to “give.” Now that one is easy - for those who have tried it. Why, because of the promise that goes with it. If we give and are generous (towards the Lord and His people), *It will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.* This is a real “mouthful” of words. Let’s break them down a bit.

- *good measure*, μέτρον καλόν (metronlaion)
- *pressed down*, πεπιεσμένον (pepiesmenon)
- *shaken together*, σεσαλευμένον (sesaleunenon)
- *running over*, ὑπερεκχυννόμενον (hyperkchunnomenon)
- *put into your bosom*. δώσουσιν ... (dodousin)

Before we look at these individually, there are some common features to note: (1) all but the first and last end in μένον (menon) which indicates a passive participle (second person plural). Several have the first letter repeated with an epsilon inserted (πεπ pep) indicating future (a future participle). All of these terms, then express an action that will be taken with lasting results - for you and I. These do not represent transitory event which may happen if we give - they are results with permeant results. Finally, it would seem that any one of them would be sufficient to describe the situation but we are given five. It is Luke’s way of indicating the fullness of the result.

“Good measure” is an accurate translation of the Greek. What is “good measure?” It means to fill the measuring device to its limit and to not short-change. You will get all that is coming to you.

“Pressed down” comes from a verb that is not used elsewhere in the new Testament. It is found once in the Old Testament.

“You shall sow, but not reap; You shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; And make sweet wine, but not drink wine.

Micah 6:15

“Pressed down” is a fairly good translation. If your measure is to be “full” you must press the material down to make sure there are no

voids. (I am sure that those of you who cook are familiar with this process.)

“Shaken together” is from a rather common Greek word (found mostly in Luke’s writings - Matthew 11:7; Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:25; Luke 6:38; Luke 6:48; Luke 7:24; Luke 21:26; Acts 2:25; Acts 4:31; Acts 16:26; Acts 17:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; Hebrews 12:26-27). If you put solid, irregular (not round) objects in a container, and you want to fill it as full as possible, you have to shake it - rather vigorously -to fill the voids.

So then, you fill the container, pressing and shaking to make sure that all of the voids are full. Then, if you fill it any more, you will find it “running over.” The Greek word found here is not used anywhere else (that anyone has discovered). It is compound of a word meaning “to fill,”

*The threshing floors shall be full of wheat,
And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.*

Joel 2:24

Here it has a prefix, strengthening the “over” part of the “overflowing” or “running over.”

Finally this overflowingness will be “put into your bosom.” This is an idiom we need to check out in the Old Testament.

*Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers
together," Says the Lord, "Who have burned
incense on the mountains And blasphemed Me on the
hills; Therefore I will measure their former work into
their bosom."*

Isaiah 65:7

Other references may be found.

*And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their
bosom Their reproach with which they have*

reproached You, O Lord.

Psalm 79:12

Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his
clothes not be burned? Proverbs 6:27

*You show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the
iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children
after them--the Great, the Mighty God, whose name
is the Lord of hosts.* Jeremiah 32:18

A.T. Robertson says:

*Into your bosom (eis ton kolpon humon). The fold of
the wide upper garment bound by the girdle made a
pocket in common use*

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the New Testament"

Today, I guess it might be put into our backpack, grocery cart, or wherever we carry things. All of this verbiage simple says one thing - you can not outgive God!" Whatever you give, willingly, God will return but in greater abundance. I can't help think of Job.

*Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than
his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six
thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one
thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and
three daughters. . . .In all the land were found no
women so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their
father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.*

Job 42:12-13 & 15

The Lord repaid Job double of everything he had - except his sons and daughter. But, the Lord actually repaid him doubly in sons and daughters as well when you consider that, in heaven, he would have the original children plus the ones the Lord gave him again.

For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. " We have already seen how the Lord will give us full measure - but what measure? If you give with a teaspoon, the Lord will fill your teaspoon to overflowing. If you give with a 50 gallon drum, the Lord will fill your 50 gallon drum to overflowing. The Lord leaves the selection of the measurement system to you. Again, you can not outgive the Lord!

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

We move next to a "parable." Jesus used many parables as we shall see as we go through this study. Let us make sure we understand what a parable is (and is not). The word is a transliteration of the Greek, παραβολή (parabole) coming from παρα (para) meaning "along side" and βάλλω (ballo) meaning "to throw". Hence the word refers to what is "thrown (put) alongside (of something else)." In a more specific sense, it is a made up story or account that is "placed beside" are real story or account for the purposes of illustrating the concept in a clearer (or less clear form).

I put "less clear" above because of what we will see later in Luke and also see in Matthew in Mark (below).

And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.' Luke 8:10

This concept is further elaborated on below.

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be

given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'

Matthew 13:10-15

In some cases, the parables were for those with understanding. For those without understanding, they were mysteries. This is also illustrated quite graphically in Mark.

Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching: (insert parable of the sower here) But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.' " And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

Mark 4:2 & 10-13

So, some understood the parables, many did not. Why would He not want some of the people to understand? When Pastor Jim delivers a message, he wants everyone to understand. As a matter of fact, Matthew notes the following:

All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them,
Matthew 13:34

We have already seen two types of people following Jesus. There were His disciples (in the general sense - those who wanted to learn His teachings) and the Scribes and Pharisees who were there only to trip Him up and find excuse to arrest Him. By speaking in parables, the disciples who learned from Him would be able to decipher the meaning (or, as in Mark, ask Him the meaning later in private). The Pharisees would not understand. Even if they did understand, you can not arrest a man on the basis of a parable - you need concrete proof.

So, back to the parable. *Can the blind lead the blind?* Obviously, this is a rhetorical question. The obvious answer is no. Or is it? He adds, *Will they not both fall into the ditch?* Again, a rhetorical question - of course they will. Or will they?

As far as the parable itself is concerned, both answers are yes. But the parable is just a substitute for the real thing. What is the "real thing?" *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.* You can not go to a friend who was just recently introduced to the Bible and accepted Christ and ask your friend to teach a Bible class for you. You have to go to someone who really knows the Bible (or, as in my case, has a reasonable understanding of it). Jesus knew infinitely more than His disciples - He knows infinitely more than you or I. We all can learn from Him. But, those who followed the Pharisees were following those who, in reality, did not understand what Jesus was all about nor did they understand how He could be the promised Messiah. They refused to believe and they taught their followers not to believe.

It is still the same today. You can accept the Bible as God's word and learn about Him from it. Unfortunately there are many religions for which this is not the case. I am not speaking of just the obvious, the Moslems who follow the Qur-an, and the various other religions

of the world. I am speaking also of many Christian denominations who do not really believe the Bible. They may say “the Bible contains God’s word which, by implication, means it also contains a lot of other things. They may say that the Bible, especially the Old Testament is just a collection of “folk lore.”

These leaders who refuse to take the Bible as the inerrant, inspired word of God are the “blind who lead the blind.” *Will they not both fall into the ditch?* Yes, and that “ditch” is known in real life as Hell.

Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye?

This is a parable that needs little explanation. Another figure of speech that could be used here is “Why is the pot calling the kettle black?” It is actually connected with the last one. The last one dealt with the blind leaders and their blind followers. Now, if a man has a “plank” in his eye, is his eyesight not blocked? So, we are still speaking about the blind.

Let us first look at the terms.

KJV	NJKV	NASB	NIV
mote	speck	speck	speck
beam	plank	log	plank

Greek: κάρφος (karphe) “speck”
δοκός (dokos) “plank”

The first word (speck) is from a root which means “to contract or dry up.” and refers to that which would dry up and blow off a tree, bush or other plant - chaff. This is something irritating but small - a good dose of eyewash would solve this problem

The second word comes from a root which has to do with “bearing up something.” An architect might refer to a “load bearing beam.” Now, in Christ’s day on earth, they did not have steel or aluminum beams, they were all planks (or logs) as we have above. They were, because they were to be load bearing, of necessity, quite large.

I can see (physically speaking) how one might have a piece of chaff in his or her eye. But how could one have a large beam of wood (plank, log) in the eye. Well, is a parable, it is not necessary to be technically accurate. The point is that if you have a large beam in front of your eye (or eyes), you can not see a thing. If you have a piece of chaff in your eye, it may hurt really bad but you can usually see something.

The Pharisees had “planks” in front of their eyes and could not see the answer of the promised Messiah. Their followers had chaff in their eyes which could be removed by following someone who had good eye sight. I had cataract surgery a few years ago. I made sure that the eye surgeon who did the work was not, himself, suffering from cataracts (or something worse). I wanted the job done by someone who had good clear vision. This is what Jesus says we must do in a spiritual sense. We must follow teachers who have, themselves, followed the teachings of Jesus. As Paul puts it.

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2

Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye.

I suppose we could replace the word “hypocrite” with the word “Pharisee.” With this, Jesus goes on to yet another parable.

"For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by

its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." Luke 6:43-49

From people, Jesus switches His parables to plant life. *"For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.* Not being a farmer, I am not sure why this is, but it is the case. Most of the “bad” trees I have left bear virtually no fruit. We have a good orange tree that, typically, has three crops of good oranges on it (little green ones and buds, larger green ones, and orange ones). I know it to be true but not why.

Jesus elaborates. *For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.* I guess the answer is this. A good tree is “good, by definition, because it brings forth good fruit (and vice-versa). But now Jesus supplies the answer.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. It is what is in the “heart” of a plant, animal, or man that produces good or bad. James tells us,

But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil,

But the tongue is only a mirror of the heart. The meaning of the parable? The hearts of the Pharisees had become hardened a long time before. Jesus had a heart which on, at least, two occasions caused Him to cry. (Luke 19:41; John 11:35)

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Who was Jesus talking to when He said this? He wasn't talking to the Pharisees (I don't think) because they did not call Him "Lord Lord." He must have been talking to the others, the apostles, the disciples, and to you and I. How often do we fail to do the things that Jesus says? Not because we do not want to do them but because of the weakness of the flesh.

Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: So, then, let's see what is required to be able to do the things Jesus says. What is this person like?

He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. When we had our home built, the builder put down columns in the front of the house that went down to the hard ground to supply support for the house in times when the upper soil was wet and loosened. This is what Jesus said to do. He was not speaking, however, of physical houses but spiritual ones. There are various things you can build your faith on.

The teachings of men such as:

- The Pharisees
- Buddha
- Mohammad
- Confucius
- Liberal theologians
- etc, etc, etc.
-

None of these are “rocks” upon which to build your house. They are a *house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.*”

Ideally, we should “build our house (our faith) on the things which Jesus says. Jesus is not here in the flesh, however, so we can not do that. We do have His teachings. We have the Gospels which contain His teachings. We have the Epistles in which Paul et. al. expound on Jesus’s teachings, and the have the Old Testament which serves as the basis for His teachings. So we have the next best thing to build our faith on. It is the only thing which will produce a “house” that will not fall in times of trouble.

Today, our nation is in a time of trouble. The polls show that many are afraid - they are afraid to fly, they are afraid of another attack, they are afraid of Anthrax, smallpox, etc. While we should have some concern over these things.

For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians. 5:1

CHAPTER SEVEN

Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick. Luke 7:1-10

We have noted that the Sermon on the Mount has much more detail in Matthew's Gospel. Luke says *Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people.* . . . This is an indication that Luke was aware that the sermon was much longer but was led by the Spirit not to include it all. He is still in (and around) Capernaum.

He meets a "certain centurion." It was ordained that such a meeting take place. A "centurion" is a εκατοντάρχον (ekatoniarchon)

which is a compound word, “leader of a hundred.” So this man had a hundred Roman soldier under him. Actually, this is nowhere near correct. It means he was the head of sixty such groups, 6000 men. He was, thus, a rather important Roman soldier.

There are five such men noted in the Scriptures (unless one appears in more than one place). It is interesting what we can learn about these men. We shall save discussion of this particular centurion until a little later.

The next such person is found in: (Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47).

So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"

Luke 23:47

So this centurion recognized who Jesus really was. Then we have

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."

Acts 10:1-6

Another centurion who recognized Jesus Christ. Then we have,

And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the

centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman."

Acts 22:25-26

What this centurion's relation with God was we can not tell, but, nevertheless he looked out after Paul's welfare. One other such man is noted in Acts 27:1; Acts 27:6; Acts 27:11; Acts 27:31; Acts 27:43; and Acts 28:16. Looking at one of these passages we find the following.

But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

Acts 27:43

So, altogether in the Scriptures, we have five such men. Three of the professed believe in Christ and the other two, at least, looked after God's people. They must have been really good men.

Now, turning to this centurion, Luke says, *a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.* This servant was ἔντιμος (entimos) to the centurion. The root of the word means "to esteem." It seems rather strange that this man who led 700 soldiers would "esteem" one of his servants! Paul also used this word.

Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

Philippians 2:29-30

(This is a reference to Timothy). It takes a truly great man to have such concern for a servant.

So when he (the centurion) heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. One has to wonder which “elders of the Jews” are here referred to. It would not seem to be the Pharisees. But, it seems strange that any of them would go on such an errand. But let’s go on!

And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue." From this we learn several revealing facts. Not did this centurion look to Jesus for help but he loved the Nation of Israel. He loved the Israelites. For some reason, these Roman centurions had a keen compassion for those they ruled over. Perhaps this is the reason they rose to the rank they did.

Then we learn why the elders of Israel even bothered to go to Jesus. It was not because of their love for Jesus, it was because of their love for the centurion. They wanted to do the bidding of this man who had even built a synagogue for them. It is unfortunate that many Christians are not as enthusiastic about serving the Lord, who died for them, as these Jewish elders were about serving a centurion who built a synagogue for them.

" Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof. Jesus responded to the request and immediately went to see this man. The NKJV translation, while correct, is somewhat confusing (when He was already not far from the house). The NIV paraphrases it slightly which makes it read better, He was not far from the house . . . When he neared the man’s home, the centurion sent friends to tell the Lord not to “trouble Himself.” σκύλλω (skullo) has the literal meaning “to skin” (i.e. to skin an animal for its pelt). Its meaning, in a less literal way, refers to anything that would be as vexing. The centurion did not want Jesus to come into a situation that would be irksome to Him.

What would be troublesome? Because the centurion was not ικάνος

(ikanos) for Jesus to come into his house. The word means “to be sufficient, worthy, fit, etc.” In spite of all this centurion had done for his servants, for the Jews, he did not consider that he had done enough for Jesus to come into his house. As a matter of fact, neither you nor I are worthy of this either. As many “works” as you may have done do not qualify you to have Jesus come and dwell with you. The centurion was correct. It is only what Christ has done for us that permits us to have fellowship with Him.

The next statement seems rather rude or cowardly.

Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. The English translations miss a point here. Both verses contain the word “worthy” but the Greek words are different. We looked at the word in the last verse and it will be found again in the next chapter. The word in this verse is ἀξιόω (axioo) which is used a number of times in the New Testament. Paul uses it several times.

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

1 Timothy 5:17

While the previous word refers to what a man does to become “worthy” this word refers to what a man is (or who he is) and has to do with what others think of him (or, in this case, what he thinks of himself). Not only did this man think it would be offensive to Jesus to enter his home, he felt that his presence before the Lord would be unacceptable. He was right, you and I are not worthy to stand before the Lord - except through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of that,

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus

Our worthiness is imparted to us by God, not by anything we have done. Not anything the centurion did. But there was one thing the centurion did do! *But say the word, and my servant will be healed.* He had faith! He believe in Jesus Christ (i.e. that He could perform miracles). He had faith to believe that Jesus could heal his servant even though Jesus wasn't even present.

Jesus, today, is seated at the right hand of the Father but He can still heal us and He can still save us - only faith is required. The centurion's faith was not in vain. *For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it.* " This man understood authority. He had much authority. He had faith that Jesus had even more authority over the affairs of men.

So, what was the result of this? *When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!* This brings to mind another great soldier who was also not a Jew.

Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, but a leper. And the Syrians had gone out on raids, and had brought back captive a young girl from the land of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife. Then she said to her mistress, "If only my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! For he would heal him of his leprosy."

2 Kings 5:1-3

But he was not of the same caliber as this centurion. Later on we read the following:

Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean." But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' 2 Kings 5:9-11

He, too, stood away from the presence of God's man (Elisha). But, when told what to do he "became furious" because the way to be cured was not to his liking (he did, eventually, obey and was cured). The centurion had great faith. We all need to have such faith. *And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.* The centurion's faith in Christ and led to the healing of his servant.

In case you missed something, let me do a recap. Then

He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him. Luke 5:13

And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. Luke 6:10

To begin with, Jesus stretched for His hand and placed it on the person to be healed. Then He needed only for the man to stretch forth his hand. Now, for the first time, He has healed someone who was not even in His presence. He continues to expand the examples of his authority as the Son of God.

Let us continue.

Now it happened, the day after, that He went into a

city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.

Luke 7:11-17

He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. Nain was a city of Galilee which is nowhere else mentioned. Its name means “pasture.” and was likely located in an area good for grazing animals. This city still exists but is very small. It was probably small then as well.

And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. In this city we find a “dead man.” The term is common in the New Testament and is also used to describe Jesus when in the tomb. Some will say the boy was only in a coma or asleep. Luke, the physician, says the boy was dead. Why else would they be carrying him out of the city but to bury him?

Jesus has healed the sick, the lame, and cast out demons. Never, prior to this, has he dealt with one who was dead. The man was dead - he had a mother who was a widow. Is there significance to this?

Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first

learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. And these things command, that they may be blameless. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man,

1 Timothy 5:3-9

Here Paul speaks about the care of widows. He refers to those who are *really widows*. She is one who is *left alone*. Those who have family are to “real widows” because, as Paul says, *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever*.

Now, this widow had a son to support her, but now he was dead and she was a widow indeed. She did not have the benefit of Paul’s advice since he had not yet given it. She would have to rely on charity and begging to provide for herself.

We are now confronted with two things:

1. *When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her.*
2. *He said to her, "Do not weep."*

Jesus saw two things, her weeping, indicating her deep sorrow and, more important, He saw her heart and her innermost needs. Hence he had compassion on her. The word is σπλαγχνίζομαι (splaxnizomai) which stem from the Greek word for bowels. The Greeks thought that the emotion of “love and pity” lied in the bowels (not the heart). So, seeing her weeping and knowing her heart, he had both love and pity for this woman. Note that it was the widow, not the son that is under consideration here. He did what He is about to do for her.

Jesus then did the following:

- *He touched the open coffin*
- *He caused those who carried him to stand still*
- *He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."*

Touched is from ἅπτω (apto) which is significant in several ways. First, it comes from a root meaning “to fasten to” or “to adhere to.”

He did not just merely feel it, but he touched it in such a way as to affix His hand to it and, thus, stop those who were carrying it. Of the 33 occurrences in the New Testament, all but six are in connection with Jesus’ healing. In the next chapter (8:43-49) we shall consider this word in more detail.

He called out to the “young man.” The word is νεανίσκος (neaniskos). The root has the meaning of “new” as in the related English word “neophyte.” It is the diminutive form of a word that is used in both the Old and New Testament for persons between 24 and 40 years of age. In the diminutive form it would indicate that the son was under 24 years of age. He told the young man to “arise” The word, ἐγείρω (egairo) is a common word which is usually used in connection with arising from sleep or arising from the dead. Indeed, it will be used when later in the Gospel when Jesus rises from the dead.

"So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. We are not told what he said. We are told that He presented him to his mother. We could translate it "He gave him to his mother" (the verb is common). I believe the inference is that he "gave him to his mother alive.

Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us"; and, "God has visited His people." "Fear" here is, of course, a reverential fear, an awe. It is interesting what the people have not yet said. They have not said "the promised Messiah has come," on that "a great prophet has risen among us." This brings to mind some recent reading I've done in the Qur'an which speaks of Mohammad as being a great prophet and even refers to Jesus as a prophet of Allah. The people, in spite of all that is done, have failed to recognize Him as God in the flesh.

Poor short sighted people! They should have been able to see who He was by this time. There are many today who have been around long enough to reach the same conclusion - but have not!

Then the disciples of John reported to him concerning all these things. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written:

*'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.'*

For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Luke 7:18-28

We now begin a somewhat curious side note in Luke's narrative. We

leave Jesus and move to John. Which John? Luke starts out with “the disciples of John...” John the Apostle did not yet have any disciples so it had to be John the Baptist. Sixteen times in the Gospels he is called “John the Baptist” but, here, it is just “John.”

Apparently John had “spies,” who *reported to him concerning all these things*. I do not use the word in a bad sense but, still, they were watching what Jesus did and reporting back to John. The “things” they reported were the things we have been studying (or, at least, similar occurrences).

This brings a curious response on the part of John. He sent two of his disciples to Jesus asking, *"Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"* What is curious about this? John Baptized Jesus and the start of Jesus' ministry. John should have known who Jesus was. Let us go back a bit.

Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Luke 3:15-16

When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

Luke 3:21-22

John said that the Messiah was coming (although he did not use the term). Then he baptized Jesus and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus. But wait a moment, let's check with Mark.

And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Mark 1:10-11

According to Mark, it was only Jesus who saw the Holy Spirit. It was only Jesus who heard the voice from heaven. There is no indication in any of the Scriptures that John knew who it was he baptized. It was only now that Jesus began His earthly ministry that John, like some others, began to realize who He was.

And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. He did not answer John's emissaries right away. He continued His work of miracles - miracles of healing physical infirmities and casting out demons. Why? After doing so He said, *"Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.* He did not have to make any claims. All that was needed was for them to tell John what they had seen. This is why, instead of answering their questions, He went about healing.

Then Jesus said to the men, *the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.*" This requires some explanation. This is the first time that Jesus said that He was preaching the Gospel. There is a curious point here.

The Greek word εὐγγέλιον (evangelion) is used all through Matthew and Mark's Gospels (Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35; Matthew 24:14; Matthew 26:13; Mark 1:1; Mark 1:14-15; Mark 8:35; Mark 10:29; Mark 13:10; Mark 14:9; Mark 16:15). Luke uses it only twice toward the end of Acts (Acts 15:7; Acts 20:24) It is not used at all in John's Gospel. The Greek word εὐγγέλιζω (evangelizo) is used extensively by Luke in both his Gospel and in Acts (Luke 1:19; Luke 2:10; Luke 3:18; Luke 4:18; Luke 4:43; Luke 7:22; Luke 8:1; Luke 9:6; Luke 16:16; Luke 20:1; Acts 5:42;

Acts 8:4; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:25; Acts 8:35; Acts 8:40; Acts 10:36; Acts 11:20; Acts 13:32; Acts 14:7; Acts 14:15; Acts 14:21; Acts 15:35; Acts 16:10). Matthew does use it once (Matthew 11:5). John uses neither word. Paul uses both.

The words sound similar. The reason is that the first is a noun (the Gospel) and the second is a verb (to tell good news). Luke does not often mention the fact that Jesus preached the Gospel. Technically, it was not possible yet.

*Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David,
was raised from the dead according to my gospel,*

2 Timothy 2:8

There really was no “good news” until Christ was raised from the dead. So here, “good news” is used in a more general sense and Luke seldom uses it in the Gospel (as a noun - a thing which has come to pass), only as a process by which it is revealed. But, in this case, Luke does use it because John would then be reminded of Isaiah’s prophecy.

*"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
Because the Lord has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,*

*And the opening of the prison to those who are
bound;*

Isaiah 61:1

The phrase, “*blessed is he who is not offended because of Me*” is a bit hard to explain. “Offended” is from a Greek word you already know the meaning of (or think you do). It is σκανδαλίζω (skandalizo) (scandalize!). Literally, it means to put a stumbling block in someone’s path. We might try to translate this as “blessed is he who for whom I am not a stumbling block.” This is not really any better. Others have tried to make sense of it.

And spiritually prosperous is he whoever does not find in me that of which he disapproves and which hinders him from acknowledging My authority.

Luke 7:23 Wuest

This is, no doubt, an accurate translation but it really needs to be translated into plain English! Some others have:

And happy is the man who never loses faith in Me.

Luke 7:23 Phillips

Blessed is the one who doesn't lose his faith in Me.

Luke 7:23 Living Bible

And blessed is he who takes no offense at me.

Luke 7:23 RSV

And happy is the man who does not find me a stumbling block

Luke 7:23 New English Bible

Actually, the New English Bible (although I do not like it) comes the closest to what I wrote. We can pursue this a bit further by considering the “stumbling block.”

*"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me **to sin**, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of **offenses**! For **offenses** must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! If your hand or foot causes you **to sin**, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you **to sin**, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire."*

Matthew 18:6-9

The verb which Luke uses is used five times in the above passage. Three times it is translated (in the NKJV) as “to sin” and the others

“offense.” The gist of the whole thing is that a man (or woman) is blessed if he (or she) does not get into things which are contrary to Christ and thus are caused to sin (to stumble).

When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John. He asks two rhetorical questions of His disciples:

- *"What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"*
- *But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments?"*

First, it would be better to consult the NIV here which would insert “If not,” before the second question. It is implied because the implied answer to the first question is “no.” The first part of both questions appear to be the same: *what did you go out to see?* They are not. In the first question, “see” is the translation of θεάομαι (Theaomai) which was found back in 5:27 when Jesus “saw” Levi. It has various meanings one of which is “to learn by looking” hence “to study.” The second “see” is from εἶδω (eido) which is a very common verb and simply refers to the process of seeing (something).

The thing the went out to “study” or “to learn from” was what? A reed shaken by the wind? We might look to James for this answer.

*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is **a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.***

James 1:5-8

We would suppose a reed shaken by the wind would be the same as a double-minded man. It describes one who is not steadfast in his

believes but goes whichever way the “wind is blowing.” So, first, Jesus asks if they went out to see and learn from such a person. The obvious answer is “No!” They must have gone out to learn something of value.

Secondly, He asks them what they expected to view. “*A man clothed in soft garments?*” Soft is from μαλακος (malakos) which is found only here, in a parallel passage in Matthew (11:8) and in the verse below.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 1 Corinthians. 6:9

The NASB has “effeminate” and the NIV has “male prostitutes” which all are about the same. The related word, μαλακία (malakia) is translated as “sickness” where it is found (Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35; Matthew 10:1). It cannot be determined if Jesus meant the term to be this far reaching. He may simply have been referring to one who was a “classy dresser” (a “dude”) in view of the kind of apparel John wore.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. Mark 1:6

The answer to this question is also “No!” They did not go out for a fashion show. Jesus clarifies the second question Himself.

Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. Thus, He reminds the people that they went out to see a prophet. But He goes further because John was no ordinary prophet of which there were many in the Old Testament. Jesus said he was “more than a prophet.”

This is he of whom it is written: 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.' The reason why he was “more than a prophet” is that he was the one whom God had chosen to prepare the way for Jesus. John was an important part of God’s great plan. John was really great. I cannot emphasize this enough. Why? Look at what Jesus then said. *For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*” Jesus says that you are greater than John the Baptist, the greatest of all the prophets! He even says that I am! The least member of the Kingdom is greater.

And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying:

*'We played the flute for you,
And you did not dance;
We mourned to you,
And you did not weep.'*

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by all her children."

Luke 7:29-35

And when all the people heard Him, even the tax collectors justified God. I can help being amuse by the addition about the tax collectors! There is something to be explained in this verse. God has “justified” us through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. But how do people

“justify God?” It is hard to answer this question linguistically. The Greek word is the common word, used many times by Paul concerning our justification through faith in Christ. But, the word, in general usage, can be applied to other things.

The answer to this is in the phrase to follow - *having been baptized with the baptism of John*. God was “just” in requiring them to have been baptized by John. This is what the phrase means - no more than this. This was the disciples and even the tax collectors.

Now, we look at the Pharisees. *But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him*. They didn’t “justify God,” they hadn’t even submitted to John’s baptism. Jesus then characterizes these men in a manner which needs a bit of explanation. He says they are like children - children in a market place saying to one another? *‘We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep.’*

The picture he paints is in two parts which should be taken separately. He vision two groups of children playing. in each part as below.

- *We played the flute for you*. They played music such as would be played at a wedding or other happy occasion. The other group should have entered into the game but they did not, they *did not dance*.
- *We mourned to you*. They acted as the mourners at a funeral, expecting the other group of children to act as if they were at such a funeral, but they did not participate, they *did not weep*.

The first group of children represent Jesus Christ and his disciples.

And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

Luke 5:34

They were a “happy” group and yet the Pharisees did not share in

their happiness. The second group of children were representatives of John the Baptist who went around wearing skins and eating locusts and wild honey. The Pharisees did not participate in this either. They stood afar off and watch and would have nothing to do with either,

This is spelled out in what follows. *For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'* John demonstrated one type of behavior and they considered him to be a demon. Then, *The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'* Jesus acted in a different way and they called him a winebibber (as well as being a friend of sinners and tax collectors). "Winebibber" is translated "drunkard" in the newer translations.

The bottom line is that if you didn't "play the game" (to use the analogy above) the way the Pharisees said it had to be played, you were wrong. Not only wrong, but evil.

Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and

the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

Luke 7:36-43

Now we come to an interesting event. for the first time, *one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.* There is no record of Him eating with a Pharisee before. *And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet . . .* First we have a Pharisee, now we have a woman of the city. She was a sinner and so, being both a woman and a sinner, she was most definitely **not** invited to the dinner.

Geldenhuis writes,

However, she was so contrite and repentant because of her former sinful life, and on the other hand so grateful and attached to Christ who had come into her life as Redeemer, that she put aside all her fears, and not only entered the house but even went up to the table where the Pharisee was reclining with his guests, and kneeled at the feet of Jesus. In the East it is customary for all taking part in a repast to take off their sandals and to lean towards the table in a recumbent position, with their feet stretched out backwards. So it was easy for this sinful woman, whose name is not given, to wash His feet with her tears and to wipe and anoint them.

Geldenhuis "The Gospel of Luke"

I am not sure I would like to dine in the position noted, but apparently, this is what they did. With His bare feet stretched out

behind Him, it was quite easy for the woman to stand there. It was also very risky for such a sinful woman to enter the home of a Pharisee uninvited like this.

This woman did the following:

- She wept
- She washed his feet with her tears
- She dried them with her hair
- She kissed His feet
- She anointed them with “fragrant oil”

The order is interesting. If she did not weep she would have no tears to wash His feet. If she didn't wash them, there would be no need to dry them. If they were not washed (and dried) one would not want to kiss them nor would one anoint them with oil.

Why did she do these things. She wept. She wept because she was a sinner and she knew it. Seven times in Matthew's Gospel it refers to people weeping and gnashing their teeth (Matthew 2:18; Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:42; Matthew 13:50; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:30) in Hell. It will truly be a time of great sorrow. But even here on earth, we will have shortcomings which result in weeping.

A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept.

Mark 14:72

Then she washed His feet with her tears. Why her tears? Because she had nothing else with which to do it. There are often times when all we can offer Jesus is our tears. While it was very sentimental that she used her tears, it was also a practical matter.

Why did she wash them with anything? Why do you wash anything? Unless you are a fanatic, you wash things when they become dirty. Were Jesus' feet dirty? The answer will be found later in this

passage when Jesus says, “*I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet.*” While I do not wish to belabor the point, let us look at a number of Scriptures.

So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Genesis 18:2-4

Abraham saw to it that the three men (angels) had their feet washed as they met with him. His son-in-law Lot did likewise.

Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square." Genesis 19:1-2

There are a number of other examples.

Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. Genesis 24:32

So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. Genesis 43:24

So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Judges 19:21

When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife." Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."

1 Samuel 25:40-41

The act of washing the feet of a guest (or having them washed) was followed throughout the Old Testament. Men did not wear high topped shoes then, only sandals (or bare feet) and they wore not socks. Hence, on the dusty paths their feet, naturally, became dirty.

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

John 13:3-6

Jesus provided the ultimate example at the Last Supper. Finally, Paul also mentions it.

Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.

1 Timothy 5:9-10

Strangely, this Pharisee had overlooked this responsibility. His servants should have tended to it but did not. One would suppose that Jesus might have complained about having to eat with his feet dirty. Jesus did not complain!

This woman did what Paul said women should do in the above passage. However, she only washed Jesus' feet - not the others present. A servant washes only the feet of his or her master unless instructed to do others as well. Has Jesus asked her to do the others, I presume she would have. Her attention was only on Jesus.

Having washed and dried His feet, she then anointed them with oil. This was not a common practice. Since another similar occurrence is not found in Luke's Gospel, we shall turn to one of the other Gospels for similar events.

And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."

Matthew 26:6-13

In this instance, the oil was poured on His head, the proper place for it. The disciples complained about the waste. There was no such complaint here in Luke because there was no one who might have

gained from the cost of the oil - and we are not told how costly an oil was used.

It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

John 11:2

Again, Jesus supplies the real answer here (in a verse we shall get to soon), *You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.* Again, the host of the dinner had not done that which he should have done. But why His feet rather than His head? I do not have the answer but, I suppose, with Jesus “reclining” at the table she would not be able to reach His head. She did her best.

Finally, we note that she kissed His feet. When I was a kid there was an expression we used to use, “Kiss my foot!” This has nothing to do with the situation here other than kissing the foot is as low a position as you can get in kissing someone. I understand that there are certain people who kiss the Pope’s big toe - but let’s forget that.

Here is what we can gain from the Scriptures. First, Jesus received one kiss that was not given in devotion (Matthew 26:48-49; Mark 14:44-45; Luke 22:47-48) but the means by which Judas betrayed Jesus. We shall not further consider this. There are many Old Testament Scriptures when kissing was done, such as the following one.

Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field Which the Lord has blessed.

Genesis 27:26-27

So, turning to the New Testament , we have the following:

I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." ' And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

Luke 15:18-20

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Acts 20:36-38

The first passage is from the story of the Prodigal Son. The second passage refers to Paul's meeting with the Elders of the Church at Ephesus. Paul, on a number of occasions wrote the following:

Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

1 Corinthians. 16:20

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

2 Corinthians. 13:12

Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.

1 Thessalonians 5:26

Peter also expressed the same thought.

Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

1 Peter 5:14

Now, in none of these (New Testament) examples was the kissing to be of the feet. This woman kissed His feet. Why? I would assume the answer is the same as before - this was the only part of Jesus' anatomy that she had access to as He reclined at the table.

Later, we shall see Jesus' response, "*You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.*" Again, she made up for what the host failed to do.

Let's put this all together. She did all the right things - the righteous Pharisee failed to do them. The Pharisee was an educated man. The indications are that this woman was a simple woman, perhaps even a "woman of the street." She had no training from the rabbis. She did not know the Torah forward and backward, but she still was able to do what was right, what was expected.

It is the same with you and I. We may not be Bible Scholars. We may not have "hid all the Word in our hearts," Some may even be new Christians, but we can still worship Jesus Christ in a manner that will be pleasing to Him. We can, in spirit, do the things she did out of instinct and love. She did what she knew she had to do - so much so that she entered the home uninvited. We can all take example from this woman.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." It is interesting how many of these Pharisee talked to themselves! The host, apparently, knew this woman and her reputation. He assumed that Jesus did not. What is implied in what he says is that Jesus would not have allowed this to happen if He knew who this woman was.

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." This was a rather polite exchange of words - of course, Jesus had been invited to the dinner. With this, Jesus begins another parable.

There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Before we answer Jesus' question we must know what a denarius represented.

Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Matthew 20:2

So it was a day's wages for a hired hand. At five days a week, *five hundred denarii* would have represented about two year's pay! Fifty would have represented about two month's pay. Both were considerable amounts of money but, of course, the first was ten times more. Who do you think would have been more appreciative?

If you answered the first would had, you are not alone. *Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."*

Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Luke 7:44-50

Jesus then answers. We have looked at the first part of this answer on a piecemeal basis. Let's review it here,

- *I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.*
- *You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.*
- *You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.*

Then Jesus "told it like it was." *Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.* " The Pharisee had said to Jesus that He would not want to associate with this woman if He knew what a sinner she was. But Jesus already knew that her sins "were many."

How did He know this? Two ways! First, as God in the flesh, He was omniscient (all knowing) so He could know all. But apart from that, He could have pointed to you or me and said "they have sinned much." Who has not? Having thus said this, He forgave her these many sins. Again, he "amazed" those gather around that He had the power to forgive sins. Why did He forgive her sins? He tells us - *Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.* Salvation, forgiveness of sin, from the beginning has been a matter of faith and faith alone.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

She "diligently" sought out Jesus Christ. She believed in Him. She believed that He would reward her with the forgiveness of her sins. She was correct!

CHAPTER EIGHT

Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities--Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

Luke 8:1-3

“*Afterward.*” We saw this word in Chapter One (Page 4) where it was translated “orderly account.” Luke is continuing with his “orderly account” of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus continued to press onward from city to city as He began His second tour of Galilee (there will be a third). As He did so, he did two things: He preached and He brought “glad tidings.” He did not go alone. He had two groups of people with Him. First there were the men - the 12 apostles. We have already discussed them at length. They were the support He needed for His soul.

The second group were, according to this account, all women. We are given the names of three - there may have been more. These were:

- Mary Magdalene

She was a loyal companion of Jesus as is attested to by the writers of the Gospels (Luke makes only one other mention of her). At Jesus’ crucifixion, she was there.

There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome,

Mark 15:40

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

John 19:25

She remained loyal even after.

And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses observed where He was laid. Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.

Mark 15:47-16:1

Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Mark 16:9

- Joanna, wife of Chuza
- Susanna
- ...many others

We know nothing of these other woman (or the “many others”). Why bother mentioning Joanna and Susanna if we know nothing about them? Why not just “Mary and the others?” By listing three women at the beginning, I believe we are to assume that “the others” are also women. Look at the end on the statement! *and many others who provided for Him from their substance*. It seems strange that women provided for Jesus’ substance but they did. There is room in God’s kingdom for all sorts of servants. Providing for Jesus’ physical needs was every bit as important as taking care of any others.

This reminds me of what Paul said.

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ... For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should

say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? . . . No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,

1 Corinthians. 12:12, 14-16, 22-24

Jesus needed the woman ans much as He needed the 12 apostles.

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that

'Seeing they may not see,

And hearing they may not understand.'

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no

root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

Luke 8:4-15

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At this point in His ministry, with a multitude from every city gathered to hear him, Jesus spoke one of His most notable parables, the Parable of the Sower.

The sower sowed seeds. Unless one were to take unnecessary caution, it is not possible to sow all of the seeds where they ought to go. So,

The Sower

- *some fell by the wayside;*
- *Some fell on rock;*
- *some fell among thorns*
- *others fell on good ground*

You do not have to be an agricultural scientist to know which seed is likely to grow. In case you haven't figured it out, Jesus tells us.

- *on the wayside, it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.* The wayside is not a good place for seed to grow.
- *on rock, as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.* You can't get blood out of a turnip and you can not get water out of a rock (except in the exceptional case with Moses (Numbers 20:8-11)). Without water the see will die.
- *with thorns, the good seed would be choked.* I am sure we

- have all experienced this!
on good ground, of course the seed would do well.

Well, that's a pretty simple example. We should all understand that. But Jesus ended this with the words, , *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"* Well, nearly all of them had ears, so nearly all of them heard. We have eyes and have just read this. It is certainly clear.

It may be clear to you, but *His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?"* They understood the agricultural aspects of the parable. What they didn't understand was the application. What did it all mean in terms of spiritual things?

As we have pointed out before, even though a parable is meant to reveal things, Jesus used them to keep things from the masses. *To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.'* To understand this parable, you need a simple little equation: seed=word of God. With that, you can see the spiritual application. It seems so simple we would just go on to the next passage and assume that all now understand it. We won't do that.

- *Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved*

We may share the Gospel with others and go our way like the sower. But, with no help, Satan soon comes and fills their hearts with other concerns and they forget about what we told them. Just as it is not possible to sow all seed on good ground, so also it is not always possible to give the Gospel only to those who will receive it. This does not mean we should stop trying. We just need to realize that all that we sow will not grow.

- *But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who*

believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away

The next group receive the Gospel well enough. One can not go through life knowing nothing more than the “Four Spiritual Laws” or “The Romans Road to Salvation.” One has to be grounded. This is why the Great Commission says,

*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

Matthew 28:19-20

- *The ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity*

This group is sort of like the first group except that Satan doesn't have to bother with them. The difference between the two groups is the first never really were concerned about it. The later group went along with it for a time but then let other things take priority. Our churches are filled with people like that - we call them “pew warmers.” They come to church occasionally but are otherwise too busy to be bothered.

At this point we need to clear up something. The first group, obviously, were not saved. But what about these other two groups. What about those who attend the Morning Service once and a while and nothing more? Are they saved? Have the lost their salvation?

The last question is the easiest to answer.

And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is

greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

John 10:28-29

No, they have not lost their salvation - that is not possible. Then, are they saved? The Lord answer this in Matthew's Gospel.

*You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven,** but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

Matthew 7:16-23

A person who says they are saved but never produce any fruit should be suspect. The person who professes Jesus Christ may not, necessarily, possess Him. Therefore, the second and third group in this parable are those who were never really possessors of salvation.

Before you go an condemn someone because you observe no fruit in their lives, know the following.

"Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

Some people may have "hidden fruit" which you do not know about.

In general, however, people who exhibit no fruit in their lives are those in groups two and three.

- *But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.*

The last group are those who truly are saved. So, not all of the “seed” that you sow is going to bear fruit. Statistically, according to this parable, only about a fourth of it will. Probably, even less than that. Does that you mean that it is not worth the trouble? Later we shall be reading about the “ninety and nine.” Part of that goes as follows:

And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'

Luke 15:6

Witnessing to ninety-nine who do not respond is not wasted in the one hundredth one does! You and I do not have to keep up with the reputation of Billy Sunday or Billy Graham and other evangelists.

The Lord asks only one thing.

*Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one **be found faithful**.*

1 Corinthians. 4:1-2

Let me editorialize a bit as we conclude this parable. The Lord instructed us all.

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, **and** in all Judea **and** Samaria, **and** to the end of the earth."*

Acts 1:8

Note the “ands!” It does not read *you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, or in all Judea or Samaria, or to the end of the earth.*”

We are to minister here in our own church and city, our state, nation and the world. The only way we can usually minister to the last two areas is through others. We are still witnessing, neter-the-less. Paul said so.

*Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that
abounds to your account.* Philippians 4:17

So, as we sow the seeds of the Gospel, why is it that we spend so much of ourselves nurturing, over and over again, the seeds that have fallen on the rocky and weedy spoil trying to get the seeds to bear fruit - and spend so little of ourselves nurturing the seeds that could be sown on good ground? In Papua New Guinea, there are many tribes, some quite large, who have never heard the Gospel. Not only that, they have been pleading, for years, for a missionary to come to their tribes with the God Talk (Gospel).

How many people in Arroyo Grande do you suppose there are who have heard nothing about Jesus Christ? If they have never heard anything of Him, they must not have TV set or radios - especially since September 11, 2001!

I am not saying that we should neglect our “Jerusalem,” only that we need to be sure we are expending our time and funds in the most profitable way. Jesus gave his Apostles the following instructions.

*Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among
wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor
sandals; and greet no one along the road. . . . But
whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you,
go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your
city which clings to us we wipe off against you.
Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has
come near you.' But I say to you that it will be more*

tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

Luke 10:3-4, 10-12

He told them to preach the Gospel where it was received and not to spend valuable time on those places where it was not received.

Is it wrong to work with, and pray for, the same person for years and years? Not if the Lord has given you a burden to do so. But let us weigh our priorities.

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him." Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You." But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

Luke 8:16-21

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed. Two places you should not put a lamp (especially oil burning lamps as is most likely referred to here).

- covered with a vessel (jar NIV) or container NASB)
- under a bed

I don't think that either "jar" or "container" is a proper translation here - "vessel" isn't much better. The Greek word, σκεῦος (skeuos) is best translated "what'ch'm'callit." What it really refers to depends on the context. Two rather extreme examples are as

follows.

When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands, they struck sail and so were driven.

Acts 27:17

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

1 Peter 3:7

So, here it refers to “sails” when in reference to a ship and wives when in reference to people. We shall here assume that what is meant is what Jesus actually said on other occasions.

Also He said to them, "Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?"

Mark 4:21

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light.

Luke 11:33

If one were to put an oil lamp inside a jar, it would soon go out because it would burn up all the air in the jar. A basket, however, has small holes between the reeds of which it is made and hence will allow air to enter to keep the lamp burning.

Now consider this. These small holes will let a little bit of light out but most of the light will be confined to the basket. Inside the basket it will be very bright. Outside there will be very little light.

Jesus claimed,

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the

world."

John 9:5

“As long as I am in this world.” After that, we have the following:

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians. 4:6

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light Ephesians 5:8

You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 1 Thessalonians 5:5

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 2 Peter 1:19

We are now that light! As I see it, there are three kinds of churches today. There are churches in which the light has gone out. There is no hope for this sort of church so I will not further consider them.

Then there are churches which Christ is speaking about. They have lots of light *inside* the “what’ch’m’callit” (church). They have excellent Bible classes, great preaching, they know the Word well. But very little of this light gets outside of the church, it is hid inside. Finally, there is a third type of church that we have not yet come to.

Now we come to putting the lamp under the bed (I would be afraid it would set the bed afire!). In many of the similar passages the other object is the bed. The Greek is κλίνη (kline) from which we get the word “recline.” It refers to that which we “recline” on - a bed. There were various types of bed in Jesus’ time here on earth.

Some had to sleep on the ground.

And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Luke 9:58

But the usual bed was not so much unlike ours. According to Unger,

The Jewish bed may be described in five principal parts: a. Mattress. A mere matter of one or more garments. b. Covering. A finer garment than used for the mattress. In summer, a thin blanket or an outer garment worn by day (I Sam. 19:13) was sufficient. Hence the Mosaic law provided that this garment should not be kept in pledge after sunset, that the poor might not be without his covering (Deut. 24:13). c. Pillow, mentioned in I Sam. 19:13, apparently a material woven of goat's hair with which persons in the East covered the head and face while sleeping. d. The Bedstead. This was not always necessary. The divan or platform along the side or end of an Oriental room serving as a support for the bed with a frame seems implied in such references as II Sam. 3:31; II Kings 4,:10; Esther. 1 :6.

Ungers Bible Dictionary

One might wonder about doing this. In the case of children, I suspect it would be the equivalent of putting a night light in their room. It would provide a degree of comfort while confined in ones room.

This is the way it is with some Christians. The use what "light" they have for their own comfort in the privacy of their own home (bedroom). These would be the sort of Christians who belong to the second type of church I mentioned. Jesus goes on.

...but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. "Lampstand" is derived from the same Greek word that "lamp" is. It is, hence, something associated with a lamp - a holder for it. Now

Jesus is speaking about the third type of church. The type of church is mentioned below.

*"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden **lampstands**: I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your **lampstand** from its place--unless you repent.*

Revelation 2:1-5

This is the type of church that is intent on spreading its light as far as possible. If you put the lamp on the ground, it will light the area and the ground near the lamp. If you put it on a table it will light the table and the area around it. But, if you put it up on a stand, it will light the widest possible area - the area all around. The angel who spoke with John relayed Christ's concern - either the light shine forth or the lampstand would be removed. *You have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your **lampstand**.* The first love was that of sharing their faith with others and causing the church to grow. The first love, in a manner of speaking, was manifested in placing their lamp on a stand for all to see.

For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light.

Jesus here speaks about present and the future things.

PRESENT	FUTURE
“secret” κρυπτός (kruptos)	“revealed” φανερός (phaneros)
“hidden” ἀπόκρυφος (apokruphos)	“known” γινώσκω (ginosko) “light” φανερός (phaneros)

At the time Jesus spoke these words, some things were “secret.” It is a bit interesting that the NIV and NASB reverse the words “secret” and “hidden.” This is, most likely, because the words are synonyms. The Greek word here is used quite often in the New Testament and we shall look at just one interesting and informative example.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

1 Corinthians. 4:5

We have been considering things that are in the darkness because the light does not reach them. They are thus “hidden.” (which is a better translation of the word. When Christ “fulfilled the Law”, was crucified and rose again, the things which Jesus taught the disciples would be “revealed,” revealed to the world.

Today, all these things are “revealed” and “known.” The Greek word for “revealed” (above) has implied in it something that was formerly “hidden” but has now been brought to light.

The salvation which would come to the Gentiles was hidden from the Old Testament saints - it was a mystery as Paul so amply states.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

Romans 16:25

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 1 Corinthians. 2:7

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), Ephesians 3:3-4

and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, Ephesians 6:19

the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory 1:26-27

Even now, not everything has been revealed.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

1 Corinthians. 4:5

Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him." To me, the expression "how you hear" seems a bit strange. Newer translations have "how you listen" which, really, is not any different. The Greek adverb "how," πως (pos), may be best explain by going back to Chapter One.

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

Luke 1:34

“How” on hears has to do with whether or not they question what they hear in order to assure themselves that they have heard correctly. Mary heard what the angel had told her but she needed clarification so that she might believe.

This statement is coupled to the next which says, in modern English, “the more you have, the more you will get; the less you have the more you will lose.” What does this mean? You must note one important word here - “seems.” The NAS has “thinks.”

God does not take away from a person, it is only that what that person “thinks” he or she has, will be taken. The person who “thinks” they are saved but really don’t know what it is to be saved, will not receive salvation. It is unfortunate but there any many “professing” Christians today that “seem” to know what it is all about - but do not. We will, unfortunately, not see them in heaven. All that they have done in the name of Christianity shall turn out to be wood, hay, an stubble.

Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

1 Corinthians. 3:12-15

However, the situation which Jesus is here speaking of is worse. Those truly born-again Christians whose works are wood, hay, and straw will still be saved. Those who “think” they have heard the Word and know what it is to be a Christian, will not even be saved “yet as through fire.”

The one who has will receive more. There can be no point of

“stagnation” with a Christian. One who has truly received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord cannot help but grow and obtain a greater knowledge of, and a greater love for the Lord. The one who has not done so will, eventually, drift away and be lost. So, be careful “how you hear.” Make sure what you hear is entered into your heart as well as your brain.

Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You." But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

This account is, apparently out of time sequence - Luke includes it here because it fits best here. The words here seem harsh. His own mother, Mary, and his brothers were seeking him and He, in effect, turned His back on them.

There are some things which need clarification. “His mother” was, of course, Mary. Who were His “brothers?” This is a question because we use the same practice today. We have our natural brothers and sisters and we have those who are “brothers and sisters in the Lord.” In this case, the interpretation must be physical brothers. We know that Jesus had brothers (technically, half brothers since they had the same mother but not the same father).

Two of these brother were James and Judas (Jude) who wrote epistles in our Bibles. There were others.

Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him.

Mark 6:3

There is no mention of Joseph, Jesus’ father in the Scriptures except at His birth. Why, I refer to Geldenhuys here.

Since in the New Testament Jesus' brothers and even sisters are frequently mentioned in a most natural manner as if they were His own brothers and sisters, born of Mary (Matt. xii. 46, xiii. 55; Mark iii. 32, vi. 3; John ii. 12), and since in Luke ii. 7 He is called the " first-born ", apart from various other considerations, there can be no doubt that the Lord really had blood-brothers and sisters. The Roman Catholic opinion that the " brethren and sisters " were step-brothers and step-sisters (children of Joseph by a former wife) , or His 'cousins ' is unfounded and would never have existed had it not been for Epiphanius, Jerome and later Roman leaders who embraced a false asceticism and regarded Mary as a woman who had remained a virgin throughout her life. Even Tertullian insisted on taking the "brethren and sisters " of Jesus as real children of Mary (De Came Christi, vii). Jesus' brothers were James and Judas (the two writers of the New Testament epistles that bear their names), and Joseph and Simon (Mark vi. 3) .In addition He had at least two sisters (Mark vi. 3). He was, therefore, the eldest of a big family and, because Joseph probably died early, He had a large share in the maintenance of His mother and His younger brothers and sisters. For this reason also He worked for so many years as a carpenter in Nazareth until He began His public ministry .

Geldenhuys, "The Gospel of Luke"

What was going on? Why did He not go to His mother and brothers. We might get some idea from the wedding at Cana.

And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Mary, apparently, was not so much different from a lot of mothers today. In spite of the fact that He was not about 30 years of age, she was still attempting to run His life. Even after rebuking her (calling her “woman” rather than “mother”) she still did not stop but had the last word by telling the stewards what to do (to do what Jesus had said to do). It is apparent that Mary, aided by His brothers, had other plans for Jesus at that time. For those church denominations who deify Mary, we need to point out that she had her faults, as all of us do. She was over anxious at the wedding. She wished to waylay Jesus here. Her intentions may have been good but not correct.

Is family more important than the Lord’s work? Let’s save this question for Chapter 14.

Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out. But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

Luke 8:22-25

Image Not Available

Jesus and the storm

Now it happened, on a certain day. There is no need to comment further on these words, we have dealt with the fully. One some particular day, they decided to go for a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Apparently James

and John (or Simon and Andrew, or all) still had fishing boats. They were not going fishing as He says, *"Let us cross over to the other side of the lake."* As on other occasions, Jesus needed to get away for some time of prayer and rest. The other side of the lake, hopefully, would provide that (at least the ride across the lake would provide some time of rest).

Indeed, it deed for *as they sailed He fell asleep*. He apparently needed the rest. As he slept, *a windstorm came down on the lake*. This account is also recorded in Matthew (8:18 & 23-27) and Mark (4:35-41). Matthew does not mention Him sleeping. Neither does Mark but he does say a rather odd thing.

*Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat **as He was**. And other little boats were also with Him.*

Mark 4:36

The words "as He was" imply that they left without a lot of preparation. They took Jesus immediately as He asked. Perhaps the expediency was due to His being so tired. "Slept" is from ἀφύπνός (aphupnos) which is found only here in the Bible. On the surface, it would appear to me "to awake from sleep." However, according to Moulton & Milligan¹² it appears to be a medical term with the prefix referring to the start of a thing rather than the end of it. Ingoing the prefix and looking at the root word, υπνός (hupnos), we have the word from which we get "hypnotism." The word refers to a deep sleep.

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,

Matthew 1:24

But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory

¹²"The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament"

and the two men who stood with Him.

Luke 9:32

However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

John 11:13

And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.

Acts 20:9

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

Romans 13:11

Jesus was really tired and, as soon as they set out to sea, he dropped off into a deep sleep. He did not get to sleep very long because *a windstorm came down on the lake*. It was not uncommon for a sudden storm to arise of the Sea of Galilee. They would most often come from the eastern side of the lake and so the winds would be blowing directly against the boat. Since this was a rather common occurrence, Peter and John, and the others, being good fishermen, would have known how to handle the situation. However, *they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy*. It had to be an unusually severe storm if Peter and the others could not keep it from filling with water and from jeopardy. If they were in “Jeopardy” it would have had to be on a weeknight. Seriously, the newer translations have “danger” or “peril”. These words are all synonyms. They were ready to abandon ship (or whatever one did in those days and in that situation. So, *they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!"*

In spite of what was going on, Jesus was still sound asleep. They awoke Him with the words “Master, Master.” The word “Master” is used of the Lord some 68 times in the Gospels. Once it is the translation for the Greek word for “rabbi” but, mostly, it is from the Greek word for “teacher.” Here it is the word ἐπιστάτης

(epistates). The root of the word means “to stand” and, with the prefix, refers to one who “stands above.” Hence it would apply to an “overseer.” Why not the usual word for Master (i.e. teacher)? Probable because, at that point, they were not interested in learning anything - they wanted someone better than themselves to oversee the situation.

"Master, Master, we are perishing!" This is what every unsaved person should be crying out. “Perishing” here is the same Greek word that is used for those who are spiritually perishing.



Jesus Calms the Storm

Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. After being awakened, He did one thing - He “rebuked” the wind. In addition to rebuking people, and evil spirits(4:45), He rebuked a fever (4:39) and other things. This, however, was the most spectacular thing He had done thus far. James, who would have also been in the boat, wrote some time later:

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

James 1:6

And they ceased, and there was a calm. One may claim, “Well, if the storm came up so quickly, it could have ceased quickly of its own accord. It is true that the wind there comes up quickly and can die down just as quickly. But, have you ever observed water sloshing around in a vessel? When the agitation has ceased, it takes some time for the water to become placid. Luke writes, *and they ceased.* Both the wind and the sea. This is only possible with the Lord.

But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" Faith? the boat was sinking and read to “go down for the third time.” They had no choice - did they? What would have happened had they left Him asleep? No one can say exactly but it is possible to say with certainty that the boat would not have sunk with Jesus on board.

Stupid fishermen! But wait! Have you ever been in a situation where there seemed to be no escape and lost faith? It is really hard sometimes to keep ones faith when one is overcome with problems.

So, their faith was no less strong than ours. One would have thought their fear would have subsided with the wind and the sea.

But *they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"* Of course this was a reverential fear now. Up to this time, Jesus had done many miracles of healing, casting out demons, and even raising the dead. None were so dramatic as this demonstration against "Mother Nature." Jesus was, and is, master of all!

Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. When those who fed them saw what had

happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country.

Luke 8:26-34

The storm ended, then went on to the eastern shores of the lake (sea) to Gadara. There Jesus met “a certain man.” We have seen this type of term many times now. This was no accident, it was prearranged, by God, that He should meet him.

This man was demon possessed. He had been so “for a long time.” We would interpret this to mean “longer and more intensely” than the others we have seen. The demons so possessed this man that he ran amongst the tombs naked. Today, he would have been thrown into a mental institution.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? How did this man know who Jesus was? He didn't - this was the demons in him speaking out. They knew who Jesus was and what He could (and would) do to them. He had already begun the process - He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. That the demons in this man were very evil and powerful is attested to by what Luke writes next.

For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. For a man to be able to brake chains and shackles, he had to have extra-ordinary strength - strengthened by the demons. We use the plural here because of what follows.

Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. “Legion” is a transliteration of the Greek, Λεγίων (Legeon) which normally refers to a large group of soldiers - and still does as in the case of the Foreign Legion. the term is used only once other than in reference to this man.

Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions

So there were many demons in this man, causing him to act as he did. *They begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.* We have seen Jesus cast out demons before but this is the first time that Luke has indicated where they go when cast out of a person - the “abyss.” The word is used here and one at Romans 10:7 where it is in a citation from the Old Testament. The rest of the occurrences are in the book of Revelation where it is used 6 times.

The word is ἄβυσσος (abyssos). It is found throughout the Bible (i.e. in the Septuagint and New Testament), starting with Genesis 1:2

*The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of **the deep**. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

Genesis 1:2

It is also found at: Genesis 7:11; Genesis 8:2; Exodus 15:5; Exodus 15:8; Deut. 8:7; Deut. 33:13; Job 28:14; Job 38:16; Job 38:30; Job 41:32; Psalm 33:7; Psalm 36:6; Psalm 42:7; Psalm 71:20; Psalm 77:16; Psalm 78:15; Psalm 104:6; Psalm 106:9; Psalm 107:26; Psalm 135:6; Psalm 148:7; Proverbs 3:20; Proverbs 8:24; Proverbs 8:27-28; Isaiah 51:10; Isaiah 63:13; Ezekiel 26:19; Ezekiel 31:4; Ezekiel 31:15; Amos 7:4; Jonah 2:5; Habakkuk 3:10. It appear to be, in particular, a place where evil spirits are, normally, confined. It is not necessarily a place for the departed dead as another Hebrew term is used for this.

For a more complete understanding, refer to the following references in Revelation: 9:1-2; 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1; 20:3.

Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. “Swine” is from χορῖος (chorios) which is only

found in reference to this occasion (Matthew 8:30-32; Mark 5:11-16) and in the following two verses.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Matthew 7:6

Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:15-16

This Greek word is not found at all in the Septuagint. Another word in the Old Testament is translated “swine” on two occasions and these are listed below.

and the swine, though it divides the hoof, having cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.

Leviticus 11:7

Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses.

Deuteronomy 14:8

The reason there are not many references should be clear from the above. Swine are unclean animals and not eaten or raised by the Jew. I have always wondered who owned this herd of swine!

And He permitted them. Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. There are several things one might wonder about. Again, whose swine were these? If this was an area occupied by Jews, they shouldn't have been raising swine and so it seems fitting that Jesus did this. If they belonged to others, well

Jesus is always righteous!

What happened to the evil spirits when the swine drowned? One would assume that they ended up in the abyss anyway. Jesus filled their request but the result was the same.

When those who fed them saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. Again, the works of Jesus were proclaimed throughout the area. One would expect what happened next.

Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. They also who had seen it told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

Luke 8:35-39

Then they went out to see what had happened. We believe Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee to get a time of rest. He got no rest during the crossing. Now that he is there, He will still get no rest.

They came and *found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.* Now, I understand the man not being in his right mind. I wonder where he got the clothes? Jesus had cast out other demons and, as a result, had increased the number of people who followed Him to hear His

teaching. This was not the case here!

Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. In the previous sections we have seen the disciples and others in fear - in awe. Here the word is φόβος (phobos) which is the wrong kind of fear. In this case, the people rejected Jesus and His great powers. It was too bad. It is too bad that people today do the same thing.

So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." Luke 8:40-48



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Jesus and Jairus

So it was, when Jesus returned, that the

multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. It is interesting what which side of the sea you are on. Those in Gadera dismissed Jesus and sent Him away in the boat. On the other side of the sea they were there to welcome Him. The situation reminds me of the following passage by Luke.

And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

Luke 16:26

And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. Jesus has had supper with a Pharisee and several other dealings, but now the ruler of a synagogue comes to him. We won't bother to comment on the word "Behold" again.

It is interesting here that the man's name is given. Most of the people, so far, have not been named (other than His disciples). It may be significant that his name was "Jairus," a transliteration of the Greek *Ἰάϊρος* (Jairos), which actually comes from the Hebrew, *יָאִיר* (Yair) which means "he whom Jehovah Enlightens." It appears that all Pharisees were not "bad," some received enlightenment from the Lord and this man was one of them.

He fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. Any man whose twelve year old daughter was dying would be desperate, especially if she was his only daughter. Jesus, we assume, prepared to go to this man's home to see the daughter. But, *as He went, the multitudes thronged Him.* It was not easy for Him to move from place to place with people crushing against Him. We shall elaborate on this shortly.

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Woman with flow of Blood

Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be

healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. This woman, who is not named, has a lengthy description. She had:

- a flow of blood for twelve years
- spent her livelihood on physicians
- could not be healed by any
- touched the border of His garment

Twelve years is a long time for a “flow of blood.” The term refers to a flow from the uterus. It is discussed at length in Deuteronomy.

'If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. Everything that she lies on during her impurity shall be unclean; also everything that she sits on shall be unclean. Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And whoever touches anything that she sat on shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. If anything is on her bed or on anything on which she sits, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean. 'If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her customary impurity, or if it runs beyond her usual time of impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her customary impurity. She shall be unclean. Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

From this passage, we find this woman was an utter outcast. She could touch nothing, no one could touch her. For twelve long years she had sought the help of physicians. There are a number of physicians found in both the Old and the New Testament, including Doctor Luke! Over this period of time she had spent her "livelihood" on doctors - not much unlike today except she had no insurance nor Medicare! This part of the verse is omitted in newer Translations. However, we have the same thing in Mark (which is not omitted)

*and had suffered many things from many physicians.
She had spent all that she had and was no better, but
rather grew worse.*

Mark 5:26

Note, however, that Mark says that she had *suffered many things from many physicians*. I suppose that Luke, being a physician would not be excited about saying this! She had spent all, she had suffered much. Yet, in spite of all this, she was still not healed. There are some things which only the Great Physician can deal with.

In desperation, the woman touched Jesus' garment. Why? Matthew adds,

*For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His
garment, I shall be made well."*

Matthew 9:21

Following this event, the word got out for we read the following notes.

*And when the men of that place recognized Him, they
sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to
Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they
might only touch the hem of His garment. And as
many as touched it were made perfectly well.*

Matthew 14:35-36

Wherever He entered into villages, cities, or in the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Mark 6:56

Jesus' response to this act of this woman was that *immediately her flow of blood stopped*. And He said, "*Who touched Me?*" *When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'*

Peter's response was logical. Jesus was being jostled around by the crowd so how could He know that someone had merely touch the hem of His robe? There may have even been others with some sickness or infirmity that touched Him - and nothing happened.

Jesus then gives a curious reply. *Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me."* This remark requires and explanation. Did she touch His garment and, without any knowledge of it whatsoever she was healed?

Matthew does not record this reply. Jesus did not ask the question because He did not know what had happened. Peter's response is evidence enough of that. Jesus knew all along what had happened, who this woman was and what her problem was. He was just testing the disciples as He did on occasion.

Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. It became apparent who it was that had done this and so the woman, being exposed, threw herself at Jesus' mercy. It is the responsibility of anyone who has been helped in one way or another by the Lord to reveal this to others (unless it is of too personal a nature). Others need to know what the Lord can and does do.

And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." Jesus did not say "touching my garment has made you well. It was not the act that cured her, it was her faith that if she did something such as this, she would be healed. Jesus did a wonderful thing for the woman besides healing her. He could have just gone on, knowing she had been cured and that was sufficient. It was not sufficient for the rest of the people needed to know she had been healed so she could be restored to society.

While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Luke 8:49-56

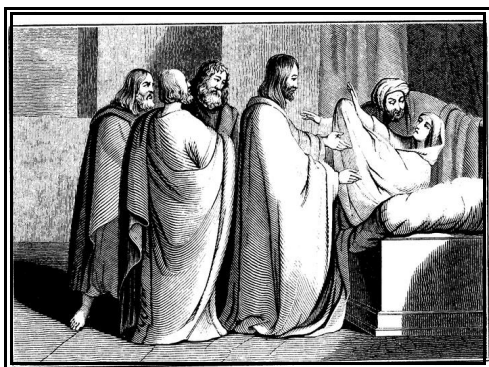
Now, back to the ruler of the synagogue. The delay had cost the life of this young girl - or so it would seem. So it seems with us sometimes. We have a need that we pray for and, before we see any answer, someone else prays and gets an immediate answer. It is also true that we want instant response when medical attention is needed. Humanly speaking, instant response is often necessary. This is not the case with the Lord.

While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not

trouble the Teacher." There was no use of seeking anything further from the Lord, it was too late.

I am afraid we often think that - we give up hope and don't bother to seek the Lord further. However, *when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well."* Jesus' words were "only believe." We have a hymn in our hymnals with that title. The advice was not only for the ruler of the synagogue, it is for us also.

Note that there were two things he had to do, first, "do not be afraid" and then, "only believe." You can not have both. You can not be overanxious and still have true faith. Faith must take the place of fear. If you have true faith, life-giving faith, there should be no apprehension on your part. Now, it is easier said than done, but that should be our goal.



Jesus and Jairus' Daughter

When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Why, do you suppose, this was? He could have permitted no one to come in or He could have allowed all to come in.

Everyone could not get in and, besides, it was not his home - it was not for Him to invite other people into the home. He did allow three of the apostles to come in with Him. Why three Apostles?

This will be the third time I am coming to you. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established."

2 Corinthians 13:1

They would be witnesses. Had none of them entered, we would not have this account in our Bibles!

Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Apparently, when he reached the home, there were others in the home who (we assume) were asked to leave. He said she was "asleep," meaning that, while she was actually dead, it was not a permanent state and that she would arise.

Was she really dead? Was she actually sleeping. The fact that the crowd "ridiculed" Him would indicate that they had determined she was really dead.

He took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise." Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. The food was not only to give her strength but . . . Do dead people eat? It was concrete proof that she was alive and well.

Her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened. The NASB has that he "instructed" them not to tell. This is more in keeping with the Greek as it was not a command but a plea. After the horrible and, then astonishing time they had been through, the Lord did not "order" them to do something. The Lord does not "order" us to do things - He asks us to.

Of course, Peter and James and John would spread the word. The parents were to remain and rejoice with their daughter. Note, as in the past, we have no record of anything the daughter may have said.

CHAPTER NINE

This chapter marks a new area in Christ's earthly ministry. His travels in Galilee to teach about the Kingdom are essentially complete. In this chapter we shall note a number of new ministries which are begun. This is also the longest chapter except for Chapter one and Chapter Twenty-two.

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Luke 9:1-6

The chapter begins with His calling together of the Twelve. The better Greek texts do not include "disciples." It is not needed as the "twelve" always refers to the same twelve men. The NIV translators took heed of the fact that the "calling" is a participle in the Greek text and hence it should be, "When Jesus had called the Twelve together," or, more literally, "having called the twelve together." At what point of time this was, we can not be sure. What he did at this point is what is important.

He "gave them" two things; (1) power and authority over demons, and (2) power to cure diseases. "Power" is from δύναμις (dynamis) from which we get words like "dynamo" and "dynamics." While the word, in Christ's day, had some common use, it was more often used in a more theological sense. Moulton & Milligan say:

Ramsay (*Recent Discovery*, p. 118) has drawn pointed attention to the technical use of δύναμις (dynamis) “is the language of religion, superstition, and magic,” and describes it as “one of the most common and characteristic terms in the language of pagan devotion, ‘Power’ was what the devotees respected and worshiped; any exhibition of ‘power’ must have its cause in something that was divine.” He quotes by way of illustration from Lydia, “There is one God in the heavens, great Men the Heavenly, the great power of the ever-living God ”

Moulton & Milligan, “*The Vocabulary of the Greek N.T.*”

Thayer notes that it and “authority,” ἐξουσία (eksousia) which is also used here are synonyms (along with several other Greek words). He says δύναμις (dynamis) is “a natural ability, general and inherent” while ἐξουσία (eksousia) is “primarily liberty in action.”¹³ It is apparent that Jesus here gives the Twelve something special.

Only God could cast out demons. Christ, being God in the flesh, could do so and has done so in previous chapters. No man had the ability to do so. Now Jesus gives the Twelve this ability, this “power.” Not only does He enable them to do so, but gives them the freedom (authority) to do so. He also gives them power over diseases. Note that diseases comes last. That was not to be their primary function but one which should accompany it.

He “sent them out” to “preach the Kingdom of God.” The verb ἀποστέλλω (apostello) is where we get “Apostle” from. The verb, without the prefix {i.e. στέλλω (stello)} is found below.

*But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you **withdraw** from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.*

¹³Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the N.T.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

The prefix means “away from” so we have “to withdraw away from.” If one is ordered to do so, then he is “sent away” on some mission. Here, the mission was to “Preach the Kingdom.” Note that they were not sent out to print the Gospel since the “Gospel” did not exist until after Christ’s resurrection. They were to preach in the light of where they were at that time. They were to preach repentance. They were to take up what Christ had been doing. One day they would have to do so on a permanent basis.

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:8

They were to “preach.” The word is κηρύσσω (kerusso) which in classical Greek is to serve as a herald (i.e. like the “herald angels”). The person who does this is referred to is the following.

*So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then **a herald cried aloud**: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up;*

Daniel 3:3-5

In the New Testament, it is used in a more restrictive way.

*for which I was appointed a **preacher** and an apostle--I am speaking the truth in Christ and not*

lying--a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2:7

to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 1:11

and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;

2 Peter 2:5

The important thing, in all cases, is that the person was to be a “proclaimer” That is, he was simply to replay the message of the king - he was not to make up his own message or attempt to interpret messages. He was simply to repeat the proclamation of the king. In this case, it was the proclamation of the King-of-Kings.

The Twelve were to go forth and proclaim what they had had Jesus say.

Consider how He sent them out. There were not to take:

- staffs
- bags
- bread
- money
- more than one tunic

This might be good advice with current airline security. But, seriously, what does this say?

First, the staff is $\rho\acute{\alpha}\beta\delta\omicron\varsigma$ (rapbdos) which has various uses in the Scriptures. Mostly it is used as a rod of iron by which one may be beaten or ruled. (1 Corinthians. 4:21; Rev. 2:27; Rev. 12:5; Rev. 19:15). It is used in a similar sense of the scepter used by a ruler (Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 9:4). In one case it refers to a measuring rod (Rev. 11:1). We shall look at one remaining reference.

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top

We note the words “leaning on.” It was a source of support. In the rick hill country of Galilee, one would use a walking stick to aid one's balance. The Twelve were to go forth with no visible means of such support. They would have to lean on the strength of Jesus Christ. We too, must place our trust in Him and not upon various contrivances.

Then they were not to carry any πήρα (pera) or “bags). I suppose one might use the word “wallet” today (for men) or “purse” for women. In N.T. times, it was a little different because they would carry, mostly, provisions (food) rather than cash. Not only were they to go without physical support but also with no support for their subsistence.

The latter goes along with the nest, which is more specific, ἄρτος (artos) which may mean “bread” in the specific sense or, in a more general sense “food.” Generally, the food was bread. They were also not to take any ἀργύριος (argurions) which, literally, is silver but may include other types of coinage. It would do no good to go without bread if they had the means to purchase it.

Finally, only one tunic, χιτῶν (kiton) which, technically is an undergarment (i.e. underwear). It is contrasted with outer garments which is from a different word. However, it may be used in a more general sense and, based on Matthew's account, should be.

nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.

Matthew 10:10

Where the word used refers to an outer garment (i.e. a tunic). Note that Matthew adds sandals as well. Matthew also provides an explanation, they were to earn their way. Paul also said so.

For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox

*while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is
worthy of his wages."*

1 Timothy 5:18

They were to go forth with nothing but what they were wearing. They would have to trust completely in Jesus Christ for their support. Are you ready to do the same?

Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. As they went from city to city, they would have to stay in someones house for the duration of their visit. The first part of this statement is easy enough to follow. They would find some house (inn, or other place to stay) and decide to stay there.

The next day, they might find better accommodations and move there. But, no! They were not to do that. Why? Because they were to be "preaching the Kingdom," not looking for nicer accommodations.

*For we brought nothing into this world, and it is
certain we can carry nothing out. And having food
and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

1 Timothy 6:7-8

*And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake
off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them.*

I must confess that, for years, I thought these words referred to the city - they don't. They refer to the individuals whose home you go to and to whom you approach with the message of the Kingdom. It is a principle espoused below.

*He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who
does not gather with Me scatters.*

Luke 11:23

There is no neutrality when it comes to Jesus Christ. You either believe and have eternal life or for refuse to believe and are condemned to eternal damnation.

So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

While, from the beginning, I have said we shall confine our study to Luke only, there is so much more material in Matthew that I feel to ignore it entirely would not be right. so, let's see a little of what Matthew has to say.

The preface to what has happened here is found below.

Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:37-38

Thus, Jesus increased the number of laborers from 1 to 13.

After the account of sending them out, Matthew gives their names - we already have seen them. Matthew also elaborates on the cities where the Twelve were not received well.

If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Matthew 10:14-20

Matthew goes on even further than noted above but this is sufficient for here. Luke simply summarizes with the statement that they did as then had been instructed. No matter which account you read, the work of spreading the Word has now been extended from one to thirteen.

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. Herod said, "John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" So he sought to see Him.

Luke 9:7-9

Before we look at this section, we need to know that Herod had John the Baptist beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12). This explains why Herod thought that Jesus might be a resurrected John the Baptist. Luke tells us he was “perplexed.” διαπορέω (diaporeo) is another good example of the power of “New Testament” Greek. It is a word made up of several. It starts with πορέω (poreo) which means “a transit. ford, or way”¹⁴ With the α in front of it (“not”) it means “to be left without a way, to be in straits” and, in a loser sense, “to be in doubt.” Now, when δια (dia) is placed in front of it, the meaning is intensified, “thoroughly.” “Perplexed” is, perhaps, too weak a translation. Herod was beside himself over this matter.

Why he was in such a state follows - *some that John had risen from the dead*. He had already beheaded him. Had he really risen from the dead? If so, we John come after him and cause him great trouble. Herod had to get to the bottom of the matter as quickly as possible. Now, they told him it might have been Elijah or some

¹⁴Thayers Greek-English Lexicon

other prophet, but this was of no primary concern of Herod - it was John he was concerned about. His words confirm this.

"John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" If it was not John, who was it? If it was John ... *So he sought to see Him.* None of the Gospels record what happened when the meeting took place - if it ever took place. This section is inserted here only to show Herod's disposition towards Jesus.

And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here." But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." And they did so, and made them all sit down. Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.



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And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Other than when Jesus named them “apostles” (Luke 6:13), this is the first time they were called by this name - because they had now been “sent out.

”Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. This is a very instructive passage. Instead of doing as He did previously . . .

The Loaves and Fishes

So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 5:16

this time he took the apostles with Him to a deserted place. Why, previously, He had to withdraw so that He could rest from His labors and pray. *And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done.* This time it was the apostles who needed to withdraw, rest, and pray. Jesus saw to it that they did - He took them. Why?

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

He knew what it was like. The work of discipleship is not easy and one needs rest from time to time and so this is what Jesus did. Mark emphasizes this point.

And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were

many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.

Mark 6:31

They went to Bethsaida which means “house of hunting” or “house of fishing.” It sounds like a neat place for a retreat. It was, apparently not new to some of the apostles.

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

John 1:44

So, some of them “went home” to rest. It didn’t work out that way!

But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. Now wait a moment. Jesus had just taken the apostles there for a rest and the crowd comes. Jesus said to the crowd, “Come back later, we’re tired and are resting!” No! He did not say that. Instead, *He received them and spoke to them.* He didn’t have the apostles speak to them, He did so Himself.

Now, we have a problem, The KJV says they went to a “desert” place which is not, in general, correct. They went to a “deserted” place. There is a significant place. “Desert” refers to a place lacking in vegetation. A “deserted” place is one lacking in people and (by inference) cities and towns. They were “way out” at a “fishing resort.” Many of you have been to such a place (not necessarily “fishing”) where there is a small store where you may buy a limited amount of the essentials of life (m&m’s and the like).

The apostles, being logical people, *when the day began to wear away, came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."* They knew the “local fishing lodge” could not feed this multitude of people. The apostles were learning from Jesus the concern for others - something we can learn as well. One might argue that they didn’t want some large “class action suit” brought against them for placing this large

group in peril but they didn't have that many lawyers then! They were really concerned about the welfare of this people.

They were compassionate but wrong. What is more important, bread to eat or the "bread of life?" They were just as impulsive now as they were in the storm tossed boat. Something had to be done at once!

But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." Now this seems wrong. The apostles probably only had enough for themselves. They had no power to do anything else - or did they? When we are in what appears to be a hopeless situation, are we really? Or is there a solution? Jesus is always the solution - but let us go on.

They went on. *"We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."* For there were about five thousand men. John amplifies on this a bit.

One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

With this command, the apostles began to think of other things. Instead of sending the people away, they could go and buy the food, but they didn't have that kind of money. Luke says there were 5000 men there. We have to understand the Jewish way of counting as amplified by Matthew.

Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Matthew 14:21

Women and children "didn't count." Don't get mad at me, it was not my idea to count that way. Adding the women and children,

there could easily have been more than 10,000 there that day. To put it another way we turn to Mark.

But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"

Mark 6:37

Previously, we have noted that a denarius was worth about a day's wages for a laborer. It would take 40 weeks of labor for someone to amass enough money to buy bread for one meal for these people. That's a lot of bread!

Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." And they did so, and made them all sit down. So, they sat together in groups of 50 men (along with women and children), making up about 100 such groupings. Why was this done? How would you feed 5000 men, plus women and children in any equitable manner? You see,

God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians. 14:33

There had to be some sort of order to feed this many people. I wonder if He made them sit down so they couldn't slip from group to group! But, of course, sitting (or reclining) was the normal position for eating.

He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude. If I read this passage right, you and I often make mistakes (at least I do). Jesus did two things here:

6. He Blessed them (the loaves and fishes)
7. He broke them (the loaves and fishes)

Now my mistake is that often we serve (break up) the food before asking the blessing. Jesus blessed it first, then divided it. You must

put the spiritual ahead of the physical - it does not work the other way. Had he broke the bread before He blessed it, there would, no doubt, have been only the pieces of five loaves and two fish. The blessing comes first.

The twelve then distributed the food. Each of the apostles would have had about eight or nine groups to take care of - not an insurmountable task. (Again, the reason for the groups of 50, there is yet one other reason).

So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them. Note the following:

- all ate
- there were groups of 50 men
- there were 2000 men altogether
- all were filled
- they left twelve baskets of fragments.

This is pretty specific. Some say, "The crowd was so impressed by the boy's gift that they didn't eat." Luke says "all ate" Some say, well, there weren't really 5000 there." There weren't, there were many more, counting the women and children. Finally, how is it that 5 loaves and 2 fish could fill up twelve baskets? The account is much too specific and researched to be anything but what it claims to be. Jesus had, most definitely, performed a miracle.

And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and

chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."

Luke 9:18-22

And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him. No need to comment on "and it happened" as God saw to that. He was alone praying and was joined by his disciples. He then asked them several questions. "Who do the crowds say that I am?" he asked. "Crowd" is from ὄχλος (oxlos) which is used nearly 200 times in the New Testament, all, except for a few in Revelation, are in the Gospels and in Acts. This is to be expected because these are the only "historical books" of the New Testament. It refers to the masses of people (the NAS says "multitudes"). The answer was threefold: (1) John the Baptist, (2) Elijah, and (3) some other resurrected prophet. Why the thought it might be Elijah is not certain except that we are told the following in the Old Testament.

Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 2 Kings 2:11

Enoch and Elijah are the only two people in the Old Testament that did not see death (or so we are told). It would be natural, then to assume He might be Elijah. Note that the "other prophets" would have to be "risen again" but not Elijah.

Now, the second question. He asked His disciples who they said He was. Peter was the first to answer. Peter, it seems, is almost always the first person to open his mouth. Someone has referred to Peter as the "Apostle with the foot shaped mouth." (from putting his foot in it). However, his response here was right on - "the Christ of God." (a very direct translation of the Greek). Matthew records further words from Peter.

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Matthew 16:16

“The Christ” is from the Greek. It is unlikely that Peter spoke Greek (unless, perhaps, he knew enough of it to communicate with Gentiles). What his actual answer was that Jesus was the promised Messiah. The Hebrew equivalent is found some 38 times in the Old Testament and is almost always translated “Anointed.” Only one passage has “Messiah” in it.

"Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Daniel 9:25-26

Peter declared that Jesus was the “anointed one” whom Israel had been expecting for years - for centuries!

And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." For the first time in this Gospel we find the expression “Son of Man.” The term is found often in the Old Testament but we shall just look at two passages in Daniel.

"I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end."

Daniel 8:17

In the first passage "Son of Man" quite obviously refers to Jesus Christ. In the second passage Daniel is referred to as "the son of man." The term is used in both senses. This is, apparently, the title that Jesus preferred. But, he instructed them to tell this to no one. The term, as applied to Christ first appears in Psalm 8:4 and the last reference is in Revelation 14:14.

In the introduction we noted the work by Pink, "Why Four Gospels." About Luke, Pink writes, "*In Luke, Christ is set forth as the Son of Man, as connected with but contrasted from the sons of men, and everything in the narrative serves to bring this out. This explains why the third Gospel traces His genealogy back to Adam, the first man, (instead of to Abraham only, as in Matthew), why as the perfect Man He is seen here so frequently in prayer, and why the angels are seen ministering to Him, instead of commanded by Him as they are in Matthew.*" Luke, as a physician, was particularly concerned with the manhood of Jesus Christ.

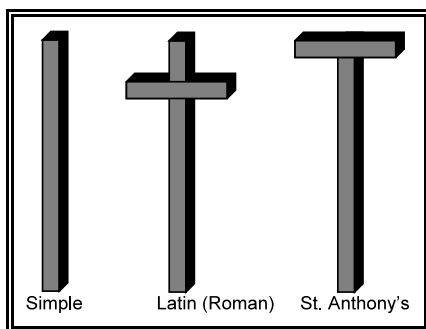
He spoke to the disciples about His death which would be occurring not long hence. He gave all the details except the manner (the cross) which appears, in a vague way, shortly. The world would soon know about this but, for the time, it was something only the disciples might comprehend - even they had difficulty with it.

Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For

whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. "But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:23-27

There it is! Those who wished to follow Jesus (and still wish to follow Him) must *take up his cross daily*. In Jesus' day, there were



Three types of cross

three common types of cross (as used in crucifixion), These are shown below. In some artwork, we see Christ on the "Simple" cross and, in a few, on "St. Anthony's." The most common in artwork, and, indeed, as a symbol of our faith is the Latin or Roman cross. Being a Roman cross and since the Roman's handled Jesus' crucifixion, it is

most likely the form used.

So, quite some time before His crucifixion was nearing, Christ spoke about the cross.

What does it mean to take up one's cross? Jesus was not the first Jew crucified by the Romans. The Jews knew well what the cross represented - pain and suffering and sorrow and, ultimately, the loss of life. No one, including the Apostles had any idea at this point that this was Jesus' destination. They did know what "take up ones cross" meant.

The first part of Jesus' statement is fairly clear. You can follow your own desires or you can follow Christ.

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot

Taking up ones cross goes beyond that. It is not a choice of going one easy way or another. It is leaving ones comfortable lifestyle and suffering what distress and afflictions might be involved in following Christ. While many Christians find following Christ not all that painful, there is always some sort of sacrifice. It may be just your time and a bit of your wealth. It may be a lot of your time and wealth. But, for some, it may be suffering from malaria and various other diseases found in the jungles of the world. It may be suffering psychologically as people taunt you and make fun of you for your "fanatic" beliefs. In some cases it may go so far as giving your life as did those in the Peruvian plane downing a while back.

Jesus did not simply say, "take up your cross," He said to do it "daily." The word is καθ (kath), a preposition that can have a Varsity of meanings. In this context, it might be expanded, as in other places "day by day." It is translated thus in the following: Luke 11:3; Acts 2:46-47; Acts 17:17; 2 Corinthians. 4:16 (although not all translations have it in every reference).

Serving Christ is not a one time commitment, it is one which one must renew each and every day as one arises. "Today, I will follow Christ."

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. This, on first reading, sounds like a bit of double-talk. Let us read it "the second time" to see what it really says. One thing it does not say is *For whoever saves his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it.* There are several important words omitted.

The first is "desires." The word is found in this same connection in all three synoptic Gospels. Matthew and Mark use it in one other connection.

Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- Matthew 20:26-27

Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. Mark 10:43-44

The word is used twice in each of the above passages. All three have one thing in common. Let's list these.

- *desires to save his life*
- *desires to become great*
- *desires to be first*

I could add another:

- *desires to be President of the U.S.*

What does this have to do with the others? It, like the others, is a desire that the average person will never attain to, no matter how hard they might try. Jesus said *whoever desires to save his life*. He didn't say it was possible to do so. Apart from Jesus Christ, all men are lost. There is nothing you can do to save your life except to follow Jesus.

The second part is a bit more difficult. It deals with losing one's life "for My sake." To begin with, let us consider "life." There are several Greek words to consider here. There are two words, βίος (Bios) - from which we get "biology" and ζωή (zoa) - from which we get "zoology." While there is a difference between these two words, the both have to do with "living organisms." They were to be contrasted with physical death. Neither of these words are used here. The word is ψυχή (psuche) - from which we get words like "psychology." It deals with the inner man, his soul rather than his physical being. Paul contrasts this word with another below.

*It is sown a **natural** body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a **natural** body, and there is a spiritual body.* 1 Corinthians. 15:44

There is, then, the “body,” “soul,” and “spirit.” There are three parts to us. In the passage above, Paul says that the physical body we now have is designed to meet the needs of our souls. Our new bodies will be fashioned to meet the needs of our spirits (“God consciousness”). So, in this passage, “losing ones life” does not mean dying a physical death - it refers to spiritual death. Paul elaborates of this subject at length in Romans.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you,

He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 8:1-11

If we die to Christ, Christ lives within us and becomes our lives.

For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? This can be answered by looking at the biographies of some men (or women) who have amassed great riches and fame. This is seen almost weekly in Hollywood where some rich and famous movie star dies from a drug overdose, suicide, or some other form of premature death. Worldly wealth has never been the salvation of anyone.

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. Jesus now turns to those who might be “ashamed” of Him or His words (which, today, would include His teachings as found in the Scriptures). The word is ἐπαίσχυνομαι (epaischunomai). Paul uses the word a number of times.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Romans 1:16

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

2 Timothy 1:8

For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

2 Timothy 1:12

The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; 2 Timothy 1:16

Twice he says he is not ashamed. Once he says Onesiphorus was not ashamed of Paul's chains (and presumably what they stood for). Finally, he says we should not be ashamed but to share in his sufferings (i.e. bearing his cross daily).

It is the last part of this passage which is a bit troublesome. *"But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."*

A.T. Robertson says the following:

Till they see the kingdom of God come with power. In Mark 8:38 Jesus clearly is speaking of the second coming. To what is he referring in Mark 9:1? One is reminded of Mark 13:32; Matthew 24:36 where Jesus expressly denies that anyone save the Father himself (not even the Son) knows the day or the hour. Does he contradict that here? It may be observed that Luke has only "see the kingdom of God," while Matthew has "see the Son of man coming" (*erchomenon*, present participle, a process). Mark has "see the kingdom of God come" (*eleôluthuian*, perfect active participle, already come) and adds "with power." Certainly the second coming did not take place while some of those standing there still lived. Did Jesus mean that? The very next incident in the Synoptic Gospels is the Transfiguration on Mount Hermon. Does not Jesus have that in mind here? The language will apply also to the coming of the Holy Spirit on the great Day of Pentecost. Some see in it a reference to the destruction of the temple.

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the New Testament"

We shall go along with the idea that the event on the Mount of transfiguration, which comes next, is what Jesus was here referring to. We, therefore, go to the next section.

Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray. As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.

Luke 9:28-36

About eight days after these sayings, He took Peter, John, and James and went up on the mountain to pray

About a week after he gave the discourse we just finished discussing, He went up on a mount - which is figuratively called the Mount of Transfiguration. We do not know what mountain that might have been. We note the short time span in connection with what was said previously about Jesus' statement being fulfilled here.

Of the Twelve, He took only Peter, John, and James. These were the same three that had gone into Jairus' home with Him. Why? Paul answers that question for us.

and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to

be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

Galatians 2:9

Paul perceived that these three were the most active of the Twelve (with Andrew running slightly behind). These were, also, the firsts ones called. Jesus felt it important to have a few trusted people by His side. It is no different today. God's workers (pastors, missionaries, etc.) need people whom they can trust and can rely on to aid them in their ministries. So these were the ones Jesus relied on.

As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. Luke says His face was altered but not how. We refer to Matthew and Mark.

He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

Matthew 17:2

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was transfigured before them.

Mark 9:2

Hence the term "Mount of Transfiguration." Thus we learn, from Matthew, that His face shown like the sun. The other such reference is in Revelation.

and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. . . . He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Revelation 1:13 & 16

This, then, is another point in the argument that Peter and James and John were *standing there who would not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.*" This day they saw what we shall see at the end of the age. Mark gives an interesting description of Jesus' clothing.

His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them.

Mark 9:3 NIV

They were even whiter than "Clorox Bright." Again, the same sort of appearance we find in Revelation.

And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah,
 . Why Moses and Elijah? Why not some other Old Testament saints? Geldenhuys writes the following.

Moses and Elijah appear in heavenly glory, to speak to Him in connection with His death and all that He must suffer and endure in Jerusalem. Jesus came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets, and so God specially sends Moses, through whom He had given the Law, and Elijah, the typical representative of the prophets through whom God had spoken and prepared the way for the coming of Christ

Geldenhuys, "The Gospel of Luke"

I would suppose that this explanation is as good as any. "Moses" and "Law" are regarded as synonyms. Elijah is mentioned more times in the New Testament than any other prophet.

They appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. "Decease" is the KJV and NKJV translation of a Greek word you already know. ἔξοδος (exodus) is the name of the second book of the Bible. It comes from ἔξ or ἔκ (ek), a preposition meaning "out" and ὁδος (hodos) "a way," a "road," etc. (very common). So it is "a way out" - an "exit" When

one uses an “exit,” the “depart.” Hence the newer translations have “departure” which is still used sometimes to day for one’s death.

But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep. It is thought that the trip up the mountain was made in the evening and so Peter and the others were tired as they went up into the mountain and even more tired when they got there. So, they went to sleep and missed this entire conversation between Moses and Elijah.

This seems to have been a pattern for Peter and the Twelve.

Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Matthew 26:36-41

We shall comment on this when we come to it.

And when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him. The Greek word for “fully awake” *διηγορήσαντες* (*diagregoresantes*) is used only here. As has been mentioned before, Luke had a habit of adding the *δια* (*dia*) to many Greek words, mostly to intensify the meaning. They had been in a deep sleep, now they were fully alert.

What they saw was Jesus as He will be in the future and they also saw Moses and Elijah. This is a fact; it is well attested to in the

Scriptures.

Now comes Peter, the “Apostle with the foot shaped mouth” (from putting his foot in his mouth so often). *Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" --not knowing what he said.* Just at the last minute, Peter awoke and grasped something of what was going on. He also noticed that Moses and Elijah were making ready to depart.

Peter wanted this situation to last. He didn't want the men to depart. So, the thing to do would be to make a place for them to stay. The NIV reads, *Let us put up three shelters.* A “tabernacle” is nothing more than a tent, a place of shelter where the three could stay. He spoke before he thought. Luke says he didn't know what he was saying - what he was proposing to do. Jesus had other things to accomplish.

Don't be too hard on Peter. How often have you gone to a mountain-top conference grounds for a week or weekend and had such a great spiritual time you wanted to stay? I have quite often. But we have to come down from the mountain to be about the business the Lord has for us to do.

While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. Being in such a cloud was not unique to this event.

Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain

forty days and forty nights. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

Exodus 24:15-25:1

Moses had been in such a cloud before. Throughout the Old Testament the Lord always appeared in a cloud or pillar of smoke. The cloud “overshadowed them.” This is the same term we saw when Gabriel appeared to Mary (Luke 1:35) *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.”* Luke says this cloud “overshadowed” them. The word is ἐπιokaζω (episkiazo) Without the prefix, σκία (skia) refers to a shadow. The word with and without the prefix is found in Acts.

so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

Acts 5:15

This must have been quite an experience for Peter and James and John - something they had never experienced before nor would they experience again. In fact, there is no record that it has happened to anyone since then. Luke tells us they were “frightened” as they entered. This was not a reverential awe, they were just plain scared, φόβος (phobos). You would have been as well!

And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” We saw a similar event in Acts 3:22, *And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.”* This time the message is to pay attention to what Jesus told them. *When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.* The Greek here indicates that the appearance of “Jesus alone” was simultaneous with the sounding of the voice.

The three apostles told no one about what they had seen or heard

according to Luke. They must have told someone or Luke would not have know about it and neither would Matthew and Mark! The point is, they told no one at that time. After Pentecost, they were free to speak regarding this. Jesus had already given them instructions, not long before, *He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."* (Luke 9:21-22) and so they were being obedient servants.

Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father. Luke 9:37-42

Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain. . . Have you ever come down from the mountain? Pater and the others had, the night before, a tremendous spiritual experience. They had seen Christ in all His glory. They came as close to peering into heaven as just about any other man (except, perhaps, John). They had what is commonly referred to as a "Mountain Top Experience." Gail and I have had many as we would go to Mt. Hermon or Hume Lake for a week long conference. It was really great hearing the Word from great men of God, having fellowship with other believers, and just being in the great outdoors which God created for us. One would like to stay there forever.

However, as we shall see, when they came down they were immediately faced with a demon possessed boy. They came face-to-face with Satan.

Mountain top experience are great and we all need them from time to time. We must, however, “come down from the mountain” and face the realities of life here - with Satan and his fiery darts. (Ephesians 6:16). They had a wonderful evening - not it was back to work!

A man came to Jesus and “cried out” to Him. This from βοάω(Boao) which, means *to provide help, with the implication of having taken special notice of - ‘to help, to be concerned with, to look upon and help.*¹⁵” This man saw Jesus and perceived that He was one who could and, perhaps, would help.

He “implored” Jesus. Most of the places where this Greek term is used use the word “pray” (in the KJV anyway, Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2; Luke 21:36; Luke 22:32; Acts 4:31; Acts 8:22; Acts 8:24; Acts 8:34; Acts 10:2; 2 Cor. 5:20; 2 Cor. 8:4; 1 Thes. 3:10).

In a sense, then, this man was “praying” to Jesus. This is what we would (or should) do today.

This particular case has the demon doing three things to the child.

- *a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out;*
- *it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth,*
- *and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him*

Apparently, this spirit came and went on numerous occasions. When the spirit entered him, it did so by “seizing” him - a from a common Greek verb to take hold of which, in this case, means to assume control of. The boy cries out - suddenly. Suddenly is from ἐξαίφνης (eksaiphnes) which, except for Mark 13:36 is used only by Luke. The word does not so much imply speed but an

¹⁵ Louw & Nida “Greek-English Lexicon”

unexpectedness. No one would know when the evil spirit entered the child. They would know because he would suddenly cry out.

While in him, it causes convulsions with the result he foamed at the mouth. The entire phrase is a common medical term which is not surprising for Dr. Luke. Louw & Nida say *Though ἀφρός (aphros) may refer to any type of foam or frothy substance, in Luke 9:39 the reference is clearly to frothy saliva coming out of the mouth, something which is typical of persons experiencing an epileptic seizure*¹⁶.

Then it departs. The description differs widely in the various translations.

<i>... it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him.</i>	NKJV
<i>... and as it mauls him, it scarcely leaves him.</i>	NASB
<i>It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him.</i>	NIV

The way to understand this confusion is to realize that, first, the Greek word, μόγις (mogis) is found only here in the N.T. Secondly, it has a rather vague meaning. Some of the meanings can be “hardly” and “with difficulty.” The “translators” of the NKJV followed the KJV’s “hardly departeth from him,” misinterpreting the word “hardly” to be equated with manner rather than time - it was “hard” on the boy rather than it “hardly” ever left him.

The important this is that, even though seldom, it did leave him once in a while. This seems to be an unusual case. When it did, however, the boy suffered greatly. “bruising” is hardly the word to be used. The “mauls” in the NASB is about the closest to the actual meaning. “It is destroying” is an interpretation by the NIV translators. A good sense of the meaning is found in another passage.

*And the God of peace will **crush** Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

¹⁶ Louw & Nida “Greek-English Lexicon”

Jesus was not the first to attempt to cast out this demon. The man said, “*So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.*” This seems strange since the Twelve had recently been sent out to do just exactly that - and with success.

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.

Luke 9:1

What was wrong? Jesus replied with, “*O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you?*” These seem like rather cutting remarks, coming from Jesus. We need not comment on the term “faithless” since it is from the common Greek word for “faith” with alpha prefixed to it - “without faith.” “Perverse” seems to be a word that Luke is fond of as he uses it several times. It is found once in Matthew 17:17. Paul uses it once.

that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Philippians 2:15

It may be reasonable to assume that the Apostles’ faith was not what it should be and that would explain their inability to cast out the demon. They were certainly not “perverse.”

The answer to this puzzle is to realize to whom Jesus said this. The author of Hebrews has given this advice.

*But **without faith** it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God **must believe** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently **seek** Him.*

Hebrews 11:6

The statement was not delivered to the Apostles but to the people. The people lacked faith in the Apostles and hence nothing was accomplished. We can ask God for lots of things but we will get none of them if we have no faith.

Jesus turned to the matter and at an *as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.* As already discussed, the demon had one more round with the boy. "Threw him down" is a Greek terms used of boxers being knocked down. As always, the spirit caused convulsions.

We do not know how often these convulsions occurred. I assume that whatever hurt there was to the boy, he healed up between times. Now, here, Jesus did not cast out the demon until it had one last "fling" at the boy. So, Jesus had not only to cast out the demon but to heal the boy from the resulting injuries. This He did and returned the boy to his father.

Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

Do you not realize that Jesus does, essentially, the same for us today? He casts the devil out of us, cleanses us, and presents us to our Heavenly Father!

And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, "Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men." But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid

to ask Him about this saying.

Luke 9:43-45

As usual, the crowd was amazed at what they had seen. But, in the midst of this, Jesus spoke to His disciples, with a strange expression, used only here. *“Let these words sink down into your ears.”* which is literally, let them “be established in your ears.” In other words, they should remain in their “ears.” or, more loosely, they should remember the words well.

He then spoke of the fact that He would be betrayed. Actually, the notion of “betrayal” is only implied here, the word is simply “delivered.” The words seem simple enough to me and, most likely to you. On the other hand, we already know the result. The disciples still did not understand how Jesus was to conclude His (first) earthly ministry.

Luke writes, *they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it.* In this statement he uses two Greek words not found elsewhere in the N.T. - “hidden” and “perceive.” Without taking time to delve into these words which are reasonably well translated, it is sufficient to know that the disciples were not to blame for their continued ignorance of what was to become of Jesus. As Robertson points out, Jesus absolved them of the responsibility of knowing what was going on. This includes causing them to be fearful of asking.

While it may be pushing it a bit, I am reminded of what Solomon had to say.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

When “its time” came, He would make it known to them.

Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side." Luke 9:46-50

Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. This appears to be a rather strange situation. One would have thought that the apostle were above such pettiness. Jesus had already told each of them that they would have to take up their crosses daily (9:23). They had just seen Him on the Mt. of Transfiguration. They had seen great things.

Then there was the matter of them being unable to cast the demon out of the boy. One would think that “greatness” would be the furthest thing from their minds. This seems, however, to be a habitual problem for the apostles. In Luke 22:24, at the last supper, the question arose again, with greater fervor. We shall defer until then to discuss that case.

In our church, I have not seen anyone desiring to be greater than another and that is good. It is not so in some churches and great problems, including church splits, can be the result.

As in previous cases (with the Pharisees then), Jesus knew their thoughts and so responded. Jesus then took a young child and placed the child “along side” of Himself {Greek, παρα (para)} The apostles could look at Jesus and the child at the same time.

Get the picture? Here was Jesus, who not long before, Peter had called, “The Christ of God.” (9:20) - the Promised Messiah, the

same Jesus they had seen transfigured in all His glory. At the side of Jesus was a small unnamed child. There is a considerable contrast here. Which of the two was the greatest? Well, of course, Jesus was.

Jesus, having set up this example, said, "*Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great.*" What does the child have to do with this statement? They had to have the heart of the little child, not the Messiah. They had to be the followers, not the leader. A.T. Robertson says the following.

This little child (touto to paidion). As Jesus spoke he probably had his hand upon the head of the child. Matthew 18:5 has "one such little child." The honoured disciple, Jesus holds, is the one who welcomes little children "in my name"

Who was the greatest? The one upon whom Jesus had His hand. Those that have been truly great in God's service have been those who never considered themselves important. In the foreword to a book on the life of Hudson Taylor, we find the words below.

THE founder of the China Inland Mission was a physician J. Hudson Taylor, a man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, of entire surrender to God and His call, of great self-denial, heartfelt compassion, rare power in prayer. marvellous organising faculty, energetic initiative, indefatigable perseverance, and of astonishing childlike humility."

Dr and Mrs. Edward Taylor,
"Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission"

I have added the underscores for emphasis. This type of statement is repeated over and over again in the biographies of great men (and women) of the faith - "surrender," "self-denial," "childlike humility."

It is these characteristics which will not only make a man or woman a great servant of God but will also keep them from falling pray to scandal and ruin and we have seen in “famous” people of God today.

There is no room for thought of self-glory. The glory which was seen on the Mt. of Transfiguration is what must be before our eyes.

Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side."

It is a bit puzzling why Luke inserts this short notice here in the text. Does it have something to do with what has come before. A.T. Robertson has this to say.

And John answered (apokritheis de Ioanes). As if John wanted to change the subject after the embarrassment of the rebuke for their dispute concerning greatness (Luke 9:46-48).

"We tried to hinder him. Because he followeth not with us." Present tense preserved for vividness where Mark has imperfect. Note also here "with us" where Mark has associative instrumental. It is a pitiful specimen of partisan narrowness and pride even in the Beloved Disciple, one of the Sons of Thunder. The man was doing the Master's work in the Master's name and with the Master's power, but did not run with the group of the Twelve.

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the New Testament"

So, you see, this has been included to show the type of feelings that preceded with questions as to whom would be the greatest. These men were “big shots.” They had cast out demons and hence were in the “inner circle.” It could not be tolerated that someone else would dare do the same thing. Once we assume such an attitude, we will

be of no further use to the Lord - unless he redeems us as he did the apostles.

Jesus' words need to be heard loud and clear today - "*he who is not against us is on our side.*" We need to make it clear that the Taliban do not have the answer to eternal life with Allah. We need to make it clear that other apostate faiths are not perceived as a means to salvation. On the other hand, if there is a group that is reaching Jesus Christ with the message of salvation but we do not agree with their means in doing so - we must leave them alone. We need all the help in evangelism we can get. We do not need to expend precious time in putting down groups whose overall work is positive regardless of our feelings toward them.

If a person was casting out demons, that person must have received that power from God in one way or another and, therefore, had to be on the same "side" as the apostles. He should not have been interfered with - and neither should we interfere with another ministry as long as it is truly reaching people and not deceiving them.

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.

At this point this book takes a sudden turn. “Now it came to pass” needs no further amplification by this time. It was now “time.” Actually “time” is not included in the Greek word, συμπληράω (sumplerao). We saw the same word in Luke 8:23 “and they were filling with water.” Jesus had fulfilled the previous part of His ministry. It was “full” time for Him to press on to the final phase.

The final phase would be when he was “received up.” The Greek noun is found only here - ἀναληψις (analepsis) is found only here. However, Luke uses the verbal form often in the book of Acts (and one in Mark).

So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Mark 16:19

until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

Acts 1:2

who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

Acts 1:11

beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

Acts 1:22

Jesus' death on the cross was necessary to free us from our sins. His burial for three days was necessary to fulfill prophecy. But the thing that was the most important of all of these was His “taking up” into heaven. Without a resurrection and accession, we might be “sinless” but we would not have the assurance of going, one day, to be with the Lord. Hence, the thing that Jesus began to focus on was His

ascension into heaven.

Now, one might perceive this in a different way. Why would He look forward to being crucified? Why would He look forward to be buried and in “Abraham’s Bosom” for three days? These would not be pleasant acts. This is true, what He really had to look forward to was His reunion with His heavenly Father. This is what He really was looking forward to. this is what the rest of His ministry would be performed in reference to. It ought to be the same with us. We need to do as expressed by the author of Hebrews.

. . . looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

He “finished” our faith with His being “taken up.” We can “take up our cross daily” if we have this view before us! We can know that we, like Him, will one day ascend into heaven as He did - either after death as now, or in the rapture to come.

He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. The term “steadfastly set” is from στήριζω (sterizo) from which we get “stereotype” which originally referred to the fixed solid plates used in the newspaper printing business but has now come to mean an fixed unchanging image of a person. He, from the point on, had his vision, His sights, set on the work that lay ahead. “Setting ones face” is a fairly common Greek (and, I believe, Hebrew) idiom for which, today, we would use “setting our sights.” (It is used 11 times in the O.T.) Sending messengers “before His face” is also a fairly common idiom.

He sent messengers to prepare for what he had set His sights on. The messengers, as we have noted before, were “angels.” That is the Greek word that is so transliterated. In this case it the context indicates it was not “angels” but men and hence “messengers.”

And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. Before we examine this statement, let us be sure we know who these Samaritans were

SAMARITANS the name given to the new and mixed inhabitants whom Esarhaddon (B.C. 677), the king of Assyria, brought from Babylon and other places and settled in the cities of Samaria, instead of the original inhabitants whom Sargon (B.C. 721) had removed into captivity (2 Kings 17:24; comp. Ezra 4:2, 9-10). These strangers (comp. Luke 17:18) amalgamated with the Jews still remaining in the land, and gradually abandoned their old idolatry and adopted partly the Jewish religion. After the return from the Captivity, the Jews in Jerusalem refused to allow them to take part with them in rebuilding the temple, and hence sprang up an open enmity between them. They erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, which was, however, destroyed by a Jewish king (B.C. 130). They then built another at Shechem. The bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans continued in the time of our Lord: the Jews had "no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9; comp. Luke 9:52-53). Our Lord was in contempt called "a Samaritan" (John 8:48). Many of the Samaritans early embraced the gospel (John 4:5-42; Acts 8:25; Acts 9:31; Acts 15:3). Of these Samaritans there still remains a small population of about one hundred and sixty, who all reside in Shechem, where they carefully observe the religious customs of their fathers. They are the "smallest and oldest sect in the world."

Easton's Bible Dictionary

As noted above, the Samaritans, while embracing a form of Judaism, were not, for the most part, of Jewish stock. They were therefore not accepted by the Jews. In fact, in going from Judah to Bethlehem,

a good Jew would cross the Jordan, travel past Samaria on the other side of the Jordan, and then cross back - thus avoiding Samaria.

At one time, according to John's Gospel, Jesus did actually pass through Samaria . . .

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

John 4:7-9

It might seem strange that the Samaritans would not accept them. The Samaritans were, apparently good people - later on we shall learn about the Good Samaritan. So, then, why were the disciples rejected? Luke says, "*because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.*" That was the plan. It was the plan of both the Father and the Son (and, I would assume, the Holy Spirit). What happens if circumstances would have you go in a way that the Lord does not intend? Today, we use the expression, "the Lord closed the door." God made it impossible for the Samaritans to accept them into their city because God had other plans. God would not let His plans be circumvented by a detour through Samaria.

So, now, we turn to the apostles. *And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"* That's a rather drastic action to take. But, we have already noted that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans and, when confronted with this insult, some drastic action should be taken - or should it. The statement "just as Elijah did?" is not in the better texts. It is really not material as this is, no doubt, what was in their minds.

And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the

evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. **1 Kings 18:36-38**

When the Lord "shuts the door in our face," should we become belligerent and take it out on whoever or whatever closed the door? Jesus has the answer. *"You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."* Most texts have simple that Jesus rebuked his disciples for this. For this reason we shall not comment on the details.

And they went to another village. The issue was settled, the Lord opened another door - another village, and thus this is where they went.

*Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." **Luke 9:57-62***

This appears to be a chapter when the failings and inadequacies of the apostles is demonstrated. In spite of all we have seen thus far, there are still problems with them. Here, they simply had no idea which Christ was all about.

In this case, the person is anonymous. This person was willing to go wherever the Lord went. Jesus' response was that the person didn't know what they were saying - Jesus had no place of His own nor would He ever (during His earthly ministry). From what follows, this was enough to convince the person not to follow Jesus. It is far more comfortable to remain at home than to follow Jesus.

The next part may be a bit more confusing. The next person wanted to wait until he buried his father and then he would follow Jesus. One might think that this was a reasonable delay. The point here to be considered is that this man's father was probably still very much alive. It wasn't just a funeral that would prevent him, it was the desire not to leave home.

A third was more direct, he wanted to go home and say "goodbye." If that were all he truly wanted, there would be no problem. But, like the others, it was merely an excuse. They are many excuses we can give for not being able to follow Jesus. Some may sound better than others, but they are all lame excuses.

Jesus sums this up with the comment about putting one's hand to the plow and then looking back. I am not a farmer but I have been told that the only way to plow a straight furrow is to fix one's gaze at a target at the end of the field and to keep these sights as one crosses the field. If, in the middle of the field, you look back, you will mess up the furrow and it will no longer be straight. It also messes up the ones along side of it that have been, or are to be furrowed.

The author of Hebrews tells it all.

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at

the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

We must keep our eyes “looking unto Jesus” and not looking back.

CHAPTER TEN

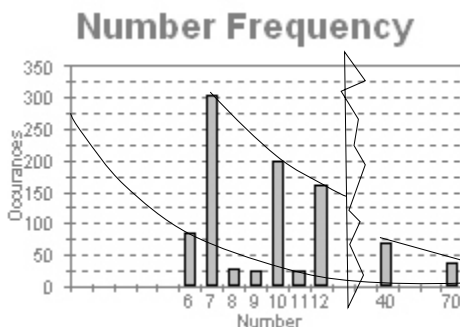
After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

Luke 10:1-12

Jesus, on a previous occasion had sent the apostles out on a mission. Now he calls “seventy others.” Is there any significance to the number? First, we must note that there are variations here. Some Greek texts has seventy while others have seventy-two. Which is it? Is there any significance to numbers in the Bible?

Some place great emphasis on “Biblical Numerology.” They are wrong. There is nothing to support such far-out interpretations.

There are, on the other hand, some numbers which have significance. On the next page is a chart showing the approximate times certain numbers appear in the Bible. To the extent practical, I have eliminated numbers like “thirty-seven” from the list of occurrences of “seven” and so on. The process is only approximate. Note, also, the break in the chart between 12 and 40 - I didn’t feel like it was important to take the time to fill in the numbers in between these. One would expect the higher the number, the less occurrences. One



would not expect the number “three-thousand, five-hunder and twenty-nine” to occur very often. This is the case as can be seen with the numbers 6, 8, 9, and 11. The numbers 7, 10, 12, 40, and 70 occur much more frequently than expected. The number three (not shown) does as well. There is significance to these numbers.

“Three” is the number of the Godhead.

“Seven” is the number of completion or perfection

“Ten” is ?? (probably just a round number)

“Twelve” is the number of the tribes of Israel, the number of
Apostles

“Forty” is the number of testing.

“Seventy” is ??

Well, we can read through the Bible and see what the significance of 70 is. First we have “elders.”

Now He said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar.

Exodus 24:1

In addition to this, there are seven other such references: Exodus 24:9; Numbers 11:16; Numbers 11:24-25; Judges 8:14; 2 Kings 10:1; Ezekiel 8:11.

Then there are the “sons.”

And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.

Genesis 46:27

In addition, there are 17 other such references: Judges 8:30; Judges 9:2; Judges 9:5; Judges 9:18; Judges 9:24; Judges 12:14; 2 Kings 10:1; 2 Kings 10:6-7; Ezra 2:36; Ezra 2:40; Ezra 8:7; Ezra 8:14; Neh. 7:8-9; Neh. 7:39; Neh. 7:43.

For some reason, Palm trees seem to enter in: Exodus 15:27; Numbers 33:9. Finally, years (or, in Daniel, weeks).

"Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the Lord, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the Lord; 'and I will make it a

perpetual desolation.

Jeremiah 25:8-12

Also: Genesis 5:12; Genesis 5:31; Genesis 11:26; 2 Chron. 36:21; Isaiah 23:15; Isaiah 23:17; Jeremiah 29:10; Daniel 9:2; Daniel 9:24; Zech. 1:12; Zech. 7:5.

Seventy is mentioned in the New Testament only in connection with this event in Jesus' ministry. Since we are dealing with people, we shall assume that the seventy He called would correspond to the 70 elders who were called in the Old Testament.

We look at just one significant passage.

Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did so again.

Numbers 11:25

Then seventy are not mentioned after this and we assume that they were appointed only for a time just as the seventy elders above were.

Then He "sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go." Perhaps this is where the Mormons got the practice of sending their men out in pairs. It is obvious from this statement that they were to go before Him and prepare the city for His entry where He would then do His ministry.

Then He said to them... The NASB has "*And He was saying to them,*" which is not very good English but good Greek. The Greek verb for "to say" (which is very common) is in the Imperfect tense which indicates continued action in the past (as contrasted to a one-time event). This would lead one to suspect that He did not send all seventy at the same time. He would send two as the need arose and,

as He sent them, he would tell them, "*The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*" This statement is repeated in Matthew 9:37-38. Then, in Samaria, after meeting the woman at the well who went to bring her townsfolk, Jesus said,

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

John 4:34-38

The “white” in the fields was, of course, the people coming out from the town. Today the fields are a little less ripe after 20 centuries of discipleship but there are still millions yet to harvest. The harvest is great the laborers are few. There is nothing unusual or uncommon for the two Greek words used here. The majority of the people on the face of the earth are not saved - they are Muslims, Buddhists, etc. or have never heard of a God before. There are a quite a few laborers in the fields - the Muslims, the Mormons, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and others. There are few who carry the saving message of Jesus Christ.

I believe His request is of significance. He says to pray. This is not the common Greek work for “pray” but δέομαι (deomai) which is not a word used exclusively for prayer. It is used in asking for something that one earnestly needs. Asking God or asking someone else. In this case the request is to be made to the “Lord of the Harvest.” Indeed, He is.

'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten. But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the Lord. And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 19:23-25

'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the Lord your God.' "

Leviticus 23:22

All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and the grain, their firstfruits which they offer to the Lord, I have given them to you.

Numbers 18:12

*Yes, the Lord will give what is good;
And our land will yield its increase.*

Psalm 85:12

"I will surely consume them," says the Lord. "No grapes shall be on the vine, Nor figs on the fig tree, And the leaf shall fade; And the things I have given them shall pass away from them."

Jeremiah 8:13

The verses above speak of harvests of food. But the Lord is Lord of the "people harvest" as well. You say "I can not be a missionary!" That may well be true. But, according to this, you can pray that the Lord would raise up other laborers who can. This is certainly a good business strategy. Rather than attempting to do all the work yourself, you seek others that will help with the work.

Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.
Matthew adds to this.

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Matthew 10:16

This was said in the sending out of the twelve apostles but the concept is the same. A.T. Robertson says the following.

As sheep in the midst of wolves (hoôs probata en mesoôî lukoôn). The presence of wolves on every hand was a fact then and now. Some of these very sheep (Matthew 10:6) at the end will turn out to be wolves and cry for Christ's crucifixion. The situation called for consummate wisdom and courage. The serpent was the emblem of wisdom or shrewdness, intellectual keenness (Genesis 3:1; Psalm 58:5), the dove of simplicity (Hosea 7:11). It was a proverb, this combination, but one difficult of realization. Either without the other is bad (rascality or gullibility). The first clause with arnas for probata is in Luke 10:3 and apparently is in a Fragment of a Lost Gospel edited by Grenfell and Hunt. The combination of wariness and innocence is necessary for the protection of the sheep and the discomfiture of the wolves.

A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament.*

We have sent marines to the Phillipines to help the army there and one of their objectives is to rescue a New Tribes Missions couple who have been held captive for months. The situation is no better today than then.

Why not send them in larger groups? Why not send them out with arms or, at least, their staves? Why no provision for their protection. The answer to this question is in the second verse of the

Bible.

The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Genesis 1:2

What does this have to do with the situation? “hovering” is from the Hebrew רָחַף (rehaph) which has a significant meaning here. It is best seen in one of the other two places where it is found.

*As an eagle stirs up its nest,
Hovers over its young,
Spreading out its wings, taking them up,
Carrying them on its wings,*

Deuteronomy 32:11

After the calamity that occurred on the earth (it was “formless and empty”), the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God) hovered over it to protect it. God has been protecting the earth ever since and, especially, His saints. The seventy were to rely on God, not their own power, to protect them.

The instructions given the seventy are similar to those given the Twelve but here there is a bit more explanation. *Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road.* Here He lists sandals, before He listed staffs. Here He says to greet no one along the road, there He said not to tale two tunics. We can, most likely, combine these and apply them to both groups.

We should not the purpose of the new items listed. They were not to greet anyone along the road. It these days, such greeting were rather elongated and time consuming and they had much work to do. They were, apparently, to go bare footed. We wonder why? Perhaps for the same reason the Twelve were not to carry staffs. You see, the Lord could protect their feet from the hard places. . .

*Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain
and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be
made straight And the rough places smooth;*

Isaiah 40:4

The Lord has the power to make the crooked roads straight (level) and the rough and rocky places smooth! They would need no sandals.

But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. This is more detailed than before, “Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.” He amplifies further, saying, “*And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house.*” We anticipated the fact they the Twelve were not to go from house to house but here it is explicit. Perhaps, since Jesus is talking to a larger circle of people, people whom He did not know as well, He needed to be more specific. Why not go from house to house? It would also take up valuable time but, they might have felt they were imposing if they stated too long in one place. I suppose I might have. But, Jesus said that they would be earning their food and lodging and, therefore, would not be a burden.

It goes further than that. Over the years, Gail and I have had many missionaries and speakers in our home, either for a meal or lodging or both. Yes, it did cost some money to do this, but, the blessings we received by doing so far outweighed any cost - especially when our children were at home to experience the blessing of having these people in the home.

Paul speaks of the same thing (using Deuteronomy 23:4 and this passage as the principal).

*Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of
double honor, especially those who labor in the word
and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "You shall not*

muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

1 Timothy 5:17-18

There are those who think the pastor or the missionary or other Christian worker should make some oath of poverty in order to serve. It is wrong for anyone to "earn a living" from the Gospel. They are correct - in a technical sense. We do not pay our pastor for the work he has been called here to perform - he does this as unto the Lord. He is, however, entitled to sufficient compensation so that he and his family can live decent lives.

Most pastors (except some on T.V.) and missionaries do not receive sufficient compensation to live in any "plush" lifestyle. It is up to us to see that they have a decent manner of living.

Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. For you and me, I suppose, this would be natural. For a Jew, it would be problematic. Not all households would be Jewish (or, at least, kosher Jews). Who knows what food would be set before them and how it might have been prepared!

This is the beginning of a principal which would be expounded at length later. First, it was explained to Peter.

But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."

Acts 10:14-15

Then, Paul expounded on it (with some exceptions).

Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being. Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness." If any of

those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."

1 Corinthians. 10:24-28

The old was passing away, the news was coming. The Law would be fulfilled, graces was on its way and this was one of its beginnings.

And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' They were to heal the sick as were the others and as Christ Himself did. They were also, using these healings as an entrance, announce the Kingdom of God.

But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. As before, if they were not received, they were not to leave the city with even a speck of dust (figuratively speaking) clinging to them. Why not. They were to have no ties with that city? Why not? There are two sides to an "altar call." You can accept it and be saved. You can reject it and, if you reject it enough times, you will never be saved. So Jesus told them, *Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'* *But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.* The Kingdom had been preached to them and they rejected it. For this reason, since the Lord was not giving them another chance, they would be worse of than Sodom.

How can you be worse off than that? Well, read on!

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be

more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."

Luke 10:13-24

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! We have been to Bethsaida before - it was that fishing village to which Jesus and His disciples retreated and near where He fed the 5000. Where was Chorazin? Who knows? It is only mentioned here and in the parallel passage in Matthew. It is not found in the Old Testament and no really knows for sure where it was. Is this strange? We are not really sure where Sodom and Gomorrah were since God destroyed them. I would assume the same may be true of Chorazin.

Let us review a bit. We begin with Sodom (from which we get the cursed term “sodomy.”) First, we are told the following.

But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord.

Genesis 13:13

Then, we find that these “Sodomites” were not very good fighting men for we are told the following.

Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

Genesis 14:10-12

Had not Abraham come and fought to free them, that would have been the end of the story. When the three angels visited Abraham, they had another chore - to go to Sodom to destroy it. But Abraham pleaded with them.

Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now

and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

Genesis 18:16-21

Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."

Genesis 18:32

So, there must have been ten men in the city who were not perverted (including Lot and his son-in-laws). So the time for the destruction came.

When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."

Genesis 19:15-17

Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Genesis 19:24-26

Jesus mentioned that no man who put his hand to the plow and looked back was fit for the kingdom of God. I guess, in a way, this

applied to Job's wife as well.

If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. Now two other cities are mentioned, Tyre and Sidon.

The first mention of these two cities together is in connection with the re-building of the temple.

They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia.

Ezra 3:7

Judgement is pronounced against it.

Because of the day that comes to plunder all the Philistines, To cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper who remains; For the Lord shall plunder the Philistines, The remnant of the country of Caphtor. Baldness has come upon Gaza, Ashkelon is cut off With the remnant of their valley. How long will you cut yourself? "O you sword of the Lord, How long until you are quiet? Put yourself up into your scabbard, Rest and be still! How can it be quiet, Seeing the Lord has given it a charge Against Ashkelon and against the seashore? There He has appointed it."

Jeremiah 47:4-7

There is no specific mention of the "mighty works" that were done there. Other than giving them jobs in the rebuilding of the temple, there were given nothing special from God. But, Jesus says that had such works been done, they would have repented in "sackcloth and ashes."

Some instances of this are found in the Old Testament.

When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

Esther 4:1-3

O daughter of my people, Dress in sackcloth And roll about in ashes! Make mourning as for an only son, most bitter lamentation; For the plunderer will suddenly come upon us.

Jeremiah 6:26

Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Daniel 9:3

Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

Jonah 3:6

It is of interest that the two do not always go together. There are far more Old Testament references sackcloth but not ashes (about 37 of them). On the other hand, the use of ashes without sackcloth is rare. Job sat in ashes (Job 2:8; Job 42:6) and there is one mention in Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:34). With respect to the what sackcloth was and how it was used, we note the following. The Greek is σάκκος (sakkos) which comes from the Hebrew שַׂק (saq).

This masculine noun is represented in the KJV forty-two times as "sackcloth," and six times as "sack," i.e. a bag which held grain or some other commodity. The word is used also in Akkadian, where it has the same two meanings, and came into English by way of Greek and Latin. šāq in the ancient world was a thick coarse cloth, usually dark in color and made mostly from goat's hair (though camel's hair was also used; cf. Matthew 3:4). The dark color is mentioned in Rev. 6:12 in the simile of the sun as being dark as sackcloth of hair. Sackcloth was used as a garment by mourners and those who wished to express contrition. It was worn in such a way as to leave the breast free for beating. Thus in Genesis 37:34 Jacob garbs himself in sackcloth to mourn for Joseph whom he supposes has been slain by a wild beast (cf. Isaiah 37:1). As a garment of grief and self-abasement, sackcloth was sometimes the dress of the prophet who preached a message of repentance (cf. Rev. 11:3). Such a sight would be a call to trembling and repentance. Both Elijah and John, preachers of repentance, wore garments of camel's skin (2 Kings 1:8; Matthew 3:4).

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

It was uses, as noted before, quite often in the Old Testament. As far as ashes are concerned, the word is τέφρα (tephra) which is also derived from the Hebrew עֲפְרָא (ephra).

The word is found twenty-one times in the OT. It has a wide variety of uses. It is often employed parallel to the similar-sounding word āpār (dust). It denotes that which is the result of burning. It is used figuratively for what is without value (Isaiah 44:20) or loathsome (Job 30:19). It signifies misery (Psalm 102:9, shame (2 Samuel 13:19), humility before God

(Genesis 18:27; Job 42:6), and repentance and contrition (Daniel 9:3; Matthew 11:21). Sackcloth and ashes were the usual indications of repentance and humility, often coupled with fasting (Job 42:6; Esther 4:1; 1). Ashes with dust were the customary signs of mourning (Isaiah 61:3). The mourner or penitent threw the ashes toward heaven, so that they fell back on himself, especially on his head, a custom attested among non-Hebrew also. In deep distress mourners sat on heaps of ashes (Job 2:8). Ashes on the head were also a token of humiliation and disgrace (2 Samuel 13:19).

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

Here, with both used together, it is a symbol of a strong desire for repentance and forgiveness.

But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." After stating that Tyre and Sidon would fare better in the judgement to come, He turns to Capernaum. His condemnation here is the greatest of all. Why?

For the last six chapters we have been observing the Lord's ministry in and about Capernaum. He has preached there many times. They have had more than adequate instruction from the Lord. But, it appears that, for the most part, the people in this city and the surrounding areas had rejected his teaching.

There are people who sit in churches Sunday after Sunday and hear the words of a faithful preacher of God's Word and yet do not really believe it and take it unto themselves. The same pronouncement is upon them as upon those at Capernaum.

Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons

are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. When the Twelve returned, they simply told Him all that they had done. The seventy, on the other hand, returned with joy and were amazed that even demons could be cast out by them in Jesus' name. Is there a lesson here. I believe when a person is "new in Christ" and Christ performs some miraculous act for them or through them, they are pleasantly surprised and rejoice. When we are "old" Christians we expect these things to happen and often don't even realize that they do happen.

We need to be alert and recognize what the Lord does in us and through us.

Jesus had a strange response. He said He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. The verb for "see" is θεωρέω (theoreo) and is in the imperfect tense. So, then, I ask, "When did He see this? Since the verb is in the imperfect, indicating action over a time, I believe He saw this every time one of the seventy cast out a demon. He was seeing Satan fall like "lightning" ἀστραπή (astrophe). The word will be found twice more in this book. It is used several times in Matthew. It is found four times in Revelation and is always associated with God and His temple.

We believe Satan has already fallen and, yet, he does appear in heaven at times.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.

Job 1:6

I believe this statement is to be taken figuratively. Each time one of the Seventy cast out a demon, Satan was, once again, defeated. It is somewhat like what Luke will tell us later.

I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

Having said this, Jesus continues with, “*Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy.*” Both of these creatures are noted in the Old Testament.

. . . who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock;

Deuteronomy 8:15

"For behold, I will send serpents among you, Vipers which cannot be charmed, And they shall bite you," says the Lord.

Jeremiah 8:17

The Seventy would, no doubt, have been familiar with the fact that the Lord had sent snakes and scorpions before to inflict the people. So, now, He was giving them the authority to trample them down. This was great, and on top of that, He said, “*and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*” This was great news. It must have been really good news to the Seventy.

There was a reason for Jesus revealing this to them. It was not so much for their assurance as it was meant to be a contrast with what He said next. *Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.*” We may rejoice in many things that the Lord does for us, and in us, and through us but the thing which should always be in the front of our minds is that we have been saved unto eternal life with the Lord. All the rest is secondary.

*Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

Habakkuk 3:18

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. The terms "wise" and "intelligent" ("prudent") are found together once in the Old Testament.

Therefore, behold, I will again do a marvelous work Among this people, A marvelous work and a wonder; For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, And the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden. "

Isaiah 29:14

In the New Testament they are found together one other place (besides a parallel passage in Matthew).

For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. "

1 Corinthians. 1:19

This is a direct quote from the previous passage. "Wise" is from σοφός (sophos) from which we get "sophisticated" and "philosophy." Both words pretty well indicate its meaning. "prudent" (or "intelligent") is from συνετός (sunetos) and refers to those who have "insight and comprehension, who can put things together"¹⁷ People may be "sophisticated" and yet not have any practical knowledge and vice versa. So, the Lord groups these both together. Instead, the Lord revealed Himself to "young children" (a better translation than "babes." Paul states a similar conclusion.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which

¹⁷Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon

are mighty;

1 Corinthians. 1:27

It is much easier to teach a child who has not become set in his ways than to teach someone who “knows it all.” The Scribes and the Pharisees knew all there was to know about God and the Old Testament (or so they thought) and were not open to new teachings.

His disciples were those who were not set in their ways and were open to His teachings. We, too, must not be so set in what we “think” is God’s word that we can not, or will not, learn from the study of the Scriptures.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. In a sense, Jesus admits the same thing for Himself. He did not use His own wisdom and intelligence to reach this conclusion, He looked to His Father for insight. This, too, we must do. We need to be open to the Word as we study, we need to be open to the word of the Father as we pray.

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

These words sound reasonable, but - this is the first time in this Gospel that Jesus, in effect, claims to be one with the Father. A.T Robertson says,

The relationship between the Father and the Son." in both Matthew and Luke, "an aerolite from the Johannean heaven." No sane criticism can get rid of this Johannine bit in these Gospels written long before the Fourth Gospel was composed. We are dealing here with the oldest known document about Christ (the Logia) and the picture is that drawn in the Fourth Gospel (see my The Christ of the Logia). It is idle to try to whittle away by fantastic exegesis the high claims made by Jesus in this passage. It is an ecstatic prayer in the presence of the Seventy under the rapture of the Holy Spirit on terms of perfect equality and understanding between the Father and the Son

in the tone of the priestly prayer in John 17. We are justified in saying that this prayer of supreme Fellowship with the Father in contemplation of final victory over Satan gives us a glimpse of the prayers with the Father when the Son spent whole nights on the mountain alone with the Father. Here is the Messianic consciousness in complete control and with perfect confidence in the outcome. Here as in Matthew 11:27 the Son claims the power to reveal the Father "to whomsoever he wills to will." This is divine sovereignty most assuredly. Human free agency is also true, but it is full divine sovereignty in salvation that is here claimed along with possession of all power from the Father. Let that supreme claim stand.

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the New Testament"

What Robertson is saying is that there are those who claim John's Gospel presents a different Christ than the Synoptic Gospels. Here is a specific proof this is not true. All claim that Christ was God.

Let me put it in a less technical way. I know things that only Gail knows and she knows things only I know. Some of these things we may reveal to others but some of them are only between her and I. Why is this?

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Matthew 19:5-6

Divorce has marred this picture greatly today but the Biblical principal is that husband and wife are one and therefore each knows what the other knows.

I and My Father are one."

John 10:30

Note, however, even a husband a wife, for the protection of the other, will keep something to himself or herself. The same is true between the Father and the Son.

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

Mark 13:32

This is also found in Matthew 24:36.

Jesus finishes up this section with the following. *Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."* Let us begin by noting that this is past tense. Up to that time no one had heard or seen it. Since then, you and I and many others have heard it (but not actually seen it).

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"

"And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Luke 10:25-29

A "certain lawyer" stood up. We are not given his name. He was not a member of the "bar association" but one who dealt with Jewish religious law. His purpose in standing up was to "test" Jesus. "Test" is from ἐκπειράζω (ekpeirazo) which was used back in

Luke 4:7 & 12 and means to tempt, to try to “trip up.” This man was not just testing Jesus to see what He would do, he was attempting to make Jesus do something wrong. His question was, *“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”* So far as we know, no one ever asked Him that question before. As a matter-of-fact, the assurance of “eternal life” is presented only in John’s Gospel other than this instance and its parallel in Matthew and Mark.

We know this man was off on the wrong foot to begin with, as he asked what he had “to do.” What do you have to do to inherit eternal life? Nothing (other than believing)!

This man was a “lawyer” so Jesus, wisely, asks him what the Law has to say with respect to his question. He not only asks him what is written in the law. The rabbis had a formula, “What readest thou?” meaning, “How do you interpret it?” The lawyer responds by quoting.

*“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your strength.”* Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Then he quotes from Leviticus.

*You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge
against the children of your people, but you shall love
your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.* Leviticus 19:18

On a later occasion the situation is reversed.

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

So, Jesus confirms here that the lawyer had quite properly cited the most important points of the Mosaic Law. If you don't think so, note that Jesus said to him, "*You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.*" Jesus had to say nothing. The lawyer had answered his own question. This, however, was not what the lawyer had in mind since he wanted to trip Jesus up.

But he, wanting to justify himself. . ." Implied in this statement is the fact that he wanted to so Jesus as being "unjustified." In other words, he was right and Jesus was wrong. So, he asked yet another question, "*And who is my neighbor?*"

Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."



The Good Samaritan

Thus we get into the account of the ~~Good~~ Merciful Samaritan. Note that, for reasons to be seen, I have changed the name. The account here is, most likely, not an actual account but a parable. Note that parables bare no names for the people with the exception of the “Rich man and Lazarus” which may not be a true parable. Some think that this was not a true parable but actually happened. It could have because this particular road was notorious for such acts.

This begins by a man who went from Jerusalem to Jericho. This was not a long journey, only about 15 miles. during this short one day’s journey, the man was robbed and beaten to the point where he was more dead than alive. Luke says he was “half dead,” a literal translation of the term used by Dr. Luke. He was beaten badly enough that he was unable to go for help.

The parable then includes three other people.

- *Now by chance a certain priest*
- *Likewise a Levite*
- *But a certain Samaritan*

So we have a “certain” priest, Levite, and Samaritan.

We have previously discussed who the Levites were. The priests, from ἱερεῖς (heireus) were associated with the temple (and hence the Greek word for “priest” is derived from the word for temple). While Jesus had predicted that the “chief priests” would be responsible for His death (chapter 9), so far none had interfered with His ministry. I presume that they remained at or near the temple most of the time.

Here a priest was on the way to Jericho, for what reason we are not told, nor is it important. Three actions are recorded for this priest.

- he “came down” (the road)

- he “saw” him
- he “passed by” (“on the other side”).

The priest was on his way to Jericho. How do we know? Because Luke says he was κατὰβαίνω (katabaino), “coming down.” Now, if you check the Scriptures carefully “down” is away from Jerusalem, “up” is toward it. Thirty-three times (at least) the term is used (2 Samuel 19:34; 1 Kings 12:28; 2 Kings 12:17; 2 Kings 16:5; 2 Kings 18:17; 2 Kings 24:10; 2 Chron. 2:16; Ezra 1:3; Ezra 7:7; Ezra 7:13; Isaiah 7:1; Zech. 14:17; Matthew 20:17-18; Mark 10:32-33; Luke 2:22; Luke 2:42; Luke 18:31; Luke 19:28; John 2:13; John 5:1; John 11:55; Acts 11:2; Acts 15:2; Acts 21:4; Acts 21:12; Acts 21:15; Acts 24:11; Acts 25:1; Acts 25:9; Galatians 1:17-18) Five times we have the phrase “coming down from Jerusalem.” (Mark 3:22; Luke 10:30; Acts 8:26; Acts 11:27; Acts 25) Nowhere are the terms interchanged. I suspect that, since a different term for “came” is used, was going the other way.

Regardless of the direction, both men “saw” the injured man. But both men did something that no one else in the New Testament did. They ἀντιπαρέρχομαι (antiparerechomai) him. This is one of those triple compounded words both Paul and Luke are fond of. It starts out with ἐρχομαι (erchomai) which means “to come” or “to go” (i.e. there is no particular direction associated with the word). Then, you add παρα (para) = along side and you have to pass along side of someone or something in your travel. Finally, the other prefix, ἀντι (anti), means the same in English as in Greek. Thus, instead of passing “by” someone it is “passing away” from someone - avoiding them. It is pretending that you didn’t see them and simply passed by.

Why did the priest not stop? We are not told but there is one thing we might note. We are told that the man was “wounded” which would mean he was bleeding, perhaps quite profusely since, later, the Samaritan *bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine*. As to the priest?

'When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean. And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge--whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

And whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. He who sits on anything on which he who has the discharge sat shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. And he who touches the body of him who has the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

Any saddle on which he who has the discharge rides shall be unclean. Whoever touches anything that was under him shall be unclean until evening. He who carries any of those things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

Leviticus 15:2-3, 5-7, 9-10

This priest certainly could do nothing that would cause him to be unclean. He might have some temple service to perform and this would get in the way of that. And, of course, which is more important - serving the Lord in the temple or working with some poor fellow along the road who would probably die anyway?

With the Levite, we have the same three items as for the priest but, in addition, a fourth.

- he “arrived” (at the place)

The Levite, in addition, “arrived at the place.” The implication is that he paused there for a time and studied the injured man. He probably looked at the injured man and then decided not to be involved.

At this point you may want to know what the difference is between

a Levite and a priest. A priest was a Levite. Not all Levites were priests. We note the following.

"Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may serve him. And they shall attend to his needs and the needs of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of meeting, to do the work of the tabernacle. Also they shall attend to all the furnishings of the tabernacle of meeting, and to the needs of the children of Israel, to do the work of the tabernacle. And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are given entirely to him from among the children of Israel.

Numbers 3:6-9

So, this man was not a priest, you might say he was a "lay person." There would be no especial reason why he could not become "unclean" for the day. Perhaps, that is why he paused to give it some thought. He decided not to get involved - after all, as a Levite, he did have a lot of "church duties" to attend to. Let someone who has nothing else to do take care of this man!

Do we, as Christians, get so involved in our church "work" that we do not have time to do some of the things the Lord has laid in front of us, intending for us to do them? Are we so busy with the work of the church we have no time to render mercy?

*Blessed are the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.*

Matthew 5:7

Then comes the "Merciful Samaritan." (He is not called that here - we call him that). His "designation" has even entered our law books - we have the Good Samaritan doctrine, which, according to Black's Law 7th edition, is *'The principle that a person who is injured while attempting to aid another in imminent danger and who then sues the one whose negligence created the danger, will not be charged with*

contributory negligence unless the rescue attempt is an unreasonable one or the rescuer acts unreasonably in performing the attempted rescue.' In other words, we have laws to protect Good Samaritans today. There was none then.

This man was “traveling” along the road. ὁδεύω (hodeuo) is used only here in the New Testament. It is derived from the Greek word for “road” and hence one who is using a “road” It implies that he was on a long trip as contrasted with traveling a short distance (i.e. Jerusalem to Jericho). Remember that the road from Jerusalem to Jericho did not pass through Samaria. Why then was the Samaritan there? Perhaps the Lord arranged for him to be there (in this parable anyway).

In spite of the fact that this Samaritan probably had a long ways to go yet, he stopped. *When he saw him, he had compassion.* Three people in the New Testament: this Samaritan, the father of the “Prodigal Son,” (another parable) and the Lord Himself. It is an interesting word, σπλαγχνίζομαι (splanxnizomai). We saw the noun form of this word in Luke 9:23 where we noted it referred to ones bowels. In the verb form, it refers to one being moved in their bowels (no, not a bowel movement!) It means it “turned his stomach” to see this man in such a condition. It is a condition that one can not ignore (the priest and the Levite did not experience this condition).

It is interesting that this parable is only found in Luke’s Gospel. What comes next may explain it. *So he went to him and bandaged his wounds.* Being a physician, Luke would have noted such an event. In fact, two of the words here are not found elsewhere in Scripture. First is καταδέω (katadeo) which is a coumpound word, “to bind” and “up.” Most of the translations, including the NKJV, have “bandaged” which is most likely a good term for the binding up on a wound. “Wound” is from τραῦμα (trauma) from which we get, of course, “trauma.” A medical dictionary says it is “a wound,

an injury inflicted, usually suddenly by some physical agent."¹⁸ He bandaged the man to keep him from bleeding to death.

Luke, as a physician, would have taken interest in this parable and the medical practice of this Samaritan. His next act was *pouring on oil and wine*. Now I would have used iodine or something else (I am out-of-date when it comes to medical treatment. They had no such medicines in those days. "pouring on" is also from a Greek word used nowhere else (we will not note it). The "oil" was most likely olive oil. According to Robertson, *Oil and wine were household remedies even for wounds (soothing oil, antiseptic alcohol). Hippocrates prescribed for ulcers: "Bind with soft wool, and sprinkle with wine and oil."*¹⁹

Having been the "paramedic" on the scene, he could have left him there. But he went even further than required. *He set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him*. He put him on his animal and "transported" the man to the nearest "trauma center" which, in those days, would be an inn. It seems a bit strange to find an inn on a road that is only about 15 miles long - a half day's journey. But Robertson points out, *"There are ruins of two inns about halfway between Bethany and Jericho"*³ The Samaritan remained overnight with the man, tending his injuries. That should have been enough. Presumably the man would be well enough to take care of himself by then. But, *on the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'*

It seems to me there was something remarkable about this man. This is especially true in view of what we know about Samaritans.

. . . For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. John 4:9b

¹⁸Stedman's Shorter Medical Dictionary

¹⁹Robertson, Word Pictures in the N.T.

I do not believe this Samaritan had a Visa or Master card to pay his bills. There were no credit ratings in those days and, if there were, the Samaritans would not be good credit risks among the Jews. The words "I will repay" are emphatic in the Greek.

You must note the words, "when I come again." Apparently this Samaritan traveled this road often and was known to the inn keeper. There is no other way this inn keeper would agree to such a thing. It is important to have a good reputation.

I can not help but preach a little here. When we go to a restaurant or motel or hotel (i.e. an inn), we are not only supposed to pay our bills but we are to tip certain people (waiters, etc.). As a Christian you should do one of two things: (1) not let anyone know you are a Christian, or, better yet (2) be sure you give an adequate tip. I am afraid there are too many Christians who fail to do this and do nothing in encouraging the unsaved to learn about Christ.

There are those who "tip" by leaving "The Four Spiritual Laws" as a tip - after all, this is more important than money! It is great to leave a tract such as this but be sure you leave a good monetary tip as well. This Samaritan, even though the Jews have no dealings with them, had build up a good reputation with the inn keeper.

So, however long it took this man to heal, he had been provided for, much more adequately that one would expect. So ends the parable (assuming it was not a true story).

So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." We return to the question as to who was a good neighbor. The lawyer answered, apparently immediately, the one who showed mercy. That's it - they lawyer had no more to say - and neither do I.

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha

welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:38-42

We need not mention the words “happened” and “certain” as we have seen them over and over again. These “certain” things “happen” because the Lord has ordained that they should.

This “certain” woman was named “Martha” which is a Greek name (Μάρθα = martha). The name appears to come from a Hebrew or Chaldean name for “mistress.” It was she that welcomed Christ into “her” house and so it would appear that she really was the “mistress” of the house. Luke uses an unusual word for “welcome.” The normal word is δέχομαι (dexomai) but here us prefixed, ὑποδέχομαι (hupodexomai) - “to receive from below.”

The exact sense of this is not clear. The nearest contortion is that she received Him under her roof and thus made Him at home there. It is more than just saying “hello,” it is taking one in to ones home and making them welcome.

Now we meet yet another “Mary.” *She had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.* Let’s get one point clear. It says the “also” sat at Jesus’ feet. Martha must have done so also. They were both sitting there but there was a difference between the sisters.

Mary:	<i>heard His word</i>
Martha	<i>was distracted with much serving</i>

It is very important that you note that they were both sitting at Jesus’

feet. Translators often omit this. The NASB and NIV pay no attention to the Greek connective *καί* (*kai*) which, in this construction means “also.” His words were entering both sets of ears. In Mary’s case, the words went from her ears up the nerve stem and into her brain and as a result she “heard His word.” There is a difference between a sound entering one’s ears and actually hearing it. You would be surprised to know how many times Gail tells (asks?) me to take out the garbage or do some other task and the words enter my ears (which aren’t working as good these days) but they seldom seem to actually enter my brain where I hear them.

Turning to Martha, the words were entering her ears as well but her brain was miles away. She was “distracted with much serving.” It is very interesting how many words in the last part of this chapter are used nowhere else in the Bible. “Distracted” is *περισπάω* (*perispao*). The word means to be “drawn around” - drawn around to other things. Hence, “distracted” is a good translation.

“Service” is the word from which we get “deacon.” I wonder on any given Sunday, how many wives are concentrating what they are going to fix for lunch that day rather than hearing the message. I also wonder how many men are thinking about how well they might do on their golf game that afternoon. Our eyes are on the pastor - his words are entering our ears, but we are hearing something else. Before you get too hard on Martha, consider what your attitude is at times.

Anyway, her thoughts about what had to be done with Jesus staying with them got the best of her and she rose to her feet and *approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."* It was twelve Noon and time for lunch, time for the message to be over. She asked the Lord to send Mary to help her with the preparations.

*Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. "Worried" is a fairly common word in the Greek - one might use "concerned" instead. In addition to that she was "troubled." The verb, *θορυβάζω* (*thorubazo*) is used only*

here but the noun form of the word is used a number of times in the Scriptures and is translated “riot,” “uproar,” “tumult” and with similar words. In this case, the “tumult” was within. She had graciously invited the Lord to come in and stay but her sister is doing nothing about making any preparations. No wonder she was in such a dither.

"Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." With respect to Mary choosing the “good part,” A. T. Robertson says, *“The good portion (tēn agathēn merīda). The best dish on the table, fellowship with Jesus. This is the spiritual application of the metaphor of the dishes on the table. Salvation is not “the good portion” for Martha had that also.*²⁰ Do you realize how often we get so busy with “church work” that we have no time for the one that the church is all about - Jesus Christ?

It is possible to get so involved in what seem to be good and necessary things in the Lord’s work and reach the point where we have no time for Him. We must not get so busy that we have no time for the Lord.

²⁰A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the N.T.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

Luke 11:1-4

As we have seen many times before, Jesus was "praying in a certain place." When he was done, one of the disciples had a request: "Lord, teach us to pray." I don't like to be "sensational" here but this was a stupid request. Why? What was his reason for asking? Did he have some need he wanted to pray for? No, it just that John the Baptist had taught his disciples how to pray and so he wanted instruction too. Jesus had neglected to teach them.

Why was this stupid? Because all they had to do if they had a need was ask Jesus about it. They did not need formal prayer like John's disciples practiced. They had the Lord in their midst and all they had to do was ask. As we shall see, it is the same with us. You do not have to pray in any formal manner. The Jews did.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

Daniel 6:10

Today, if they can, the Jews flock to the Wailing Wall to pray. The Moslems must face in the right direction as they prostrate themselves

to pray. It is the same in many religions. The disciples did need this at all.

Nevertheless, Jesus answered their request and gave them instructions in how to pray. He did not give them a prayer to recite. He gave them an outline showing what should be included. He also gave them something else. You will note in the prayer the words, “us” and “we.” When you and I pray in private, we need no prescription for prayer. We may simply ask the Lord for our needs as they arise. If you are driving down a busy freeway and you get a flat tire, you do not have to get out of your car and kneel down to pray for the Lord’s help - you simply pray, “Lord, help me out of this mess!”

The prayer outline, then, is for public prayer, not personal prayer. It is different in the version here and that in Matthew 6. This is shown in the parallel passages below.

*Father
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.

Give us day by day our daily
bread.
And forgive us our sins,
For we also forgive everyone
who is indebted to us.
And do not lead us into
temptation.*

Luke

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
 On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.

And do not lead us into
temptation,
But deliver us from the evil
one.*

Matthew

The first line in Matthew’s account is more formal and may be what the Lord actually taught them. Luke’s version may be what was actually practiced by the time his gospel was written. Note, again, in

Matthew, it is “Our Father,” not “My Father.” It is a prayer to be given in public (i.e. in groups).

The first word of the prayer is significant - “Father.” I know of no other religion on the face of this earth where one may address the “Supreme Being” with the word “Father.”

Mark records the following prayer of Jesus.

And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

Mark 14:36

Jesus was even more intimate with the word “Abba.” This is the Hebrew (or Aramaic) form of the word for “father.” The use of both words together is both interesting and problematic. It is problematic because if you were to translate both words you would have “father father.” It is believed by some that Jesus regularly prayed this way but it is only recorded this way here.

The usage of it continued.

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

Romans 8:15

Luke just has “Father.” Jesus may have used the term “abba father” but not wishing to double up on “father” omits it. On the other hand, Jesus may not have used it here and hence Matthew’s addition “in heaven.” A literal translation from Matthew is “Our Father - the one that is in heaven:” i.e. not the one we have here on earth.

“Hallowed be your name.” ἁγιαζω (hagiazo) is a common Greek verb and it is used to separate the profane from the sacred. In other words, the prayer is asking (the verb is in the imperative) that God’s name would not be used in profane ways - they might be held in

reverence. Unfortunately, that request has not been granted because there are many, far too many, who use the Lord's name in the wrong way!

As Christians, we need to do our part to maintain this distinction. Is it alright for a Christian to "curse, swear, or use other expletives?" Ideally, no! I don't know of any who do not at some appropriate time. Saying "damn it" or "O hell," however, is quite different from saying "God, damn it," of using the Lord's name in some other inappropriate way. Again, this is not to say that it is ok for us to use these other forms, we just do!

Matthew adds: *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Why does he include it and Luke does not? You will have to ask them when you get to heaven. It is not an essential part of the prayer. God's will will be done on earth regardless of what we do.

The next part of the prayer is worded differently in the two passages. "Give us" and "our daily bread" are the same. This difference is that Luke has "day by day" The though is the same. We do not ask, "Give us bread for all month!" We are only to ask for what we need today. It has always been that way!

When the Lord provided daily bread for the Israelites in the form of Manna.

"I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God.' " So it was that quails came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground. . . .And Moses said, "Let no one leave any of it till morning." Notwithstanding they did not heed Moses. But some of them left part of it until morning, and it bred worms

and stank. And Moses was angry with them.

Exodus 16:12-14 & 19-20

They were to be satisfied with enough for one day. The Lord would provide again for the next day. We, too, need to be satisfied with the needs of today. This is what Jesus told us.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:34

This part of the prayer is not about “bread” as this is just an outline of how we ought to pray. “Bread” is to be taken as being typical of all our needs for that day.

So, after properly greeting the Lord, we ask for what we need that day. We ask for what we need, not what we “want.”

The next part of the prayer has even more variations:

Luke has:

And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

Matthew has:

And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors

The more “orthodox” churches have

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.

Where does this later version come from? Immediately following the prayer in Matthew, we have the following.

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do

not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:14-15

We have three different words - do we have three different meanings and interpretations? Trench has this to say (with respect to these three words).

A MOURNFULLY numerous group of words, and one which it would be only too easy to make larger still. Nor is it hard to see why. For sin . . . may be regarded under an infinite number of aspects, and in all languages has been so regarded; and as the diagnosis of it belongs most of all to the Scriptures, nowhere else are we likely to find it contemplated on so many sides, set forth under such various images. It may be regarded as the missing of a mark or aim; it is then ἁμαρτία (hamartia)[translated “sin”]. Falling where one should have stood upright; this will be παράπτωμα (paraptoma) [Translated “trespass”]

Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament

“Debts” is from ὀφείλημα (hophilema) - that which is owed. These may be monetary debts but, more commonly, social debts of offences (they may include monetary debts). All of these are, more or less, synonymous. In Luke it is apparent that “sins” and “indebtedness” are synonyms.

The bottom line here is that if someone has offended us, we are to forgive them and vice-versa. Note that it is a two way street - initiated by us - as we forgive...!

- So, after asking for our needs, we are to ask for forgiveness as our short comings. In you prefer the word “sins,” that is ok too.

Luke concludes the prayer with *And do not lead us into temptation.*

We have asked for forgiveness of our short comings and we continue by asking that the Lord would help us avoid future ones. The two go together. We are not to confess our sins and be made clean and then go out and sin some more. There are those who do so on a regular basis (in another church denomination). There are those who do so in all congregations. Asking for forgiveness involves the determination to not make the same mistakes again (we can find enough new ones to make!)

Matthew adds *But deliver us from the evil one.* this is somewhat superfluous since keeping us from temptation is keeping us from the evil one.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the Glory, forever, amen. Where did that come from? I have no idea. Someone at some later time must have thought it was a fitting end to such a prayer. But, we have not been studying “a prayer” but an outline of what we are to do. To summarize, we are to:

- Greet our Father, respectfully
- Ask for our needs for the day
- Ask for forgiveness of our short comings (and forgiving others in the process)
- Ask for deliverance from future temptations.

The pray, then, simply involves the need for things and the need for forgiveness and deliverance. It is a simple prayer. Today, the “Prayer of Jabez” is a hot item. You can even order 13 week Bible studies on Jabez’ prayer. What did he pray?

Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

I don't know what the attraction is. We are supposed to ask for what we need today. Jabez prayed for much more, *bless me indeed, and*

enlarge my territory. He did pray that he world not be tempted, *You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!* but he did not ask for forgiveness for what he had already messed up! Finally, he did not properly address his Father! You can have Jabes' prayer, I'll stick with this one!

The reason the churches love this prayer today is because many of those who possess Christ as the Lord and Savior (as well as all those who only profess to know Him) have changed the emphasis of Christianity. It is no more "what the Lord will do through me" (for the benefit of others) but "what the Lord will do for me."

And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Luke 11:5-10

Jesus continues with His discourse on prayer. Now it is not an outline for prayer, it is an attitude for prayer. He gives a parable (of sorts) in which one of them might go to a friends house at midnight. For some people I know, that would be no problem but for people in those days, they would have all been in bed.

He asks the he lend him three loaves of bread. Of course, you can not return bread that has been eaten but you can return it in kind.

The word for “lend” here is not the usual one, it is κίχρει (Kichremi) and means “to lend without interest, to give the use of.” The response of the neighbor is thus:

- *'Do not trouble me;*
- *the door is now shut,*
- *and my children are with me in bed;*
- *I cannot rise and give to you'*

“Do not trouble me” is not a good translation. It would be better translated, “Do not bring me to doing extra work.” He had done his work for the day - he was through.

“The door is now shut” We have an interesting use of this phrase in Revelation.

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens': I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

Revelation 3:7-8

There are several implications here. The door was not only shut, but locked. The idiom is mindful of what one finds at a store. If the door is shut and locked, you are out of luck - all work for the day has ceased and they door will not be opened.

“My children are with me in bed.” If you have had children, you know when you finally get them to sleep at night, you do not wish to disturb them. Getting up in this case would have surely aroused the children as well!

“I cannot rise and give to you” also means “I will not rise and give to you.”

Well, this is a pretty bleak picture. There is no way that this man is going to get any bread. Well, let's go on with what Jesus had to say.

- *he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend,*
- *yet because of his persistence he will rise*
- *give him as many as he needs.*

We have already determined that, though the man be a friend, he is not about to get up in the middle of the night and get anything from his friend.

There is a key word in the next part "persistence." The word is ἀναίδεια (anaideai) which is found only here. It is derived from αἰδώς (aidos) which is found in 1 Timothy.

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes,

1 Timothy 2:9

The word means "shamelessness" or "impudence," both of which have a rather negative connotation. It is translated "importunity" in Luke 18:1-7 which we shall study later.

The lesson is that prayer is sometimes answered the same way this neighbor's needs were answered - through persistence in prayer. Sometimes we may pray just once for something, but usually it requires persistence.

So, Jesus continues with the following:

- *ask, and it will be given to you;*
- *seek, and you will find;*
- *knock, and it will be opened to you.*

For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

We could begin with a study of the word in this trio of statements but that would be of little value - the words are as common in Greek as they are in English. If you wish to be successful in prayer, however, you must do these three things.

First, you must “ask.” James shows us the other side of the picture.

. . . Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

James 4:2

When you were a child, you probably asked for things for Christmas (probably a lot of things). If you were on “Santa’s” good list, you were likely to find some of these under the tree on Christmas morning. If you did not ask, they would not be there. How often have you needed something but failed to ask the greatest of all givers, the Lord Himself?

After this triad of things, Jesus gives an explanation to them. The explanations for the last two follow the original. The explanation for this first, “asking” does not. He instructs us to “ask and it will be given.” - it will be under our Christmas tree. It does not end there. In the explanation He says that the one who “asks receives.” There are two parts of the act. If you leave the present under the tree, it will do you no good. You have to “receive” it. I am afraid sometimes we ask for things, the Lord provides them, but we fail to see them and take them to ourselves. We must be able to see answers to our prayers when the Lord provides them.

“Asking” with reference to prayer makes sense. Where does “seeking” come in? How often do you “ask” for something in prayer and seem to receive no answer? Is it because the Lord did not answer? Sometimes the Lord’s answer is “No!” Have you ever considered that the Lord did answer your prayer but it is not obvious to you that He did? Sometimes the Lord expects us to do our part in the process.

Suppose you asked the Lord to find you another home for some reason. You ask the Lord for this and wait - and wait, and still no

home shows up! Did you bother to go out and look at any homes? How would the Lord answer this prayer unless you actively “seek” one. You will not “find” what you have asked for (and the Lord has provided) and unless you “seek” for it.

“Knock” falls into the same category. You have prayed for another job. You wait and wait for a new job to be offered to you but none comes. Unless you go “knocking” at a few doors, you will never have a new job “opened up” for you. We can break the process into three parts:

- ASK - It is up to the Lord to give: it is up to you to receive.
- SEEK - It is up to you to seek and to find the answers
- KNOCK - It is up to you to knock and have it opened to you.

If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Luke 11:11-13

Jesus continues on the subject of prayer. He begins with the actions of a human father. He lists things the son may ask for and the things the father is not likely to give in return

- BREAD A stone
- FISH A serpent
- EGG A scorpion

Note that all of these are food, basic food, not luxuries. Note also that the newer texts do not have the part about the bread - but Matthew does (Matthew 7:9) - Matthew does not mention the egg.

Note also that they way these questions are asked in the Greek expects the answers to be no - which should not be a surprise to anyone.

Why the Lord uses these three things is not really known. It is probably not very important to know. I would guess that there is a connection. A loaf of bread and a stone can have a similar appearance. A Serpent is a form of sea life like a fish and so, in that sense, is similar. In the Bible, the serpent is usually a figure of Satan. The connection between the egg and the scorpion is a bit more difficult. Perhaps scorpions may be found where one would go looking for eggs. Other than that I have no idea of the connection. When we get to heaven, we can ask the Lord what the connection is.

Obviously, no father in his right mind would do such a things. So Jesus clenches the argument that, if we know hoe do give good things to our children, should God not know even more so? Do not forget, however one word that is used four times in his passage - "ask." The first step is asking!

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falls. If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you say I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him

and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

Luke 11:14-23

Again, Jesus cast out a demon. In this case, Luke writes *it was mute*. This assumes the demon was mute. Recall in all previous cases the demon cried out not to be disturbed. There is no record of any conversation. When the demon had been cast out, Luke writes, *the mute spoke* which indicates that the man spoke. Apparently the muteness of the demon had been transferred to the man. This is consistent with previous cases where the demon spoke through the possessed person.

As before, many marveled at this. But, now, we have the beginnings of another group. *some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."* We even have a third group. *Others, testing Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.* We still have these same groups.

Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was a division among the people because of Him. Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

John 7:40-44

There were those who believed. There were those who did not believe. Finally, there were those who wanted more information in order to decide.

The second group claimed He cast out demons by Beelzebub. The

meaning or source of this name is unknown. Roberston says this.

The etymology of the word is also unknown, whether “lord of a dwelling” with a pun on “the master of the house” or “lord of flies” or “lord of dung” or “lord of idolatrous sacrifices.” It is evidently a term of reproach. “An opprobrious epithet; exact form of the word and meaning of the name have given more trouble to commentators than it is all worth” (Bruce).

Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the New Testament*”

The term is also found in Matthew 12:24 & 27 and in Mark 3:22. What ever the source of the word, he is one of Satan’s henchman, if not another name of Satan himself.

As before, He perceived the thoughts of the crowd. He then uses an analogy of a kingdom or house (themselves analogies). First, *“Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.”* We have firsthand knowledge of this. We are currently attempting to bring down nations who harbor terrorism by training rebels and supplying them with arms with the hopes that the nation will bring itself down to desolation so a new government may be setup.

Today, Jesus might have said “a house divided again a house ends in divorce.” This is also, sadly, the case today. There is too much in the world, and Satan is too active to avert such tragedies.

If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? If Satan is the one who is responsible for casting out his demons, how can that last? If a general went around shooting his own troops, where would that lead?

Now He has them in a corner. If, as they suggest, He is able to cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub, who is it that enables them to do so? They would not have dared to say that they also cast out demons in the name of Bellzebub, but they could also not claim to to it in God’s name then either.

If it is the name of God that allows Jesus to cast out demons, then they have the very God in their midst. His presence is the same as the presence of the Living God. So, *surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. “Fully armed” comes from καθοπλία (kathoplia) which is related to a similar word with a different prefix πανοπλία (panoplia) which Paul uses.

*Put on the **whole armor** of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the **whole armor** of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

Ephesians 6:11-13

He then contrasts a “strong man” with a “stronger man.” It is not enough for us to be strong, we have to have the strength to overcome the evil one who, himself, has great strength. John writes this.

*I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. **I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.***

1 John 2:13-14

We must be the stronger to overcome. If we are not, Satan will come and “spoil” our fellowship with the Father. We have two choices, *He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.*

"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Luke 11:24-28

Jesus begins an interesting simile. He speaks of an unclean spirit who has been cast out of a person. We have seen the results before, especially those who were cast into pigs and drowned. Here He says, the spirit goes through “dry places,” a literal translation of the Greek. These places were deserts in which no one, not even a spirit, would wish to live.

Finding this place uninhabitable, he decides to return to the person from whom he was cast out. What does he find? Two things: it was swept, it was put in order.

“Swept” is found in the parallel passage of Matthew and also in the following:

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and

search carefully until she finds it?

To “sweep” is σαρώω (sarao) which means to “remove as with a broom.” It “empties the house” so something else may occupy it. to “put it order” is somewhat misleading here. The word is κοσμέο (kosmeo) from which we get the word “cosmetics.” Thus we find better translations of it in the following verses.

*in like manner also, that the women **adorn** themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,*

1 Timothy 2:9

*For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also **adorned** themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*

1 Peter 3:5

*Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride **adorned** for her husband.*

Revelation 21:2

The demon comes into the house and looks around. It is like a house prepared for a real estate tour. You know, I have never seen a house on such a tour that would probably look that way when someone was living in it. Everything is cleaned and in its place. Everything is perfect. This is what the Lord is describing.

So, he leaves the real estate agent and *he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there.* Why not? The place is perfect and these other demons may as well live there too. This would not be so sad if this “house” were not a person. It is a person from who one spirit has been taken but another spirit not taken its place. For this I think of the

following:

For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

1 Thessalonians 1:9

It is not enough to leave what is evil, one must turn to that which is good. If you leave yourself with a vacuum, it will soon be filled with more of what you had to begin with!

Jesus concludes this with *the last state of that man is worse than the first.*" You are either with Satan or with God. There is no permanent middle ground. Israel had seen many with demons cast out, Those who had the demons cast out had a chance to turn to God. Those who had not yet been possessed of a demon had a chance to turn to God. But few in Israel did so! Few in the world today do so!

And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.

Luke 11:29-32

There is some pretty heavy theology in this section. Let us break it down into its several parts. First there is the "sign" and, specifically, the "Sign of Jonah."

A "Sign" is, usually, some supernatural occurrence that confirms what has been said. Paul wrote an interesting statement regarding this.

For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;

1 Corinthians. 1:22

Signs are for Israel, not for you and I. There were several signs given to Israel.

And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

Genesis 9:12-13

and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.

Genesis 17:11

Moreover the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord!" Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:10-14

So we have signs that indicate there will be no more floods, a sign to indicate whether a man be an Israelite or not, and the sign of the coming Messiah. There are no signs given to us (until we reach

Revelation). In this case, we have the “sign of Jonah.:

A.T. Robertson writes:

Luke does not give here the burial and resurrection of Jesus of which Jonah’s experience in the big fish was a type (Matthew 12:39ff.), but that is really implied (Plummer argues) by the use here of “shall be given” and “shall be”, for the resurrection of Jesus is still future. The preaching of Jesus ought to have been sign enough as in the case of Jonah, but the resurrection will be given. Luke’s report is much briefer and omits what is in Matthew 12:41.

A.T. Roberston, “Word Pictures in the Greek N.T.”

What he is saying is that Jesus, like Jonah, preached repentance. But the real preaching of repentance did not come until after Jesus’ crucifixion. This was the case with Jonah. He was, for all practical purposes, dead and buried for two nights and three days before he finally went and Nineveh heard the message.

The “Queen of the South” here is a rather obvious reference to the Queen of Sheba. When she visited Solomon, we find the following.

*Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions. She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, **there was no more spirit in her.** Then she said to the king: "It*

*was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! **Blessed be the Lord your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the Lord has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.***

1 Kings 10:1-9

This pagan queen came to Solomon and, seeing what she saw and hearing what she heard, she could come to no other conclusion than Solomon was, indeed, blessed by the Most High God and that the Lord established him for the purpose. Israel, on the other hand, had heard Jesus for quite some time now and had still not recognized Him.

And indeed a greater than Solomon is here. If the Queen of Sheba (the South) recognized this in Solomon, a mere human, how much more the Jesus should have recognized Jesus. In the same sense, Luke quotes Jesus, *The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*

So, we have a queen who recognized the works of God, an entire city that recognized God's message and repented. These people all perceived the works of God and yet these Galileans, for the most part, rejected Jesus as the Messiah in spite of the many miracles which He performed and which could only have come from God.

Jesus has now began to publicly proclaim His rejections and the work that will be done on the cross.

"No one, when he has lit a lamp, puts it in a secret

place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light."

Luke 11:33-36

In Luke 8:16 we saw the image of a lamp and a lampstand. He again repeats this imagery. But, this time he continues on with it. He says the "lamp of the body is the eye." If you consider this in a figurative senses, which is the way it is to be taken, The only way light can enter your body is through your eyes. Now, there is no physical light inside your body (except near the surface) but the light is transformed into nerve impulses which pass though the body, mostly to the brain. Therefore, the only way you mind and heart can be illuminated is through the eye.

Pastor Jim has a poem he reads from time to time about rather seeing a sermon than hearing one. There is the old saying "I can't hear what you are saying because of what I see you doing. Anyone could have gone through Galilee and preached what Jesus preached - perhaps without such authority - but no one could have done the things he did in the sight of many witnesses.

when your eye is good, your whole body also is full of light. We often see what we want to see. If our "eye is good" we see what is true and honest. If our eye is bad we see only what we want to see and the result is that we do not really understand what is going on. We are full of darkness.

Jesus encourages us to open our eyes to the truth. If we are open to the truth, *the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright*

shining of a lamp gives you light." We have the truth in our Bible and we can have our eyes open to this truth simply by reading the Scriptures with an open mind.

And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. When the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness. Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you. But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them."

Luke 11:37-44

This is the second (recorded) occasion where Christ dines with a Pharisee. There are some similarities and some differences. In the first case (Luke 7:44), Jesus criticized the master of the house, "*you gave Me no water for My feet,*" Here it is the Pharisee that *marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.*

Pharisees of all ages, those in the time of Christ, those "pharisees" of today, are all the same. Jesus gave them an example of what they do. *Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.* Consider this example. When I work out in the field, I take a can of Coke or a bottle with diluted fruit juice. The outside of the can or bottle gets covered with dirt and weeds and mud - it is hard to prevent this. I

make sure, however, that the inside and the mouth of the bottle are clean. There are parts that matter - there are parts that do not matter.

Even good, well intentioned religious organizations are guilty of this. New Tribes Mission will accept no one for service who has had a divorce in their past. New Tribes Missions is desperate for people who will work in support positions (office work, fixing planes, etc.) which require no great depth of spiritual maturity.

Is there something wrong with this approach? What does Paul say about one who is to serve the church?

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be [1] blameless, the [2] husband of one wife, [3] temperate, [4] sober-minded, [5] of good behavior, [6] hospitable, [7] able to teach; [8] not given to wine, [9] not violent, [10] not greedy for money, but [11] gentle, [12] not quarrelsome, [13] not covetous; [14] one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); [15] not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have [16] a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

1 Timothy 3:1-7

Here Paul gives 16 characteristics of a man who is to serve (I added the numbers). But New Tribes selects (presumably) only one of these to determine whether a person is fit to serve. (I am not picking on New Tribes, there are many other examples).

There are many ideal characteristics which a Christian servant should possess. None possess all of them. Peter Palmer, very early on,

demonstrated that he did not have [7] ability to teach (in the native tongue and so was taken out of the tribe and placed into a leadership position at headquarters - [14] one who rules his own house well and hence able to lead in the affairs of the mission there. We each have our own abilities that God has given us that are to be pressed into service for Him.

“You tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God” These Pharisees did well in those aspects of leadership which may be easily measured - their giving. But, justice and love are harder qualities to measure - and to exhibit, and so they got by because no one knew they lacked in these.

Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. Paul had a rule for this - [15] not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. These Pharisees complimented themselves on their great pride. They were given the best seats, they were known in the market places. They were honored - but not for good cause! They excelled in what showed outwardly, they failed miserably on what really counted.

Jesus saw them for what they really were - as recorded in Matthew's Gospel.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of

vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? d Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,

Matthew 23:25-33

For you are like graves which are not seen, and the men who walk over them are not aware of them." To understand this, you need to know a point of the Law.

Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

Numbers 19:16

In the passage in Matthew, it referred to "whitewashed tombs." The practical reason for this is so that one would not walk, unknowingly, on another persons tomb. In other words, those who followed the teachings of these Pharisee's would be made "unclean" (i.e. in their thinking) without even realizing it. Were they not listening to the "respected" leaders of Israel? Were they not learning the truth? No!

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, - of any age!

Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also." And He said, "Woe to you also, lawyers! For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your

fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs. Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him.

Luke 11:45-54

I am somewhat amused by what happened next. *Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, "Teacher, by saying these things You reproach us also."* That is an understatement if I ever heard one. Of course He reproached them. He went on to reproach them even more.

For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. A.T. Robertson said the following.

It is a fierce indictment of scribes (lawyers) for their pettifogging interpretations of the written law in their oral teaching (later written down as Mishna and then as Gemarah), a terrible load which these lawyers did not pretend to carry themselves, not even "with one of their fingers" to "touch"

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the G.N.T."

It is sad so see some of the same sort of things arising today in various (so called) Christian denominations. Priests who are child molesters; T.V. Evangelists who embezzle huge sums of money, and on and on. They insist on spiritual purity in their followers but fail in their own lives. It is not so much that they are hypocrites as it is that they are mere humans and subject to the urging of the old nature like the rest of us.

Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. In fact, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs

We find an excellent example of this in the book of Acts.

And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

Acts 6:8

The rest of chapter 6 and most of chapter 7 records what the result of this was.

And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council. They also set up false witnesses who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law;

Acts 6:12-13

It was at this point that Stephen gave a most impressive sermon - the sermon of his life!

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the

betrayers and murderers,

Acts 7:52

He makes the same accusation as did Jesus.

Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts 7:57-60

One wonders if it does any good to take such a stand against the hypocrites of ones day. The result always seems to be the same: they crucified Jesus, they stoned Stephen. One must always take such a stand. You may not know the result of it, but God will use it.

Now Saul was consenting to his death.

Acts 8:1A

It was, most likely, this message from Stephan (both in his words and his dying) that help steer the Apostle Paul into the great ministry he had!

Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." Robertson writes the following:

"Ye took away the key of knowledge." This is a flat charge of obscurantism on the part of these scribes (lawyers), the teachers (rabbis) of the people. They themselves refused to go into the house of knowledge (beautiful figure) and learn. They then locked the door and hid the key to the house of knowledge and hindered those who

were trying to enter. It is the most pitiful picture imaginable of blind ecclesiastics trying to keep others as blind as they were, blind leaders of the blind, both falling into the pit.

Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the G.N.T.*”

Not only were the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders causing problems for Jesus but for those who would follow him. Unfortunately, it is no different today. There are the cults that make it impossible for their followers to find Christ as their Savior. There are the liberal churches and “orthodox” denominations that either put down to the Gospel message or bury it amongst their traditions. There are TV preachers (not all of them) that scandalize Christianity so that it is not attractive to people.

There are many ways to discourage a person to accept Christ and Christianity and Satan “pulls all the stops” on these so as to make it is difficult as possible to hear and receive the message of salvation.

As He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently, and to cross-examine Him about many things, lying in wait for Him, and seeking to catch Him in something He might say, that they might accuse Him. I take great heart in this statement. I have never been one to water down my complaints about those who are doing wrong things. I have never been afraid of confronting what I believe to be wrong. It is comforting to know that our Lord did the same. He minced no words with these Jewish leaders and they become more vehement in their opposition to Him.

“Assail” is from ἐνέχω (enecho) which is, literally, “to hold within” and comes to imply holding within ones self and grudge against another. We find the same word below.

*Therefore Herodias **held it against him** and wanted to kill him, but she could not;*

Mark 6:19

The word is used with an adverb to make it stronger - “vehemently.”

The Bible teaches that we will also suffer the same sort of hatred (Matthew 10:22; Mark 13:13; Luke 6:22; Luke 21:17; John 15:18; 1 John 3:13).

In addition, they “cross-examined” Him. “ἀποστοματίζω (apostomatizo)” is a compound word found only here. The root word is not found anywhere. It has a long derivation. “Cross-examine” is not really a good translation. The NIV “to besiege him with questions.” They were asking many questions in an attempt to trip Him up - they failed!

CHAPTER TWELVE

In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. "Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for

one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

Luke 12:1-15

While the Scribes and Pharisees were seeking ways to trip Him up, "in the meantime" others were still coming to Him. An "innumerable multitude" comes from a Greek word which has been brought into English - μυριάς (myrias) from which we have "myriads." The throngs so crowded Him that they were stepping on one another.

He began to say to His disciples first of all - should probably be rendered "he began to say, primarily to His disciples. He wanted his disciples to hear this, but others could benefit too. As an introduction to what follows, we have the following.

This long discourse in Luke 12 is really a series of separate talks to various groups in the vast crowds around Jesus. This particular talk goes through Luke 12:12.

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the G.N.T."

Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Paul had a lot to say about leaven.

Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1 Corinthians. 5:6-8

Leaven is that which spreads throughout a material and, in a senses, defiling it. As Paul says, a little of it goes a long way. In the case

of the Pharisees, it was hypocrisy. ὑπόκρισις (hypokrisis) brought directly into the English - hypocrisy.

The definition for both the verb and the noun are as follows.

[The verb] *1. to take up another's statements in reference to what one has decided for one's self (middle) to reply, answer, 2. to make answer (speak) on the stage, i. e. to personate any one, play a part, (often so fr. Dem. down). Hence 3. to simulate, feign, pretend.*

[the noun] *1. an answering; 2. the acting of a stage-player (Aristot., Polyb., Dion. Hal., Plut., Lcian., Artem., al.). 3. dissimulation, hypocrisy*

Thayer "Greek-English Lexicon"

The Pharisees acted as if they believed one thing but, in practice, led considerably different lives. Jesus then lists the following:

- *Nothing covered that will not be revealed*
- *Nothing hidden that will not be known*
- *Everything spoken in the dark will be heard in the light*
- *Everything spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.*

I cannot help but think how true these statements are today. Listen to the daily news - "we have it from an unnamed source that...."

The fact that nothing can be kept secret has been a real problem today. At the beginning of the "War on Terror" the Congress of the U.S. was appraised of everything that was being done - and most of it was leaking out to the press. Today, only select people in Congress and kept informed. If you cannot trust a U.S. Congress man or woman, who can you trust?

The thing that Jesus was making primary reference to here was the things you might do or say as a Christian. He is warning of what Christians might endure for the sake of the faith. According to *Foxes Book of Martyrs*" The early martyrs for the faith included:

- Stephen (as told in Acts)
- James the Great (son of Zebedee, beheaded)

- Phillip(scourged, thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified, A.D. 54)
- Matthew (slain with a halberd in the city of Nadabah, A.D. 60)
- James the Less, Matthais, Andrew, Mark, Peter, Paul, Jude, Bartholomew, Thomas, Luke, Simon, and Barnabas

Fox goes on - and on - and on up to the early missionary martyrs of the 18th century.

Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! Those mentioned above died at the hands of mere men. We know that Stephan looked into heaven and saw Jesus welcoming him up there. People who are dying for the cause of Christ today go to be with the Lord. It leaves a great void for those left behind but is glory for those who go. None of us wants to die because of the loved ones we would leave behind - we have no fear of what would lie ahead.

Jesus is thus speaking of more than this. We can die in one of two ways - as Christians and as the unsaved. Those who die unsaved are those who are cast into hell. It is important to note specifically where the unsaved will go. Luke uses γέεννα (gehenna) here for "Hell." The word is used almost exclusively in the synoptic Gospels (Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:9; Matthew 23:15; Matthew 23:33; Mark 9:43; Mark 9:45; Mark 9:47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6). The word "Hell" is also the translation of ᾠδης (Hades) (Matthew 11:23; Matthew 16:18; Luke 10:15; Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27; Acts 2:31; 1 Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 20:13-14). The NASB translation mostly leaves the word untranslated, "Hades." The NIV uses various translations for this later word.

What is the difference? In the Old Testament Hades was the place where Abraham and his seed went after death. The connection between these is seen in the following.

The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death

and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 20:13-14

The “Lake of fire” is synonymous with “Gehenna,” the final resting place for those who die outside of Christ. We will see more on this in a later chapter. For now, note that we are here speaking of Gehenna. This can be an unsettling thing to consider. With terrorism here today, we could each die tomorrow - or even today!

Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. If God is aware of the fate of some life-form as small as a sparrow, He will certainly be concerned with our fate. God will not forget us.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. God is only concerned with sparrows themselves. The inference here is that he is not especially concerned with their feathers. But with us, God is even more concerned, even counting the hair on our heads (for some this is fairly easy!). I believe this is to be taken as hyperbolic speech, I don't think God has a chart with the number of hairs we each have. It is an expression that shows God's concern for the fate of each of us.

“I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.” There is some interesting theology here.

Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Matthew 7:22-23

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I

*will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.
But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also
deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

Matthew 10:32-33

It would seem that all the story tellers have it wrong. When we reach the “pearly gates,” it will not be St. Peter who greets us, it will be Christ who will announce our arrival and attest to the fact that we should be admitted.

But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. This is the other side of the coin. These people will be sent of to Hades for a time and then, as we read, eventually end up in Gehenna - the lake of fire.

And anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. Now we are getting into real tough theology - the “Unpardonable Sin.” Much has been written with respect to the unpardonable sin mentioned here but few dare to explain what it is. One of the few I found is L. Berkoff.

The name "sin against the Holy Spirit" is too general, for there are also sins against the Holy Spirit that are pardonable. Eph. 4:30. The Bible speaks more specifically of a "speaking against the Holy Spirit," Matt. 12:32; Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10. It is evidently a sin committed during the present life, which makes conversion and pardon impossible. The sin consists in the conscious, malicious, and wilful rejection and slandering, against evidence and conviction, of the testimony of the Holy Spirit respecting the grace of God in Christ, attributing it out of hatred and enmity to the prince of darkness. It presupposes, objectively, a revelation of the grace of God in Christ, and a powerful operation of the Holy Spirit; and, subjectively, an illumination and intellectual conviction so strong and powerful as to make an

honest denial of the truth impossible. And then the sin itself consists, not in doubting the truth, nor in a simple denial of it, but in a contradiction of it that goes contrary to the conviction of the mind, to the illumination of the conscience, and even to the verdict of the heart. In committing that sin man wilfully, maliciously, and intentionally attributes what is clearly recognized as the work of God to the influence and operation of Satan. It is nothing less than a decided slandering of the Holy Spirit, an audacious declaration that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the abyss, that the truth is the lie, and that Christ is Satan. It is not so much a sin against the person of the Holy Spirit as a sin against His official work in revealing, both objectively and subjectively, the grace and glory of God in Christ. The root of this sin is the conscious and deliberate hatred of God and of all that is recognized as divine. It is unpardonable, not because its guilt transcends the merits of Christ, or because the sinner is beyond the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, but because there are also in the world of sin certain laws and ordinances, established by God and maintained by Him. And the law in the case of this particular sin is, that it excludes an repentance, sears the conscience, hardens the sinner, and thus renders the sin unpardonable. In those who have committed this sin we may therefore expect to find a pronounced hatred to God, a defiant attitude to Him and all that is divine, delight in ridiculing and slandering that which is holy, and absolute unconcern respecting the welfare of their soul and the future life. In view of the fact that this sin is not followed by repentance, we may be reasonably sure that they who fear that they have committed it and worry about this, and who desire the prayers of others for them, have not committed it.

This is rather wordy and technical. In a nutshell, this sin is as follows. We are not saved by our friends - although they may be the ones the point us in the right direction. We are not saved by the Bible - although it teaches us about Jesus Christ and His works for us. We are not save by Jesus Christ - His work on the cross provided for our salvation but does not save us. The only way we are to be saved is for the Holy Spirit to do the work in us and for us.

There, hopefully, in a person's lifetime, comes a time when the Holy Spirit is ready to bring that person into God's realm. That person may accept this or that person may blaspheme to whole concept and refuse the work the Holy Spirit came to do for him. If that happens, there is no forgiveness, no second chance. This is not to say that a person appears to have only one chance at salvation. There may be many, either because the person does not blaspheme the work of the Spirit, only puts it off. There comes a day, however, when that person must accept or be lost forever!

We have already repeated the account in Genesis where, at first, Pharaoh "hardened his heart" and would not let Israel go. Then, after so many cases, the account changes and says that "God hardened Pharaoh's heart." If you have not accepted Christ as savior, there will come a day when it is too late for you.

This is not meant to scare anyone. If you are unsaved and you hear the Gospel message and you feel no disposition to accept it, do not accept it. If you hear the Gospel and the Holy Spirit is convicting you that you need to accept and you fight that conviction, you are in danger of this sin.

Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." Is this really true. If you turn to Acts 7, you find a power sermon delivered by Stephen as he was to be stoned. Did he spend the night before preparing this sermon? I think not. It was the Holy Spirit who provided him with the words he spoke.

There is, however, another side of this story. If you have not studied the word and “hid it in your heart,” the Holy Spirit will have nothing to bring to your mind to say. You have to know the Scriptures. This is the same in any walk of life. I could go and deliver an hour lecture at Cal Poly on most subject related to Computer engineering because I knew the subject matter and it was just a matter of pulling it together and speaking it. You must, however, know the material. You need to know what is in your Bible in order to have the Holy Spirit speak through you.

This is not an encouragement to disregard Paul’s advice to Timothy.

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

2 Timothy 4:2

*Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus was indicating that the time when some of them would be martyred would be soon. Thus some of them wanted to make sure that they got their share before this took place. People in those days were no different than now. Jesus' answer was the same as well. *But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."* They should have had their thoughts on spiritual matters, not their inheritances - material things.*

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Matthew 6:19-20

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the

heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 12:16-34

Let me make a modern paraphrase of what Jesus said next. *Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The work of a certain American man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my goods?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will get rid of me small garden sheds and rent large ones downtown, and there I will store all my valuables and my goods.* How many Americans would like a larger home so they would have room for all their "stuff?" How many actually rent storage sheds? By the time we are senior citizens, we are able to say, *"Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."* Then, as Jesus said, we may go home to be with the Lord (hopefully that is the direction we will be traveling). What happens to all this good stuff we have accumulated? Our heirs will probably rent some big dumpsters and fill them with all these valuables. I know because I have seen in several times. This is not to say that it is wrong to leave something for your children - this has nothing to do with it. It is the idea of hoarding up stuff for yourselves.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Matthew records why this is. If we store up treasures in heaven, that is what we will look toward and, looking toward heaven is looking towards God and so your heart will be with him.

So, Jesus is saying that we should give all of our substance to Him

and not keep any for ourselves? Does this make any sense? If we give everything to Him, what will we live on? Don't we have to keep a reasonable amount for ourselves? No! We do not have to keep anything for ourselves. It should all be given to God.

This is not to say you should, necessarily, take your life savings and put them in the offering plate next Sunday. You should, however, recognize that these savings are not yours but Gods.

Jesus explains this. *“Do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.”* There - He said it, not me! We really don't need to worry about where our next meal is coming from or what we will do when our shoes wear out. But, how can that be? - other people have to! Other people have to and thus fail to recognize life beyond food and clothing. They fail to see that *life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.*

Jesus goes on. *Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?* I wonder if ravens and other birds worry about their food - I suspect they are not capable of worrying. I wonder why he didn't use robins or sparrows or other birds, why ravens (κόραξ korax) which are mentioned only here. The Hebrew (רַב עֹרָב horab) is found in a number of places.

We find the following two passages from the Old Testament.

*Who provides food for the raven, When its young ones
cry to God, And wander about for lack of food?*

Job 38:41

*He gives to the beast its food, And to the young
ravens that cry.*

Psalm 147:9

It would appear that, of all the birds, the raven is the one least likely to hoard up a supply of food. Then we have the following.

The eye that mocks his father, And scorns obedience to his mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.

Proverbs 30:17

No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there,

Isaiah 35:9

Calling a bird of prey [raven] from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it.

Isaiah 46:11

The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring [ravenous] lion tearing the prey; they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst.

Ezekiel 22:25

The raven is a voracious bird of prey. That is the source of the word “ravenous.” So Jesus selected the bird with the biggest appetite and the least amount of responsibility in gathering food as an example. If God can take care of these “ravenous” creatures, He can take care of you and me. *Of how much more value are you than the birds?*

Jesus then moves on to the next example. *And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?* There are some people I know that would love to add even a half-cubit to their stature. Except for using elevator or high-heeled shoes, there is no way to do this. If we can not change our basic structure, we should we be concerned with them.

Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe

you, O you of little faith? He now turns from animal life to plant life - to the lilies of the field.

Your two breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle, Which feed among the lilies.

Song 4:5

His cheeks are like a bed of spices, Banks of scented herbs. His lips are lilies, Dripping liquid myrrh.

Song 5:13

My beloved has gone to his garden, To the beds of spices, To feed his flock in the gardens, And to gather lilies.

Song 6:2

Your navel is a rounded goblet; It lacks no blended beverage. Your waist is a heap of wheat Set about with lilies.

Song 7:2

Lilies are special flowers. They are very pretty and they require very little tending. We have lilies that grow across the road from us every year - no one tends them. If passing motorists do not stop and pick them (perish the thought), they eventually turn brown and die. It seems such a shame for something so beautiful to turn to brown weeds. But this is what Jesus says: *which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven*. If God can provide such beautiful covering for the lilies and other flowers, can He not provide us with suitable covering as well?

Jesus summarizes with, *And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you*. Does this mean we need not be concerned at all about saving money for a “rainy day” or not bother to look for clothing sales. Not at all. We must exercise some care of what belongs to God. We give all to God but God allows us to be stewards of what we have. He expects us to be good stewards. He also expects us to not spend so much time being stewards that we

have no time for Him.

I have friends at Cal Poly who spent their entire careers working at saving and investing money for their retirements. What was the result? They did not enjoy life as they lived it like I could. They did not have time for God as I did. And now that we are retired, they are not significantly better off than I am because God takes care of us and provides for what we need.

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This is the only place where Jesus referred to His disciples as a “little flock.” Both Paul and Peter make such references to their disciples.

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Acts 20:28-29

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

1 Peter 5:2-3

Jesus, however, refers to them as a little flock. “Little” is μικρός (micros) from which we get microscope and microphone, etc. A.T. Robertson says concerning this, “It (the word for flock) is not a diminutive and mikron is not superfluous, though it is pathetic.” It is almost as if he is referring to them as little children. It is even worse

when one considers a sheep as being a very dumb animal, relying on its master for almost everything. Peter and Paul also realized that their disciples would not be well schooled and would need much guidance.

The guidance here was that they should “sell what they had.” and, in addition, give alms to the poor. Did He really mean this? Plummer has written, “*The attempt to keep the letter of the rule here given (Acts 2:44-45) had disastrous effects on the church of Jerusalem, which speedily became a church of paupers, constantly in need of alms (Romans 15:25-26; 1 Corinthians. 16:3; 2 Corinthians. 8:4; 2 Corinthians. 9:1)*” He cites Acts 2.

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

Acts 2:44-45

He then cites three passages. We shall look at only the first as it requires little explanation.

And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians. 16:3

Jesus had sent them out before with instructions to take virtually nothing with them - but this was for only a short period of time. Of the apostles we know much about, they were all rather wealthy men. Peter and Andrew and James and John were fishermen and owned boats and nets and other fishing equipment. Matthew, apparently, had a large home which he acquired through his tax collecting. We do not know what the others may have had.

I do not believe that Jesus meant they were to become paupers. They were to give up that which would keep them from accepting what He

had to offer. He was offering them the kingdom which they had been proclaiming. They had to choose between the one or the other.

Regardless of what Jesus meant with respect to the apostles (the little flock), He does not require the same of us. He praises the church at Philippi for their generous gifts - gifts they could not have given had they rid themselves of all they had.

"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?"

Luke 12:35-41

Jesus now turns to the illustration of a wedding. He asks two things: to have the waist girded and the lamps burning. As far as the girding, he is not speaking of a girdle. He is speaking of a belt as is mentioned below.

And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

Acts 12:8

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Ephesians 6:14

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 1:13

In the first case, Peter need to gird himself so he could follow the angel. In the other two passages we are to be girded so that we are ready for action. In other words, He is saying not to be couch potatoes who are not ready for action. Likewise, the lamps are to be on already so that it would not be necessary to run around and turn them on. If they did this, they would be *like men who wait for their master*.

Why does He use this particular illustration? Because He is speaking prophetically here. He is speaking with illusion to what is recorded in Revelation.

Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19:5-9

One day there will be such a marriage supper. For now, He is

telling this apostles that they must be prepared. It would not come soon since He was still with them. It would come - someday. They would have to be prepared since there will not be time to change ones clothes or adjust the lights.

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians. 15:51-52

Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. This is a strange wedding supper when the groom serves the guests. It was that way then.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:45

It shall always be that way. But, now, when will he come? *If he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.* The night was divided into four watches.

Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

Matthew 14:25

Since the "night" began at 6:00 PM (I guess it was around that time - they didn't have Timex watches then). It ended at 6:00 AM - 12 hours. This means that the watches were: (1) 6-9 PM, (2) 9-12 PM, (3) 12-3 AM, and (4), 3-6 AM. So, Jesus is speaking of coming in the middle of the night (9 PM to 3AM). Those who are willing to be ready, even at such hours, are to be really blessed.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. The point of this statement is simple. Obviously, if you knew someone was going to break into your home at a certain time, you would make preparations to stop them. The application is a bit more complicated. We certainly do not want to prevent Jesus from coming! The application is a bit remote - in this case, we want to be ready.

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." No one knows when Jesus will return. If you read the book of Revelation, along with Daniel, Ezekiel and others, you may get the impression that it will be soon. Also,

*For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "**Peace and safety!**" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.*

1 Thessalonians 5:2-6

If the U.S. (or anyone) is able to negotiate a peace in Israel so that the Jews can live in their land and the Palestinians in theirs, watch out - the Day of the Lord is at hand! There will be no peace in that area until the Lord is ready for it.

Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?" Peter, the one who was always opening his mouth, asked Jesus if He was just talking to them or to everyone. In verse 32, before He began the parable, He addresses them as a "little flock." There is little question to whom he was speaking. But then, Peter was always the excitable one.

A.T. Robertson writes.

This whole paragraph from Luke 12:22-40 had been addressed directly to the disciples. Hence it is not surprising to find Peter putting in a question. This incident confirms also the impression that Luke is giving actual historical data in the environment of these discourses. He is certain that the Twelve are meant, but he desires to know if others are included, for he had spoken to the multitude in Luke 12:13-21. Recall Mark 13:37. This interruption is somewhat like that on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:33) and is characteristic of Peter. Was it the magnificent promise in Luke 12:37 that stirred Peter's impulsiveness? It is certainly more than a literary device of Luke. Peter's question draws out a parabolic reply by Jesus (Luke 12:42-48).

A. T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the G.N.T."

And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been

committed, of him they will ask the more.

Luke 12:42-48

Jesus appears not to answer Peter. As noted above, the answer is “parabolic” (.i.e. in the form of a parable rather than direct).

The parable deals with three distinct types of people:

31. The one who “knows better” and acts accordingly
32. The one who “should know better” but pays no attention
33. The one who “does not know better.” and does nothing

Let us consider the first two first, together. Both are given something that the third is not. “Ruler” is not the best translation of καθίστημι (kathistemi) as it is too harsh a word. It means to be placed in charge of, not to be a despot. Both the NIV and NASB have “put in charge.” A “steward” is οἰκονόμος (oikonomos) coming from two roots, “to manage” and “house” hence, “to manage a house.” The NIV has “manager.”

The meaning of the word is enlarged by the expression *to give them their portion of food in due season?* Before we go further, we must seek the answer to Peter’s question. Who are the “managers” that Jesus speaks of. Let me, first, suggest another name. Since they are to *give them (others) their portion of food in due season*, and since he has been speaking of “flocks,” I would say the “manager” is a “shepherd.”

So, then, is Jesus just speaking to the apostles? In one sense, yes, they would have to take over the caring for Jesus’ disciples when He departed. On the other hand, Jesus never returned from the “bridal feast” during the lifetime of the apostles - He could have, but did not. So, it would seem that we must extend this group to all who have been entrusted with Jesus’ teachings with the responsibility to spread the to others. But that responsibility belongs to all Christians and so, in conclusion, the “managers,” “shepherds,” or “stewards,” are all of us!

So, some of us “know better.” We know and believe the word and, especially, we believe in the Lord’s imminent return. Before continuing let’s make sure we understand the meaning of “imminent.” According to my dictionary, it means “likely to occur immediately.” Note the word “likely!” There is a significant difference between “imminent” and “immediate.” If we said that the Lord would return “immediately” we would be saying that he will be coming in the next few days or weeks. When we say we believe His return is “imminent” we mean that He could return in the next few days or weeks, but not necessarily.

Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. If we believe in the immanent return then we must be doing something to prepare for it. We must be working to fulfill the work that he appointed us to do or, in the words above, made us “managers” of. When Jesus comes, He will say “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” and will give us responsibility in His kingdom. I trust that you are part of this group!

Then there is the second group. They are the one who say, ‘*My master is delaying his coming,*’ They are the ones about whom Peter wrote.

knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as

one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:3-13

There are many scoffers today. There are many who do not really take the Bible seriously because, after all, it is “just folklore,” or “it contains God’s word” (meaning some of it is and some is not). They are many who do not believe in the unexpected return of the Master. Because of this, they have no feeling of urgency, no feeling of the need to spread the Gospel. Instead, they *begin to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk.*

I would like to let Paul enlarge upon this statement.

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. . . . You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet

the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, 5-9, and 12-13

When Christ speaks of them getting “drunk” I think He means more than the common meaning of the word. I think he means that they become “blinded” (which drunk people are) and fail to do the Master’s bidding.

The master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, . . . and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. This is strong talk. If “one saved, always saved” is a correct doctrine, and we believe it is, it means that this group only made a pretense of believing and were not true believers at all. Matthew cited Jesus in a manner which says it all.

Therefore by their fruits you will know them. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

Matthew 7:20-23

Later, James reiterated it.

Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. . . .But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? . . . You see then

that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2:17, 20, 24-26

There seem to be two subdivision here. There are those we have considered above and then there are those of whom Jesus has this to say.

And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. I believe this group is not as bad as the other. They were not awaiting His coming but they were not working against Him. They just were not doing anything. They are the ones whom Paul spoke about below.

Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

1 Corinthians. 3:13-15

But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. Here, I believe, Jesus is speaking of people like new Christians who have not been disciplined and don't know what to do or expect. There is a saying that the "punishment should be consistent with the crime" (or something like that) and Jesus certainly will do this. He says, *For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

"I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it

were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Then He also said to the multitudes, "Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time? "Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right? When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite."

Luke 12:49-59

Luke ends this chapter with some rather difficult theology or eschatology. He begins with Jesus' words, "*I came to send fire on the earth.*" Does He mean this figuratively or physically. "Fire" is from πυρά (pyra) - hence "pyrotechnics" One wonders is there is a common root between this word and "purify." That is what fire does.

each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he

will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 1 Corinthians. 3:13-15

While there are prophecies concerning the end time, especially in Revelation, but also in other references such as Peter below.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

2 Peter 3:10-12

There are no references to the Lord sending fire upon the earth. There are references, however that fire is in use today.

And of the angels He says: "Who makes His angels And His ministers a flame of fire."

Hebrews 1:7

For our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:29

Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.

James 5:3

that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

1 Peter 1:7

This "fire" would begin after His resurrection when the Holy Spirit

came upon the Apostles and others and began to work in them. Jesus adds, "*how I wish it were already kindled!*" These words bring out the human side of Jesus. He knew what lay in store for Him and he wished it were already behind Him. Note one word here though - "kindled." He doesn't really wish all were behind Him, He simply wishes that the time would come when the process would begin.

Have you ever faced the coming of a situation, good or bad, in which you longed for the time when it would come so you could experience and, then, have it behind you?

But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished. Jesus had already been baptized by John. How many baptisms does one have to have? Consider the passage below.

*Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, **and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?**" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared."*

Mark 10:35-40

Not only would Jesus undergo a different "baptism" but the disciples would as well. Consider also the verses below.

Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall

be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Acts 11:16

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

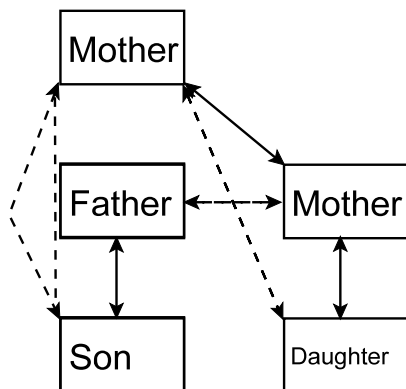
1 Corinthians 12:13

In addition to water baptism, there is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is not what Jesus was referring to as He was not so baptized. His baptism, we might say, was by fire (not literally). His baptism occurred during the Crucifixion and His Resurrection. Many of the Apostles met with similar fates - as He promised!

Then he said, "*how distressed I am till it is accomplished.*" He was not only anxious for it to start, as noted before, he was also anxious to get it over with. Would you not be as well?

Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. This statement seems rather strange - coming from Jesus. One must interpret this in two parts. First, it has been nearly 2000 years since Jesus uttered these words. How many of these 2000 years have been years of peace. There have been wars in various places ever since. There are wars today!

Jesus did not bring a world of peace. In addition, in the end times the world will experience anything but peace. Jesus continues with "*for from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*" Funny He doesn't say anything about father against mother-in-law! That's about all He doesn't say.



This may be nit-picking but we have charted the relationships noted. The solid lines are for people who are against each other. The dotted lines for the group of two and the group of three that are at odds. (The “Mother” on the top left in the Mother-in-Law).

One could summarize this, according to this chart as one generation being at odds with the next and the previous but two generations apart is ok. How often this seem to be the case - with the Grandparents getting along fine with the grandchildren but not with the children.

Why Jesus expressed it in this manner, I have no idea. He may have had some family in mind.

Next, Jesus says, “*Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is.*” I am not a weather person but I do know something about weather.

- Israel and the California Central Coast all border a sea to the West
- For this reason, the both have a rather similar weather pattern
- When we get a wind from out of the West, it is coming from the ocean (Mediterranean for Israel). These winds pick up air that has absorbed moisture from the sea and hence they often bring rain.
- When we get a wind from the north (blowing to the south) it is because of a high pressure area to the north of us and this typically brings warmer weather.

Jesus was not revealing anything new. Four of His apostles were

fishermen who made it their business to predict the weather. He was pointing out they new how to look at what was happening and predict from that what was going to happen sometime in the future.

Jesus has strong words to say next! *“Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time? ”Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?”* I suppose it is not nice to say but, at the time He said thee things, all of his disciples were Jewish. He is addressing Jews directly, He is addressing us indirectly since we can learn from what He told them.

By this time He had many disciples in addition to the Twelve. In spite of Peter’s confession, “You are the Christ.” (Matthew 16:16; Mark 8:29; John 6:68-69), not even the Twelve really knew Him. They had do idea what was about to happen and, when it did, they all deserted him - including Peter who denied Him three times. (The Twelve did eventually believe, after the crucifixion), the other disciples believed something bu, in spite of the great miracles Jesus performed and the great teaching He gave them, they did not understand. They saw the signs, they were ignorant of “what is right.”

When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, make every effort along the way to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you shall not depart from there till you have paid the very last mite.”

Here is some advice that is badly needed today. If it were heeded, there would be a lot less lawyers around. Today, Jesus might have said, “Make an effort to settle out of court.” If you go to court, you might be handed over to the *πρακτωρ* (praktor). This word is use only here in the New Testament. He is the one who administers whatever punishment the court decides. Incidentally, the meaning of the work has to be inferred from the context since it really means, “one who does anything.”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

Luke 13:1-5

In the previous chapter, Jesus spoke a number of parables. Now, some in the crowd want some concrete information. They came forward and asked Jesus concerning some recent event. The event is not recorded anywhere else but there is no reason to expect that it did not happen. Robertson says,

The incident is recorded nowhere else, but is in entire harmony with Pilate's record for outrages. These Galileans at a feast in Jerusalem may have been involved in some insurrection against the Roman government, the leaders of whom Pilate had slain right in the temple courts where the sacrifices were going on. Jesus comments on the incident, but not as the reporters had expected. Instead of denunciation of Pilate he turned it into a parable for their own conduct in the uncertainty of life.

A.T. Robertson, "Word Pictures in the G.N.T."

Jesus asks the question, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?" Today, as always, terrible things happen to some people at

the hands of others. Does this make them more sinful than the rest of us? Paul wrote,

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:23

Note that “fall short” is present tense in the Greek. We have all sinned and, as a result, continue to fall short of the glory of God. Fall short” is a sin in itself.

In God’s eyes, one sinner is no worse than another. Because some calamity falls on some people does not mean that God is judging them because they have committed more grievous sins. It may be true that God will take a believer home rather than to let him or her commit some very grievous sin, but we are not speaking of believers here.

But then He continues with some news which must have not be at all pleasant to those who asked. Unless they, themselves, repented, they would meet a similar fate.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

Hebrews 9:27

They, those who have not repented and received Christ as Savior will, one day die and then they will too will be judged, just as the others.

Jesus then continues with another example. There is no evidence that they asked Him about it, it appears as if He just offered the information anyway. The accounts are essentially same except in one respect.

- *whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices*
- *the tower in Siloam fell*

In the first case, those who died, did so at the hands of another

(Pilate). In the second case, they died as the result of a natural disaster (I don't believe anyone flew a plane into the tower!).

The reason for duplication is to make it amply clear that the cause, whether man made or an "act of God," makes no difference. God is not a respecter of persons. If you are not a repentant sinner, the end will always be the same!

He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "

Luke 13:6-9

As before, Jesus speaks in a parable. The parable involves:

- A certain man
- A fig tree (barren)
- A keeper of the vineyard

It is fairly apparent that the "certain man" is the Lord Himself. As far as the fig tree is concerned, it is, on occasion, used to represent Israel. We skip the references in the Gospels. In the Old Testament references are found in: Jeremiah 8:13; Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:7. But, who is the "keeper of the vineyard?" I believe that the keeper is you and I. We are to "dig around and fertilize it."

"Dig" is from σκάπτος (skaptos) which is not used anywhere else in the New Testament. It is found once in an interesting passage in the Old Testament.

And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will lay it waste; It shall not be

*pruned or **dug**. But there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it."*

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

Isaiah 5:5-7

There is also a Greek word in the new testament in which the verb appears as a compound verb, κατασκάτω (kataskapto) which means to “dig under” and hence to undermine. Paul uses it.

"Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

Romans 11:3

*Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and **digged down** thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*

Romans 11:3 KJV

Why three years? Because a fig tree is expected to bear fruit in three years. When Jesus came, there was little fruit. He could have said, “that’s it, cut it down.” But, in His mercy, he left Israel for another “year” (actually 2000 of them). Today we are “digging around it” in order to preserve it. Whether or not we will prevail remains to be seen.

Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had

healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day." The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound--think of it--for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

Luke 13:10-17

What follows next is not a parable, it is a direct teaching. At this point, Jesus was still teaching regularly in the synagogues. At this particular time we have a woman who enters the picture. She had been bent over for 18 years (Osteoporosis?) The word is derived from κύπτω (kyptos) which is found twice in the New Testament.

And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

Mark 1:7

This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

John 8:6-8

Here the verb is prefixed to become συγκύπτω (synkyptos) which indicates that she was continuously in this position and could not straighten up. It is, again, curious that only Luke the physician records this. Perhaps he had personal knowledge of osteoporosis!

Jesus said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." He released her from this condition. The fact she had been that way for 18 years is a sure indication of a miracle and not relief from a passing symptom.

And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. The word is ἀνορθόω (anorthoo) which is also found in the following.

*'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And **I will set it up**;*

Acts 15:16

*Therefore **strengthen** the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,*

Hebrews 12:12

A good "orthopedic" word, "to again make straight" He removed the osteoporosis and restored her to her former self. It must have been a tremendous relief to her - to anyone for whom such a thing is done.

One would think that everyone would be happy. No so! The ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. "Indignation" is a rather mild word to use to express the feelings of the ruler of the synagogue. He was really burning. We have already noted that one was not supposed to work on the Sabbath.

Today, working on the Sabbath (or on Sunday) is not unusual. It used to be. When I was a kid there was virtually no store in town that was open. But, if you got sick, you could call the doctor and he would soon be at your doorstep! (today you have to meet him at the emergency room). What I am getting at is there are a lot of things that are not so necessary that they need doing on the day of worship and rest. There are a few things that are - and should be.

Jesus's reply must have cut him "to the quick." The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?" First, Jesus calls him a hypocrite. We have previously considered this term and it is certainly not an accusation one would like to hear.

You are not to work on the Sabbath but it was common practice to water one's animals. You would think they could provide them with enough water on Friday night to take care of them. No, they watered them on the Sabbath! Which is more important? Watering an animal or curing a woman who had a crippling disease for 18 years? I suppose she could have waited until the next day - but why? Jesus might be in another village by the next day!

"So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound--think of it--for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" I don't know where the words "think of it" in the NKJV come from. They are not in the Greek nor are they in the old KJV, the NASB or the NIV.

It is a bit troubling to read that Satan had bound her with this disease. Why would Satan do it? I suppose the answer is the same as why God would allow an evil spirit to enter a person. In any case, the woman was not a "Christian" (no one was at that time) nor even a disciple. I do not believe a Christian can be demon possessed or have an infirmity that comes from Satan. But this was another age.

There were two groups of people there that day. His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him. One group was put to shame - they need to be. The other group rejoiced in, not only the healing of this woman, but in all He did that day.

Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in

his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."

Luke 13:18-19

For some time He and the Apostles had been preaching on the Kingdom of God. So, at last, He provides a picture of it. He begins with a mustard seed. σίναπι (sinapi) = mustard seed is an interesting seed to use as an example. Mark tells us why.

Then He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade."

Mark 4:30-32

I don't believe I have ever seen a mustard seed but I have extensive experience with the plant. It begins as a very small leafy plant which is not very impressive. Leave it alone for a month or so and it will be six feet high! It grows faster than any other plant that I know of and can, in Israel at least, grow to 12 feet high. This plant is shown in the image to the right (Courtesy of Unger's Bible Dictionary) It is certainly a fit plant for the example Jesus presents.



The tree, figuratively reaches into the "heavens" and this is where life exists. Heaven will be like that. We will "nest" in the heavens.

And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

Luke 13:20-21

He next turns to leaven. There is something about leaven that needs to be known. Where did “a woman” get the leaven she put into the “meal” (bread dough)? bread was made in those days, a small amount of the dough was kept and was then used to leaven the next batch of dough. It “self-perpetuated.” Heaven will have no end. It will continue forever.

And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last." On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

As He went from city to city or town, his course was always in the direction of Jerusalem. Someone asked a reasonable question, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" I can tell you the answer is "yes!" Why?" Because we must "strive to enter through the narrow gate." Matthew gives us the other choice.

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.

Matthew 7:13

Supposedly it is easy to be saved. Go to a revival meeting and see how many people raise their hands or come forward for salvation. I can tell you that only some of these will actually be saved. The rest will end up going through the broad gate. Jesus said the same thing - "many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able." Being saved by faith and faith alone is not easy. Virtually all of the other religions of the world require you to do some sort of good works to get to heaven. You can even blow up a building to get you to heaven (according to some). Accepting something by faith and by faith alone is not easy.

When Jesus (not St. Peter) meets us at the "pearly gates" He will allow some to come in. Many he will come but the result will be different. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' Why not? Because they were depending on works or something else beside faith for their salvation.

Let us go on. Some will say 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' Many will say, "I came to church almost every Sunday!"

Some will say “I put \$5 in the offering every time I came. They believe that sitting in a church makes them Christians. I am reminded of the speaker who asked if sitting in ones garage would turn them into a car? The people will expect to be known and cared for by Christ but they will be mistaken.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God

“weeping and gnashing of teeth is found some 7 places in the N.T. (all but this one in Matthew)(Mat 8:12, Mat 13:42, Mat 13:50, Mat 22:13, Mat 24:51, Mat 25:30) There is some difficult theology here. We believe if you die without Christ, you will go directly to Hades (Hell). But this passage seems to say you will go to heaven and then be case down. In order to understand this we must realize that “The Kingdom of God” and the “Church” are not one and the same (although there is some overlap). Being cast out does not refer to today but the end of the age. It does not refer to being cast out “of heaven” but out of the Kingdom. It is not until Christ’s return that the unsaved will be case into the “lake of fire and brimstone (Gehenna, Hell) (Rev. 14:10; Rev. 20:10; Rev. 21:80.

On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." I doubt that this is true. We read the following later on.

*And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, **he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him**, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.*

Luke 23:7-8

This does not sound like a man who wanted to kill Jesus! It was the

Pharisees that wanted Him out of the way and, eventually, they would use Herod to do this.

In any case, Jesus replied, "*Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.'*" The term "today, tomorrow, and the third day" (a quite literal translation of the Greek) is somewhat a mystery. What did He mean by that? It may mean of two things. The first would be that He would, literally, enter Jerusalem on (or after) the third day or it may mean that he would reach Jerusalem shortly and this is some idiom to indicate this (according to Robertson). "I shall be perfected." τελειόω (teleioo) is a common word in the Greek and does not mean "perfect" in the sense we use the word today. It means "to be complete (something is not perfect until it is complete). It would have been better to translate this "and on the third day I will reach my goal." as is found in the NIV and NASB. This backs up the idea that the previous phrase indicated his soon return to Jerusalem.

The thought is further summed up in the expression, *for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.* He had to be in the center of Israel (politically and religiously speaking) to complete His mission.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

Luke 13:34-35

The expression originates in

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.*

The fulfillment of this is seen in Matthew.

Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' Hosanna in the highest!"

Matthew 21:9

for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

Matthew 23:39

It is repeat in Mark and John (Mark 11:9; John 12:13) It would seem that, until this point, Jesus had avoided Jerusalem in His travels because He knew they were the ones *who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to her!* Soon He would enter Jerusalem (Chapters 17 and 18). There we will see what He said was correct.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go. Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

Luke 14:1-6

Now it happened again! He went into the home of another ruler of the Pharisees for dinner. Specifically, He had done so in Luke 7:36 and Luke 11:37-38. This is the third time that Luke records such a dinner. No mention is made in the previous occasions that it was on the Sabbath.

This time would appear to be a setup because Luke follows the statement about going to dinner with the words, *they watched Him closely*. The word παρατηρέω (paratereo) is used six times in the Bible (Mark 3:2; Luke 6:7; Luke 14:1; Luke 20:20; Acts 9:24; Galatians 4:10) and the four times it is found in the Gospels is always refers to the Pharisees watching Jesus. Without the prefix, τηρέω (tereo) the word means to watch or to keep as a jailor would “keep” a prisoner. With the prefix, the meaning is intensified to mean “to watch insidiously,” or “to watch assiduously”²¹ It must not have been very pleasant for Jesus to attend a feast in which his every move was watched and every word was weighed.

²¹Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon

At the feast there was another “certain man.” This is the sixth time a “certain person” appeared before Jesus (Luke 8:27; Luke 9:57; Luke 10:30; Luke 10:38; and Luke 11:27). This one had “dropsy.” I tend to drop things all the time, especially on my toes! But that is not what this was. “who had dropsy” is all one word in the Greek, ὑδρωπικός (hydropikos). The first part of the word is the greek word for “water” (i.e. hydroplane, etc.). If you look at a slight variation of the word and omit the “hy” you end up with the English term “dropsy.”

dropsy (drop'sy). Hydrops; an excessive accumulation of clear watery fluid in any of the tissues or cavities of the body; variously called, according to its character and location, edema, anasarca, ascites, hydrothorax, hydropericardium, etc.

Steadman's Shorter Medical Dictionary

Exactly what form this took is not known but Luke, the physician, properly noted it. He must have been miserable with this physical condition.

“*And Jesus, answering...*” One may wonder what he was “answering - no question was asked. According to Thayer, ἀποκρίνω (apokrino) “answer,” in imitation of the Hebrew idiom, “to begin to speak (about something that has occurred).” What had occurred is what had occurred on previous occasions. He knew what they were thinking and “beat them to the punch.”

“*Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?*” In Luke 6:7 the same question arose. It is interesting how those opposed to Christianity continue to bring up the same old and tired arguments. I suppose that is because there are no new ones to bring up. He asked the question - there was no answer. How could they? If they answered in the affirmative, He would have healed the man and that would have been the end of the matter. If they answered in the negative, they would have obtained the same results as on previous occasions. They remained silent. “Silent” is somewhat misleading as the word ἡσυχάζω (hesachazo) does not mean, of itself, “to not speak” but goes further than that.

It means “to hold ones peace” and hence refers to actions as well as words. They continued to observe what He would do.

As a result, *He took him and healed him, and let him go.* It is interesting that, once healed, Jesus sent the man away. Perhaps he did not want the man to be involved in what transpired next.

In the last chapter (13:15) He spoke of giving water to a “donkey or an ox” on he Sabbath. Now He uses the same animals in a different context, of saving one from a “pit.”

Note: the NIV and NASB read “a son or an ox - there is a considerable difference between a son and a donkey! Which are we to take? First, you must know the two words in question. “Son” is υἱός (huios) and “donkey” (or “ass”) is ὄνος (onos) which, when written by hand, may look quite similar. Geldenhuis says the translation would be “the son of which of you, or even only his ox...” This sounds good but is not a normal translation of Greek text. In view of the example of Luke 13:15 and the way the Greek text reads, I believe he is referring to a donkey or ass.

To leave the animal in the “pit” on the Sabbath is unthinkable. First “pit” is not a hold in the ground, per sat. φρέαρ (phrear) is used two places in the New Testament. Here and in John 4:11-12 which deals with the “woman at the well” it refers to simply that - a well with water in it. The remaining four occurrences are in the book of Revelation where it refers to the “bottomless pit.” There is a difference in having an animal fall into a hole and not being able to get out and falling into a well where, if not rescued, is likely to drown.

This is why Jesus uses the words, “*immediately pull him out*” in this context. The owner took no time in rescuing the animal before it had a chance to drown. It would be inhumane to not do so not to mention the loss of an important piece of livestock. So, the action was done on the Sabbath and *they could not answer Him regarding these things.* To not answer is more emphatic than this text would imply. The word, ἀνταποκρίνομαι (antapokrinomai), which is

used only here and in Romans,

But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"

Romans 9:20

Take away the ἀντα (anta) and you have the word we discussed on previously (“to begin to speak”). With the prefix it is “to speak against” and is a rather strong work in the Greek. They had no harsh words to say to him, they were dumbfounded.

So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 14:7-11

Jesus, after taking care of the man with the dropsy, took advantage of the dinner to speak yet another parable. In all, Jesus spoke parables, namely,

- Wise and foolish builders. Matthew 7:24-27
- Children of the bride chamber. Matthew 9:15
- New cloth and old garment. Matthew 9:16
- New wine and old bottles. Matthew 9:17

- Unclean spirit. Matthew 12:43
- Sower. Matthew 13:3-23; Luke 8:5-15
- Tares. Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
- Mustard-seed. Matthew 13:31-32; Luke 13:19
- Leaven. Matthew 13:33
- Treasure hid in a field. Matthew 13:44
- Pearl of great price. Matthew 13:45-46
- Net cast into the sea. Matthew 13:47-50
- Meats defiling not. Matthew 15:10-15
- Unmerciful servant. Matthew 18:23-35
- Labourers hired. Matthew 20:1-16
- Two sons. Matthew 21:28-32
- Wicked husbandmen. Matthew 21:33-45
- Marriage-feast. Matthew 22:2-14
- Fig-tree leafing. Matthew 24:32-34
- Man of the house watching. Matthew 24:43
- Faithful, and evil servants. Matthew 24:45-51
- Ten virgins. Matthew 25:1-13
- Talents. Matthew 25:14-30
- Kingdom, divided against itself. Mark 3:24
- House, divided against itself. Mark 3:25
- Strong man armed. Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21
- Seed growing secretly. Mark 4:26-29
- Lighted candle. Mark 4:21; Luke 11:33-36
- Man taking a far journey. Mark 13:34-37
- Blind leading the blind. Luke 6:39
- Beam and mote. Luke 6:41-42
- Tree and its fruit. Luke 6:43-45
- Creditor and debtors. Luke 7:41-47
- Good Samaritan. Luke 10:30-37
- Importunate friend. Luke 11:5-9
- Rich fool. Luke 12:16-21
- Cloud and wind. Luke 12:54-57
- Barren fig-tree. Luke 13:6-9
- Men bidden to a feast. Luke 14:7-11
- Builder of a tower. Luke 14:28-30, 33
- King going to war. Luke 14:31-33
- Savour of salt. Luke 14:34-35

- Lost sheep. Luke 15:3-7
- Lost piece of silver. Luke 15:8-10
- Prodigal son. Luke 15:11-32
- Unjust steward. Luke 16:1-8
- Rich man and Lazarus. Luke 16:19-31
- Importunate widow. Luke 18:1-8
- Pharisee and Publican. Luke 18:9-14
- Pounds. Luke 19:12-27
- Good Shepherd. John 10:1-6
- Vine and branches. John 15:1-5

Of these 21 are in Matthew's Gospel, 8 are in Mark's, 21 in Luke's (+2 that are also in Matthew and two which are in Mark's - a total of 25), and only 2 in John's Gospel. So Luke has more parables recorded than any of the other Gospel writers. This is the tenth in Luke.

He noted how they chose the best places. "Notice" is ἐπέχω (epecho) which is stronger than "notice" would imply. Two examples are below.

***holding fast** the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

Philippians 2:16 NASB

***Pay close attention** to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.*

1 Timothy 4:16 NASB

Jesus was clearly noting the situation at that dinner. In Luke 11:43 he noted that the Pharisees chose the best seats in the synagogues. Here it is at a supper. The NASB reads "He noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor *at the table.*" Why not? If you go to a dinner and there is a good spot to sit, why not sit there?"

Jesus gives a really good answer. Suppose someone who is more

“honorable” than you has been invited and comes to the supper? Well, let them take whatever place is left (serves them right for being late). It did not work that way. It did not work that way in the service either.

Being on a small ship, the entire crew sat at one table for meals. We were all together but there was more to it than that. On one side of the table, beginning near the galley, sat the Captain. To his right sat the Chief Engineer. To his right sat any Machinist Mates that were on board, in order of rank, and then came the firemen, according to rank. The deck force sat on the other side of the table in a similar arrangement. There were no name cards on the table but everyone knew where they were to sit. If I had still been a fireman and came and sat next to the Chief Engineer, I would be alright until a Machinist Mate came along and then I would have to move over to make room for him.

It was almost the same way then. The best seats were for the guests of honor. If you took one of these seats and a guest of honor showed up, you would have to give him (or her) your seat. It was different in one way - the rest did not move down so you could take the next seat. *Then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.* You had to move to the end of the table and take the least desirable seat.

So, then, where do you sit, especially if you do not know the guest list? You still stand the risk of sitting in the wrong seat if you take one of lower honor. Well, Jesus has the best answer of all. *Sit down in the lowest place.* Now that doesn't seem right. Why should you have the worst seat of the table - surely there will be those there who are less honorable than you! again, Jesus has the answer. *When he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.'* *Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.* If the host comes in and sees you at this low seat, he will sit you where you belong. Then you will have your proper place at the table, enjoy the company of those like you, and not have to worry about being moved to the end of the table.

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles

himself will be exalted." This concept appears several times in the Scriptures.

Folly is set in great dignity, While the rich sit in a lowly place.

Ecclesiastes 10:6

thus says the Lord God: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown; Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.

Ezekiel 21:26

And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Matthew 23:12

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.

Luke 1:52

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,

James 1:9

Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

Luke 14:12-15

Now Jesus turns to the host of the supper. It has to do with the guest list. Who do you invite to dinner? There are those who are not to be invited:

- *your friends,*
- *your brothers,*
- *your relatives,*

- *rich neighbors*

It would appear that this eliminates almost anyone you would be inclined to invite! Who then are to be invited?

- *the poor*
- *the maimed*
- *the lame*
- *the blind*

I don't know about you but this list present a problem for me. We do not invite "rich neighbors" to dinner nor all of our relatives. We do, however, invite many of our friends to dinner. Is this wrong? We have not invited the poor, maimed, lame, or blind for dinner (at least not because of this). Is this wrong? If our practice is not wrong, then how are we to interpret this?

I believe Jesus' next words explain what is meant. *You will be blessed, because they cannot repay you.* The whole issue is motive. Do you invite people to dinner in hopes they will return the favor or think more highly of you or that you will gain in some other way? That is not the reason for inviting them.

Do you invited people to dinner who need to eat and will not likely be in position to repay you by inviting you to dinner or repaying you in some other way? We have. We have had many missionaries for dinner and other speakers at church. For the most part, they have no way of repaying us by inviting us to dinner or in most any other way other than thanking us.

Jesus said that when you do this, *you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.* The fact of the matter is we have already been repaid in full just for the joy of having these great people in our home and having a chance to fellowship with them. To be sure, we will probably be repaid "at the resurrection" but this is not our reason for doing so.

" Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these

things, he said to Him, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" We could pass this up by simply saying that, apparently, someone at the dinner appreciated His words. But why?

"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

Matthew 22:2-10

We shall comment further on this in the next section. We also have, however the following.

Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19:9

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

The Jews, those who were good and faithful Jews, hoped to attend this supper and this guest was taken up with the idea. It is not unfitting that we get excited about being there as well.

Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So that servant came and reported these things to his master. 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 here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "

Luke 14:16-24

Jesus continues on with the idea of a feast. Here it is the one we noted from Matthew above. "A man" (i.e. the Lord) "gave a great supper" (He will give one). He invited guests, many of them, but when it was ready and he sent his servants to request their presence, they had excuses, **all of them**.

- *'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it.'*

- *'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them.'*
- *'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'*

These appear to all be good excuses. There is nothing wrong about buying land and, if one does so, one certainly would want to see it. The same is true of a yoke of oxen - are they any good? I do not need to comment that one would or want to interrupt his or her honeymoon to attend a super. So these are all good excuses - or are they? Read this again, carefully.

*A certain man gave a great supper and **invited many**, and sent his servant **at supper time** to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'* These were invited before the dinner. They had advance notice. They knew about what time supper would be. The excuses were given when the supper was ready. They knew ahead of time and should have planned for it and rearranged their schedules so they would be ready.

On the surface, all were good excuses. A man needed a place to live and provide for his family (i.e. "a piece of ground.") A man needed animals to work the land and make it possible to grow the needed food (i.e. five yoke of oxen) and, finally, (I suppose) a man needed a wife. He certainly needed a wife if he was to raise a family.

So, none of these people came. As a result *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 here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.'* Note carefully who were to be invited:

- *the maimed*
- *the lame*
- *the blind*

With the exception of poor, these are the same people whom Jesus said should have been invited in the first place (see above). These people came. In terms of a hymn we sometimes sing, "Though

many have come, there is still room for one.” There was still room for more guests.

'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. The servant was then to go into the “highways and hedges.” “Highways” is a common word, “roads” would be a better translation. But “hedges” is another matter. The word is φραγμός (phragmos) which means. laterally, “to put a fence around.” It refers to those who have been excluded for one reason or another. It is found in Ephesians as below.

*Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands--that at that time you 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 you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, **and has broken down the middle wall of separation,***

Ephesians 2:11-14

The Pharisees and other “righteous Jews would have no part in the Kingdom. Those who were maimed, lame, and blind and came to Him expecting Him to cure Him because they had faith in Him would be included. Most important of, as far as you and I are concerned, is that we also will be included! At the time, we were “cut off” from the Kingdom but Christ died for the sins of all which includes you and me.

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he

cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it-- lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Luke 14:25-35

What He has to say next is hard to interpret. He says that, if we are to come with him, we must hate certain people. these are:

- ◆ *father and mother*
- ◆ *wife and children*
- ◆ *brothers and sisters,*

First, father and mother. We have some Scriptures that seem to go along with this.

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?

Matthew 19:5

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and

mother and be joined to his wife,

Mark 10:7

The principal is laid down in the Old Testament. It is repeated in Matthew and Mark. but “leaving” ones father and mother is a lot different than “hating” them. Thayer has this to say (condensed).

To hate, pursue with hatred (Lk. i. 71; vi. 22, 27; xix.14; etc), Not a few interpreters have attributed to Mt. vi. 24; Lk. xiv. 26; xvi. 13; the signification to love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight, through oversight of the circumstance that the Orientals, in accordance with their greater excitability, are wont both to feel and to profess love and hate where we Occidentals, with our cooler temperament, feel and express nothing more than interest in, or disregard and indifference to a thing.

Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the N.T.*

In other words, it does not mean”Hate” as we American’s hate things. It can be (but is not always) a much softer word. In context, it simply means that we are to put Him first and these others come second. That is the way it is supposed to be. A man (or nowadays, a woman) has three responsibilities. These are, starting with the most important and working down,

- ▶ Our responsibilities to God
- ▶ Our responsibilities to our Family
- ▶ Our “tentmaking” (job) responsibilities.

Whenever there is a conflict, it is to be resolved according to this order of precedence. If a person does not adopt this order of precedence, that person *cannot be His disciple*. It is as simple as that.

Next, to be a true disciple, one must *bear his cross*. Jesus bore His cross.

And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha,

John 19:17

But does this mean we are to be crucified? If not, what does it mean? Jesus did not say “be crucified” although we find Paul’s words,

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Romans 6:6

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:24

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Galatians 6:14

But nothing is mentioned here about crucifixion. It has to do with “bearing.” There is nothing magic in the word “cross.” We all know what one is and have seen pictures and icons of them. Let me cite one other Scripture.

Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

A cross was a heavy item. How many of you have carried a wooden beam that was twelve (or more) feet long with a smaller cross arm (assuming that is the type of cross used).? It is very heavy. Jesus, after all of the scourges and beatings was simply too weak to carry the cross and so they pressed someone else into the task.

So we are to bear a heavy load. But how does that reconcile with the following Scripture?

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

Here He says His burden on us is “light.” Of course, here it is a yoke and not a cross. The answer to all of these questions is that “carrying the cross” is a preface to an excruciating death. Christ is not saying that we must be willing to be crucified - He is saying that we must be willing to make whatever sacrifices, including the sacrifice of our lives whatever that might be. We must be willing to do so. Many have. Read Foxx’s Book of Martyrs. Read of Missionaries who today are losing their lives for the sake of Christ.

How many of you are willing to make such sacrifices? Let me put it another way. We may not be willing to knowingly sacrifice our lives, but are we willing to place ourselves in a position where our lives are at stake and we may lose our lives?

Which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it-- lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' In my 37 years, I have seen a number of examples where

people have set out to build or (usually) rebuild their homes and have done about half the job and (apparently) run out of funds because the house stands there for years unfinished. I think to myself that these people were rather foolish to have started on such an endeavor. The question Jesus asks is simple. What is the interpretation. It has nothing to do with our homes. It has to do with another observation I have made in life.

I have observed people who have come into the “limelight” by going around and proclaiming (bragging?) about what they were going to do in the Lord’s service and how dedicated they were to it. I remember, especially, some of those in my High School group at church who were going to be missionaries and pastors, etc. Few of them ever did. What happened? They failed to count the cost. When the cost begun to become apparent to them, they backed off and did something else. It would have been far better had they counted the cost of such service first and not made such promises.

What king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace.

This question is rather like the last. The first deals with material things, this deal with people. It deals with a king with 10,000 men. Why that number? “Ten thousand” is as large a number (normally) used in Bible times. We see this in the following New Testament passages.

And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

Matthew 18:24

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

1 Corinthians. 4:15

yet in the church I would rather speak five words with

my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

1 Corinthians. 14:19

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

Revelation 5:11

In all of these cases, 10,000 is the word μυρίος (myrios) “myriad.” Strangely, Luke here uses the Greek word for 1000 prefixed by “ten” and “twenty.” It would appear from this that there is a chance of defeating 20,000 with 10,000 or there would be no point to the parable. But, if we consider our going up against uneven odds such as this, the parable falls apart. Should we make peace with Satan?

As Gudenhuys notes, we can not take parables apart and examine them microscopically. The simple point is that we must consider the cost of what we are about to do. we must consider the cost in following Jesus.

He concludes this with *so likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.* “Forsake” seems like a strong translation of ἀποτάσσω (apotasso). It is usually translated “take leave” or “say goodbye.” But words like these are reserved for people, not things. Perhaps “abandon” might be a better term.

Does this really mean we have to give away all we possess (except one set of clothes) if we wish to follow Jesus? No, it simply means we must have a willingness to do so if necessary. We must “count the cost” and see if we would be willing to do so if need be.

"Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" Jesus concludes here with a parable about salt. Now salt is Sodium Chloride. One pile of sodium chloride is the same as another. Just as one brand of aspirin is the same as another. That is one of the few things I learned in High School Chemistry. So, then, how can salt

lose its flavor? To answer this question in a rather scientific manner, let me say that I put rock salt in my water softener periodically. It does not go in as pure sodium chloride - the company does not take the trouble to highly purify something to be used in a water softener. It definitely is not flushed out of it as pure sodium chloride but as some other chemicals (with a goodly quantity of sodium chloride remaining). Pure salt will not remain that way for long. In water it quickly ionizes into sodium ions and chloride ions. Both of these will react with anything in the water.

Now, if even a little water gets into salt, some ions are produced and will react even with particles carried by the air currents. So, salt can react with other things and "lose its savor," it can acquire a bad taste.

Thus Jesus is saying that we must be pure. That is why He spoke of forsaking all things to follow Him. There should be nothing to cause us to be impure.

Matthew has a slightly different slant on it.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

Matthew 5:13

He who has ears to hear, let him hear! We all have ears! Some of us do not use them very well. But what Jesus is really saying is "he who would learn from this, let him learn!"

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them."

Luke 15:1-2

This is nothing new. He has been associating with such people from Chapter 3 on. The Pharisees and the Scribes have been trying to do something about Him since Chapter 5. It will be the same throughout the rest of this book. It will be the same throughout our lifetimes. There will be those “publicans and sinners” who need our witness. There will be those who criticize and condemn us for it. The situation, I believe, seems to be getting more that way all the time.

So He spoke this parable to them, saying: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance."

Luke 15:3-7



So now, we come to the parable of the sheep. Before we begin, let me again remind you that we can not dissect parables into their finest details and expect everything to fit. This shepherd lost one of his sheep. The ninety-

nine “needed no repentance” as they were His.

If we dissect this too much, we will come to the conclusion that a saved person can be lost. this is not so, so let us not read this into this parable.

Let us begin with the sheep. προόβατον (probaton) is, literally, “that which walks forward.” Technically, it refers to any small four-footed animal. In the Old Testament (Septuagint) it sometimes refers to a sheep. In the New Testament context, it always refers to a sheep (or a goat). According to the World Book Dictionary, one definition is “a weak, timid, or stupid person.” Winston’s Dictionary add another definition, “contemptuously, one who weakly follows a leader.” The bottom line to all this is that sheep, for their size, are very dumb animals.

Let us turn to certain portions of the Old Testament (if we looked at all the sheep in the Old testament we would never get done!).

This is the way of those who are foolish, And of their posterity who approve their sayings. Selah Like sheep they are laid in the grave; Death shall feed on them; The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; And their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling.

Psalm 49:13-14

But He made His own people go forth like sheep, And guided them in the wilderness like a flock; And He led them on safely, so that they did not fear; But the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

Psalm 78:52-53

Let my soul live, and it shall praise You; And let Your judgments help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; Seek Your servant, For I do not forget Your commandments.

Psalm 119:175-176

All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on

Him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Isaiah 53:6-7

"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the Lord.

Jeremiah 23:1

"My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray; They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; They have forgotten their resting place.

Jeremiah 50:6

"Israel is like scattered sheep; The lions have driven him away. First the king of Assyria devoured him; Now at last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his bones."

Jeremiah 50:17

So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."

Ezekiel 34:5-6

'For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.

Ezekiel 34:11-13

For the idols speak delusion; The diviners envision lies, And tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; They are in trouble because there is no shepherd.

Zachariah 10:2

In all of these passages, sheep are characterized as animals (or people) who, without a shepherd, are lost. The sheep is one animal that needs a shepherd to lead it. Thank goodness “the Lord is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1).

In most of the passages we noted in the Old Testament, when the sheep are used as a figure, it is Israel that they represent. In the New Testament, it is Christians. Before you cast any judgement on the wandering of Israel, look in the mirror (not necessarily at yourself but at Christians in general).

So the picture of a lost sheep is very fitting except for the fact that it is lost. If the New Testament refers to Christians as sheep, then a lost sheep must be a lost Christian - or is it?

“Lost” is ἀπόλλυμι (apollumi) usually means “to perish,” “to be destroyed” or “to lose ones life.” It has been translated thus in the verses we have covered before (Luke 4:34; Luke 5:37; Luke 6:9; Luke 8:24; Luke 9:24-25; Luke 9:56; Luke 11:51; Luke 13:3; Luke 13:5; Luke 13:33). Roberston says, “The one lost sheep, (. . . to destroy, but intransitive, to be lost). There is nothing more helpless than a lost sheep except a lost sinner. The sheep went off by its own ignorance and folly.”²²

As noted before, we can not take a parable too seriously. The lost sheep is not a Christian who has gone astray and is, therefore lost. When the sheep was found, it was said, *there will be more joy in*

²²A.T. Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the N.T.*”

heaven over one sinner who repents. Thus Jesus intended the lost sheep to represent a sinner, an unsaved person.

I've always wondered about the fact that the shepherd *world leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness*. Certainly there was concern over the lost sheep. But what about the 99 that he left behind? Was there no concern from their safety? The cause of this concern, I believe, is in the word "wilderness." The word is ἔρημος (eremos) and has a number of New Testament usages. For example, it can refer to a woman left by her husband.

For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband. "

Galatians 4:27

It is used of Israel left deserted by the Lord.

See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

Luke 13:35

It is used of a flock deserted by its shepherd (but this is in Homer II.5 of which I do not have a copy!)

Thayer says it also refers to "an uncultivated region fit for pasturage," but cites only this verse to confirm it. Let me repeat before going on that we are not supposed to examine parables under a microscope. Still, this seems like a logic question to ask. Let us look at some selected Scriptures which have to do with shepherds.

If you do not know, O fairest among women, Follow in the footsteps of the flock, And feed your little goats Beside the shepherds' (plural) tents.

Song 1:8

It will never be inhabited, Nor will it be settled from generation to generation; Nor will the Arabian pitch tents there, Nor will the shepherds (plural) make their sheepfolds (plural) there.

Isaiah 13:20

*For thus the Lord has spoken to me: "As a lion roars, And a young lion over his prey (When a **multitude of shepherds** is summoned against him, He will not be afraid of their voice Nor be disturbed by their noise), So the Lord of hosts will come down To fight for Mount Zion and for its hill.*

Isaiah 31:4

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. . . So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." . . . And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. . . . Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

 Luke 2:8,15,18 & 20

All of these Scriptures (and many more) speak of shepherds - plural. Shepherds were not usually loners, they gathered together for mutual protection and fellowship. So, then, it is reasonable that the shepherd left the 99 sheep in the care of another shepherd. Indeed, consider the following.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling

flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

John 10:11-16

The first part of this passage gives us cause to worry. even with a “hireling” flees when a wolf comes and devours the sheep! But, now, look at the last part of the passage. He says he has other flocks! This being the case, the question is compounded because we now want to know who is taking care of the other folds of sheep? The answer to all of our questions is summed up in the last sentence. *There will be one flock and one shepherd.* The day is coming when there will be but one shepherd, Jesus Christ. But the inference here is that there are “undershepherds” who are currently taking care of each fold.

He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

John 21:16-17

Peter (the first pope???) was appointed to be such an undershepherd. He was not the only one. Today we have people like **Pastor** Wickstrom who takes care of our church (the spiritual aspects of it). What is his title? Pastor! This comes from the Latin for “Shpherd” So, today, there are many many undershepherds to tend each flock.

In some cases there are more than one. When Pastor Jim goes on vacation, there is Pastor Ray to watch the flock.

We conclude, therefore, that the 99 were not left untended to.

So then what happens when one is missing? *He goes after the one which is lost until, hopefully he finds it? And if he has found it . . .*

Read the Scripture again. There is no word “hopefully” and no word “if” in it. The shepherd **will** find the sheep, it is only a matter of time. When he does find it, *he lays it on his shoulders*. This is really a bit strange. Consider the following.

He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

Isaiah 40:11

According to this scripture, the shepherd either leads the lamb or carries it in his bosom. There is no reference to carrying the lamb on his shoulders. It is questionable whether a shepherd would carry a full grown sheep that way, only a lamb.

There are two Scriptures that seem to relate to this.

Of Benjamin he said: "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him, Who shelters him all the day long; And he shall dwell between His shoulders."

Deuteronomy 33:12

Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples; They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders;

Isaiah 49:22

Carrying the lamb over ones shoulders is the safest way to travel with it. *And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and*

neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost! The lost sinner has been "redeemed" and brought into the "fold."

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish** but that all should come to repentance.*

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord seeks after the last "sheep."

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!' Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luke 15:8-10

We begin the second of three parables. This is the least known of them. They are all related and they are all order. The parable of the Lost Sheep involved 100 sheep. This parable involves 10 coins. The next will involve two sons. The next parable, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, is one of the best known and one of the longest. But, now, we have the widow and her coins.

We need to begin by understanding what she lost. The coins were each one δραχμή (drachma). Such a coin is nowhere else mentioned in the Scriptures. It is said to be equal in value of the denarius. J. Vernon McGee says this.

The coin was probably part of the row of coins which formed a headpiece, signifying her married state. To lose a part of it was like losing a stone out of your wedding ring. The woman depicts the Holy Spirit

whose ministry is to make sure that each one who belongs to the Bridegroom will be present for the wedding. Every coin will be in place. Every one is valuable to Him.

McGee on "Luke"

The first parable shows the earnestness for which the lost one is sought. It represents our Savior. This parable emphasizes the thoroughness which is used in the search and, as noted above, indicates the work of the Holy Spirit.

The woman will *light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?* I can empathize with this woman. Right now I am missing my computer glasses, two bungee cords and, probably a few other things. Even though I search high and low, I have a difficult time finding them - sometimes never finding them. This woman did not stop her search, even sweeping the floor (under the sofa and tables?) until, at least, she found it.

Again, there was great rejoicing when it was found, just as with the sheep.

So, now, let us go on to the third parable.

Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

Luke 15:11-13

We've had 100 sheep, 10 coins, and now we have two sons. The younger asks, *'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.'* For οὐσίᾳ (ousia) the NASB and the NIV have "estate" rather than "goods." Technically, the word means "what one has" - his

“property.”

So he divided to them his livelihood. This translation is misleading. If he gave them his “livelihood,” what would he live on? On the other hand, the word is βίος (bios) which means “life” (i.e. “biology”). Apparently, no one knows how to translate this word in this context. All four versions have something different: KJV = “life” (literal), NKJV = “livelyhood,” NASB = “wealth” and NIV = “property.” It should be obvious that the father did not give him everything, only of that which would eventually be given to the son. In fairness, he apparently gave to both sons.

It is apparent that the younger son had a plan - he would *journey to a far country*, and live in style. Does this sound familiar? How many sons today would like to do the same thing? How many are living of their parents when they should be earning their own?

This son *wasted his possessions with prodigal living.* The term “wasted” comes from διασκορπίζω (diaskorpizo). The word is best illustrated from its usage in the Septuagint as below.

You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them.

Ezekiel 5:2

Thayer says, “to winnow (i.e. to throw the grain a considerable distance . . .)” The young man spread his newly acquired wealth in all directions. He is thus described as the “prodigal son.” I didn’t know what the English word meant leave alone the Greek word.

The word “prodigal” means “to squander” or “to spend recklessly.” The Greek word, ἀσώτως (asotos) is also hard to translate. The KJV says “riotous living” whereas the NKJV has “prodigal living.” The NASB has “loose living: and the NIV has “wild living.” So, I guess, this could be the Parable of the Riotous Son, or The Parable

of the Loose Son, or “The Parable of the Riotous Son. Take your pick!

Whatever the translation, he soon spent most of what he had received from His father.

But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:14-16

Then he spent it all and, at the same time, *there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.* There is no need to expand on the translation of this. He became one of the “homeless” that we deal with today. However, he was a bit different, he was now willing to work to receive food to live on.

But it goes much further than that. He became “joined” with a citizen of that country - a bondsman. Worse than that, he had to feed the pigs. Feeding pigs is not a great job for anyone. For a young Jewish fellow, feeding animals which are regarded as unclean was about as low as one could get!

Apparently, the “citizen” did not provide much - not much food anyway because the son would have eaten the pig food if he could. Why couldn't he?

First the food he fed the pigs, the “pods” κεράτιον (kerition) were the fruit of the carob tree and were not only feed to pigs but also eaten by people, mostly the poorer ones. So it is not quite as bad as it sounds - except that no one gave him anything!

But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." ' '

Luke 15:17-19

But when he came to himself. . . Robertson says, “As if he had been far from himself as he was from home. As a matter of fact he had been away, out of his head, and now began to see things as they really were. Plato is quoted by Ackerman (*Christian Element in Plato*) as thinking of redemption as coming to oneself.”

He realized that even his father servants were leasing a better life than he was. He would have eaten what was fed to the pigs, his father's servants had enough bread and even some to spare.

I perish with hunger! “Perish” is often connected with our spiritual peril. Of course, this parable does deal with our spiritual condition.

I will arise and go to my father. He swallowed his pride and decided to return to his father. It is noticeable that he would not say “I sinned against you,” He began with his sinning against heaven and then his father. Paul says,

"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:

Ephesians 6:2

He had not only sinned against his father but against the commandment of God and hence he has his priorities right. He must confess before God first.

I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of

your hired servants. He began by humbling himself, willing to be as one of the hired hands.

Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:4

And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Matthew 23:12

The boy began at the proper place. He had decided what needed to be done and, apparently without hesitations, did it.

And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.'

Luke 15:20-22

And he arose and came to his father. He arose ... He had not been standing. There may be an inference here that what he had been considering he had been considering in prayer, Having been bolstered by that, he then went to the Father.

When he was still a great way off, his father saw him. We, too, were a long way off.

that at that time you 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 you who

once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:12-13

It was not necessary to come face-to-face with the father - this distant view was enough.

His father saw him and had compassion. “Compassion” we have seen before. In the previous instances it was the Lord and the Good Samaritan. He *ran and fell on his neck and kissed him*. In our culture that seems somewhat strange. Then, it was not. He greeted him. This is seen many times in the Scriptures.

And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son Is like the smell of a field Which the Lord has blessed.

Genesis 27:27

Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things.

Genesis 29:13

But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

Genesis 33:4

Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him,

Acts 20:37

The son, true to his plans, said, '*Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.*' It is not enough to think you have sinned, there must be the actual confession.

"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 10:32

"Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God.

Luke 12:8

that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:9-10

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. The actions of the father, since he had great compassion for the boy, are not inexplicable. We wonder about the other son! The father goes on.

And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

Luke 15:23-24

The had a great feast. The son was dead and now he was alive. But the son was not dead! Wasn't he?

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

Colossians 2:13

He may have been alive physically, but he was dead to his father. He was lost. Today, lost sinners are dead and need to be made alive in Christ.

He was lost and is found. Wait, who “found him?” Actually, he found himself. He came to his senses and realized he was lost without his father.

Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.' "

Luke 15:25-32

Oh Oh! The other son has now discovered what is going on. I told you there would be trouble. Something was wrong. He heard festivities taking place at the home. The festivities must have been significant because of what he heard. “Music” is from σύμῳνος (symphonos) which you may recognize as “symphony.” The word is used only here and is a compound of two words “together” and “to sound” or, in other words, to make music together. In other words it was not just one person playing but a group. Then there

was “dancing” - χορός (choros), the word from which we get “Choreograph” The related verb was used earlier in Luke (7:32).

It also found in the Old Testament in places such as below.

Now it had happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments.

1 Samuel 18:6

So there were also people dancing it was a really big party. We shall comment on that shortly.

First, there is something curious about this. . . .*as he came and drew near to the house.* . . . Why was he not in the house. It would appear that he had not even been invited! This seems to be a terrible omission on the part of the father.

So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

The fatted calf has two purposes in life (or should I say in death).

And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep.

2 Samuel 6:13

And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants.

1 Kings 1:9

They were used as sacrifices at festive occasions. They were also used for food.

Then immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night. And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled, and said to him, "Look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice, and I have put my life in my hands and heeded the words which you spoke to me. Now therefore, please, heed also the voice of your maidservant, and let me set a piece of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way." But he refused and said, "I will not eat." So his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and sat on the bed. Now the woman had a fatted calf in the house, and she hastened to kill it. And she took flour and kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread from it. So she brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

1 Samuel 28:20-25

Now Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal, ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl.

1 Kings 4:22-23

So there was not only entertainment but a great feast as well. But the son had not been invited!

But he was angry and would not go in. I wonder if he was angry at not being invited or for another reason - or both! He was stubborn like many of us are prone to be. Because he would not go in, his father came out to meet him. He not only came out to talk with him,

he *pleaded with him*. I believe the father realized the error he made and was doing all he could to make up for it. But then there was another reason why the older brother was angry.

Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. In other words, you never gave a party like this for me! He was jealous. I suppose he had a right to be.

He went on. *But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.* We have already mentioned the fatted calf. But note the difference. The older son complained that his father had never killed a “young goat” ἐρίφιον (eriphion) for him. This term is used only here and in Matthew 25:32.

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. . . . Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matthew 25:31-33 & 41

The younger son got the “fatted calf.” We discussed this some before. Actually, the Greek “fatted calf” comes from σιτευτός (siteutos) = “fed with corn or grain” and μόσχος (moschos) = “a sprout of a plant or tree,” “a boy or girl,” or “a young animal.” While the later word is vague, it is used in the New Testament almost exclusively for a young cow (i.e. a calf).

The fatted calf would certainly be more desirable than a goat. But the older son would have been satisfied with a goat. *“But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with*

harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.” I ask the following question, “What difference did it matter what the younger son did with his inheritance - it was his was it not? The older son had his didn't he?

The younger son returned because he had been out in the world, found out what it was like, and realized that his father's home was the only place to be. The older son knew nothing of this!

His father answered with this. *'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'* Is that really true? Should not the older son be rewarded for his faithfulness?

Now his older son was in the field. What on earth was he doing in the field ἀγρός (agros)? You do “agrosulture.” You work - you work hard. With all that work the older son deserved something.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Ephesians 2:8

The older son could work all his life but gain nothing. What did the younger son do? *Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8-9

It is not what we do with things that counts, it is what we do with Jesus Christ and the Father that counts in life. The son confessed and was restored to a place of fellowship. *'Bring out the best robe*

and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.
It doesn't mention it, but they must have given him a bath as well - he must have stunk by then! Christ will cleanse us and make us whole and hence we have arrived at the meaning of the parable.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

We come now to the parable of the unjust steward. An οἰκνόμενος (oikonomos) comes from two words. The first may be a reference to a house, to the persons in the house, or the property, wealth and goods in that house²³. The last part of the word is the word for “law.” When you put these together, it is a person who manages the affair of the household - especially the wealth and goods of the house. Paul uses it in a spiritual sense.

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

1 Corinthians. 4:1-2

In this case, the man was appointed to oversee the man’s material possessions. This is especially obvious when He says “a rich man.”

Now this steward was accused of wasting his master’s wealth. He was a poor steward as many stock brokers are! “Wasting” here is from the same Greek word we had in 15:13 of the Prodigal Son who squandered his inheritance. Note there is no inference here that the steward was embezzling, only that he was not being careful with the man’s wealth. Whether this is because the steward was just lazy, malicious, or simply was a poor manager. The master of the house did not go to him to court over wrongful acts he had committed because he had done none - he just wasn’t a very good steward.

It is pretty much the same way with Christians today who are stewards of God’s manifest riches in Christ. Some are just ignorant of how to properly share them, some are lazy and don’t do it, some just don’t care. Our Lord will not punish us either. We can do absolutely nothing for the rest of our lives and we will not be condemned.

²³Thayers Greek-English Lexicon

each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

We will be given nothing, just as the steward would be sent away with nothing. We will not lose our salvation - we lose only our rewards.

Finally, it caught up with him . 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward. It seems to me obvious that the rich man paid no attention to his wealth because others had to inform him. The Rich Man must have had great confidence in him. What he says next is a bit confusing. First he asks for an accounting and then he says he is fired. As it sounds in this parable, the steward had no chance to prove himself. Gudenhuys observes that the accounting would be needed for the new steward, which is probably correct.

You know, it is often the same with us. We accuse others and never give them the chance to prove themselves before we condemn them. This is not only true in the pagan world but in churches as well.

This frightened the steward. There were two things he could not do:

- ▶ He could not dig
- ▶ He could not beg

The NKJV omits one word, "strong." He was not strong enough to dig. the word "dig" comes from σκάπτω (skapto) which is used only by Luke in his gospel and has an uncertain meaning. It appears to be related to the word σκάφη (skaphe). This word is found three times in Acts.

*And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. . . .
 And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow, . . . Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.*

Acts 27:16,30, & 32

From this I would deduce that he was saying that he was not strong enough to engage in building boats and ships which was a common profession in that region with all the fishing that was done. The point is that it was not just “digging” he could not perform but any type of hard manual labor. He was a CPA and had never got his hands dirty!

It is to his credit that he would not beg for food or money. Besides, if he could not work he could not hold up a sign, “will work for food!”

His only alternative was to be a steward somewhere else. so he said (to himself), “I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.” He wanted to keep his job as a steward and, perhaps, he could work elsewhere.

How would he get any good references to show a future employer?

So he called every one of his master's debtors to him. The Greek text would indicate that he called them one at a time. He then cut their debts. *A hundred measures of oil became fifty. 'A hundred measures of wheat. became eighty.* This would surely make him popular with the man’s debtors. But what about the man who he worked for (and would soon terminate him)?

First, let us determine what he did. 100 “measures” of oil. A measure is a βᾶτος (batos) from the Hebrew בַּת (bath). This is the only place in the New Testament this is found. Perhaps there is a reason. A “bath” was about 7 and one-half gallons (some say it was

more like 8 to 10 gallons). So 100 of them would be 750 gallons of oil! The oil was, more specifically olive oil. It was used for lamps (Matthew 25:3-4; Matthew 25:8)

It appears more often in the New Testament for anointing ones head.(Mark 6:13; Luke 7:46; Luke 10:34; Hebrews 1:9; James 5:14). In any case, it was a fairly expensive commodity (I have been unable to find out what it would be worth today). 750 gallons of it would be worth a large sum of money. *So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.* The steward must have known what the bill was (unless he was a really bad steward) but he wanted to see the debtor's bill as well. He was first to "sit down." That's not surprising - when we wish to reveal something startling to someone else, we ask, "are you sitting down?" We don't want them to faint and fall. Then, having sat down, he tells the man to write "quickly" fifty. "Quickly" is τᾶχως (taxeos) and has the idea of haste in it. He wanted the man's debt notice to read 50 instead of 100. This would certainly have made the debtor very happy.

Then there was '*A hundred measures of wheat.*' The "measure" was a kor, in Greek κόρος (koros), from the Hebrew קֶר (kor) a word also found nowhere else in the New Testament. The Hebrew is found a few places in the Old Testament. A particularly interesting and informative passage is below.

And I, even I, Artaxerxes the king, issue a decree to all the treasurers who are in the region beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, may require of you, let it be done diligently, up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kors of wheat, one hundred baths of wine, one hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribed limit. Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it diligently be done for the house of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

Ezra 7:21-23

100 “kors” of wheat would be somewhere between 600 and 1000 bushels of wheat. We have already discussed the value of the oil. From the passage in Ezekiel, *one hundred talents of silver* would be over 3 tons of silver! So, accordingly, the 1000 bushels of wheat would be worth a great sum of money. This man was instructed to reduce it to 80. Why the difference, we do not know, this is only a parable. Both men had their debt reduced considerable and would have been very grateful to the steward. They may well have offered him a position in heir household.

Now, back to the question as to how he could do this without his master knowing, what did the master say? *“Give an account of your stewardship.”* While the master apparently knew the steward was not taking good care of his finances, he did not to specifics. He wanted them written down in an account so the next steward could take over. If each of these men reduced the amount they owed in their records, the steward could, likewise, reduce the amount in the account he gave his master and the master would not know the difference. We wonder if the steward did this for others as well!

We now come to the perplexing part of the parable. *So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.* First, it is obvious from what is said that the master found out what the steward had done. How? This is only a parable! But then comes the question, “why would the master commend the steward for what he had done? Why should he praise him - he should have stoned him? The text says he acted “shrewdly.” I am not sure what the word “shrewdly” is used in as much as it has bad connotations. The word is φρονίμως (phronimos) which is usually translated in the New Testament in a good sense - “wise.” In several passages in 1 and 2 Corinthians we have it thus translated in a good sense.

We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are

distinguished, but we are dishonored!

1 Corinthians. 4:10

I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say.

1 Corinthians. 10:15

For you put up with fools gladly, since you yourselves are wise!

2 Corinthians. 11:19

One might argue that Paul was being a bit sarcastic in at least two of the above passages. This would be brought out in the remaining passages.

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Romans 11:25

Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

Romans 12:16

In Romans he is speaking of worldly wisdom. So, “shrewd” may not be that far off.

Part of the answer lies in two terms in this passage;

- Sons of the word (the unsaved, unholy)
- Sons of light (the saved, those whose righteousness is in Christ).

He praises the steward as a son of the world. In worldly wisdom, one might do such a thing. The master may have praised him in the sense that it was a really smart thing to do even though it cost him

money.

The master goes on to say, *the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light*. It seems that most of the New Testament that deal with being “wise” do so in a negative sense (as in Romans above). You see, we need not be “wise.” We can not be “wise” (or “shrewd”).

However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 1:16-17

Only God is truly wise in the good sense of the word.

The master saw through the stewards plan. He said to the steward, *“make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home”* “Mammon” here is not the right word - in a sense. It is the transliteration of the Greek rather than a translation. It ought to be translated as “provisions” or “money” or some such thing. Exactly how it should be translated is unclear, hence the transliteration.

Most of the statement makes sense. The master knew why the steward did as he did. He was making friends so that, when he was let go, he would have someone to go to for another position. What is perplexing about this statement is the “everlasting home.” “Everlasting” is not to be taken in its normal Biblical sense. It is to mean that, if one homeowner kicked him out, he would have another to go to and on infinitum (i.e for the rest of his life).

Next, the word “home” should not be thus translated. We point out the Greek word for home at the beginning of this parable, οἶκος (oikos). This word is found some 85 times in the New Testament.

Here the word is μαμωνάς (mamonas) which, properly, is a tent. It's use in the New testament is below.

who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob.

Acts 7:46

Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.

2 Peter 1:13-14

It is not a permanent dwelling place such as we will have in heaven. The “everlasting” refers to the man’s opportunities, not his dwelling place.

Jesus goes on, leaving the parable to summarize it by saying, “*He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much.*” Had He stopped there, we would have been very perplexed. But, he did not stop there. He also stated, “*he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much*” Now He is referring to the steward. In other words:

The just man will become more just as he is given more responsibility. The unjust man will become more unjust as he is given more responsibility. So, then comes the moral.

Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? The Steward may have set himself up in good position for the rest of his life, but he would never change. He would continue to do what he had done and have to move on to the next home. Unless he repented, he would never be trusted with true riches - in Christ Jesus.

The final moral. *No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one*

and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." If money is your goal, God will not be. If God is really and truly your goal, the gold will not mean that much to you. Your heart can not be in two places at once. Either it is for God or for the world. You must make your own choice!

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 6:31-34

Serve God and the rest will take care of itself. Love God and He will provide for all your needs.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.

Luke 16:14-17

The Pharisees were lovers of money. φιλάργυρος (philarguros) is a compound with is literally, “lovers of silver,” hence lovers of money. Paul wrote concerning those who were the church’s counterpart to pharisees (in position, not moreals).

. . .not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 1

The same word is used here. Note the contrast between the two. Elder must not be the way the Pharisees were. Hearing the preceding parable (or parables), they derided Jesus. He would not receive such treatment until he hung from the cross (23:25). They “turned up their noses at him and scoffed.” Obviously they were not pleased with His teaching.

Jesus answered them. "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts." In the Old Treatment we see this very clearly.

So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:6-7

Out appearances may be very deceiving. The Pharisees in heir dealing with men (other than Jesus) were very pious and in accordance with the Law (as they interpreted). So, to the people, they were justified in all they did.

The same is very true today. There are Christian leaders who (appear) to lead very exemplary lives - on the outside. But on the

inside they are not in fellowship with the Lord. Both Jesus and Paul said this very clearly.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

Matthew 23:27

Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?"

Acts 23:3

Jesus responded with, "what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." The word "abomination might be replaced with "detestable" as is found in modern translations. "highly esteemed" is usually a good word and often refers to the Lord. Here, however the word has less noble meaning as it simple means that the Jews regarded the Pharisees as real men of God.

Their acts were certainly detestable to Jesus in all they have done so far, in what they are doing here and what they will do as we progress in this book.

"The law and the prophets were until John." Perhaps it should be "Law and Prophets." That's what the Jews in Old Testament times had - the "Law" being the first five books of the Bible, the "Prophets" being Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve minor prophets. The other ("The Writings") books were not regarded as being on the same level. That was the extend of their knowledge up until this time.

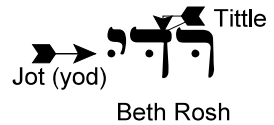
"Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it." Now we are entering New Testament times when "Moses and the Prophets" will be secondary to the teachings of Christ.

Not that the Law and the Prophets would pass away, “it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.” Matthew has it stated a bit more fully.

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Matthew 5:18

In order to understand this, these are demonstrated to the right. “Jot” comes from the Greek ἰῶτα (iota), the smallest letter in the Greek language. However, Jesus spoke Hebrew (Aramaic) in which ַ Yod (jot) was, accordingly, the smallest letter. Tittle is from κεραία (keraia) which is an “extremity, apex point, or in the case of Hebrew letters differ in one some very minor ways as in the case of Beth and Rosh. In other words, the law would not be changes in the slightest way, even if heaven and earth were to pass away.



This may be seen in the following verses.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Matthew 5:17

Time and again we read that Jesus did things. . .

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."

Matthew 8:17

that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: . . .

Matthew 12:17

All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: . . .

Matthew 21:4

that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

John 12:38

I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.'

John 13:18

But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

John 15:25

This is followed by a one sentence statement.

Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

Luke 16:18

Why this comes at this point is not clear. What is meant by it? If not one jot or tittle is to pass away, then what do we do with passages such as those below?

"You shall not commit adultery.

Exodus 20:14

The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 20:10

Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a

woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

John 8:3-5

The Word is clear, if one does such and act, they should be put to death. If this is so, we should have a lot of dead Christians now!

But consider the following.

But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:28

If this be true, there should be even more dead Christians! What do we do about this? I shall refer to Geldenhuys who wrote the following.

"The difficulty which we experience in determining what our Lord actually taught on this matter [divorce] impressively illustrates the absolute impossibility of basing detailed rules for the guidance of modern life upon isolated sayings of Christ. That the ideal is permanent monogamous marriage is undoubtedly the principle which Jesus taught; and that ideal still appeals to all the higher ethical feeling of our time. By what detailed enactments the ideal may best be promoted, which is the less of two evils when the ideal has been violated and made impossible, is a question which must be settled by the moral consciousness, the experience, the practical judgment of the present".

These words are especially directed against those Pharisees who allowed divorce to the husbands on

various kinds of trifling matters, but violated the right of the wife in such a manner that no right of divorce was granted her if she was unjustly or cruelly treated by her husband. "She was bound to her husband, and it was only to the husband that the rabbis preserved the right to dismiss his wife at pleasure" It was the milder rabbinical school of Hillel that allowed this easy divorce. It is remarkable that Jesus, whose teaching in general has more in common with the school of Hillel, should in this one respect have agreed rather with the stricter school of Shammai.

Basically He is saying two things. First He is pointing out that, if He is to obey the laws, they too must do so instead of being lax as they were. Secondly, He points out that, sometime divorce is the lesser of two evils and that one must use *the practical judgment of the present* .

None of us likes divorce but sometimes there is no alternative. One spouse may have committed adultery and it is impossible to take him or her back. Sometimes, as much as the two would prefer to remain married, there are irreconcilable differences which make it impossible. We must use practical judgement. Remember, Christ came to fulfill the law and so capital punishment is no longer a requirement.

Paul wrote . . .

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

1 Corinthians. 6:12

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.

1 Corinthians. 10:23

So, we conclude this with Paul's statement regarding all things, including divorce.

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then 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.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

Luke 16:19-31

We come to the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus. There are many who question why this may not be a parable - namely that no other parable mentions anyone by name. There is such a man named in John 11 and 12 but, since this man was alive (except for three days) it is not likely the same man. The Hebrew name, Eleazar, is mentioned quite a number of times in the Old Testament, but none would fit this parable. We will assume, like most, that it is a parable

and not a real event.

We will consider the name. The name, Λαζαρος (Lazarus), as noted above, comes from the Hebrew, אֵלְעָזָר (Eleazar) which means “God has helped.” As we proceed we will need to determine if God really helped this man - after all this is a parable and there is nouse in mentioning the man’s name if it does mean anything.

First, however, we have the other man. "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day." First, his outer garment. It is found in only one other place in the New Testament

And they clothed Him with purple; and they twisted a crown of thorns, put it on His head,

Mark 15:17

This is, of course, reference to events leading up to Christ’s crucifixion. As to the meaning of the purple, we need only to look at the next verse in Mark.

and began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Mark 15:18

It was a sign of royalty, “Hail the king!” It can not be know whether this man was actually royalty - a king - this is only a parable. Then he wore “fine linen.” This is found in a number of plaes in the Bible.

Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

Genesis 41:42

David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were

all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. David also wore a linen ephod.

1 Chronicles 15:27

So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

Esther 8:15

So linen, was also a sign of royalty. There was also another use for it.

Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

Mark 15:46

It was used as a burial cloth - for a king?

Now, for his food. he “fared sumptuously every day.” According to the Greek, he was “euphoric” over his food.

“But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate.” How could a man whom “God has helped” be treated this way? Only Dr. Luke would note that he was “full of sores (ἐλκος elkos)” He had bad ulcers (external ones). This man was in terrible shape - in contrast to the first who was “euphoric.”

He wanted to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table - like a dog! He would have eaten anything. Poor Lazarus!

If that was not bad enough, “the dogs came and licked his sores.” Before considering the action, let us consider the dogs (my wife will not like this section). “Dog” is κύων (kuon) which appears in four other places in the New Testament.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Matthew 7:6

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

Philippians 3:2

But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

2 Peter 2:22

But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

Revelation 22:15

It is an understatement to say that dogs were not highly regarded in Israel in New Testament times. It is likely that our word "cur" is derived from the Greek. Needless to say, they were not regarded as pets! The use in the New Testament is not unique. A few of the many references to the כלב (caleb, dog) are listed below. Why Joshua put up with a man named Caleb is hard to know!

You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?" ' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours." ' "

1 Kings 21:19

And concerning Jezebel the Lord also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

1 Kings 21:23

Then someone washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood while the harlots bathed, according to the word of the Lord which He had spoken.

1 Kings 22:38

My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet;

Psalm 22:15-16

As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly.

Proverbs 26:11

Now, then, it might not be too bad today if ones Cocker Spaniel cam and like the sores. In those days and that part of the world, it was disgraceful (to say the least). We've said it before, we will say it again, how could a man whom "God has helped" be treated this way? Let's find out!

"So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom." Two things here to be noted. First, he was "carried by angels." Reference to angels "carrying" someone are few.

For He said, "Surely they are My people, Children who will not lie." So He became their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.

Isaiah 63:8-9

So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Revelation 17:3

Now we are beginning to see, in part, why he was "helped by God." When we die, there is no reference that an angel will carry us away. When the rapture comes, we will be "snatched away" but it doesn't

say “by angels.” Even Elijah who was carried away by a chariot (2 Kings 2:11-12) was not accompanied by angels.

They carried him to “Abraham’s bosom.” Nowhere else is such a term used. We do have the following:

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

John 1:18

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 13:23

These refer to the bosom of the Father and that of the Son. Now Abraham was the patriarch of Israel - in a sense, Israel’s father. It came to be associated with “life after death” since Abraham was, himself, dead.

To make sense of these we have to search some more Scriptures.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:13

Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."

Ephesians 4:8

Abraham and the others “died in faith” but were assured of the promises of God. While it is disputed by some, others maintain that Jesus preached salvation to those who died and were in Abraham’s bosom. We are all saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, either Old Testament - looking forward, or New Testament - looking back. So, according to this, Lazarus was in a place where one goes while

waiting for Jesus Christ. It is to be distinguished from Sheol were tho who depart without faith end up.

The wicked shall be turned into hell (sheol), And all the nations that forget God.

Psalm 9:17

For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Psalm 16:10

“The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” “Hades” and “Sheol” are one and the same. Hades being the New Testament term, Sheol the Old. It is of importance to note that there was eye contact - it will not be so in heaven and hell!

Then 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.' There was also voice contact.

While Hades was not Gehenna Hell . . .

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:14-15

According to this reference, they are two separate entities. Both, however, were (or will be) undesirable places. Both are places of flame and heat. On the other hand, “Abraham’s Boson” and heaven are distinct places. It was nice to be in Abraham’s bosom but it will be far nicer to be in Christ’s, as Paul said,

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my

labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

Philippians 1:21-23

Abraham answered and said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. In other words, these two men went in opposite extremes.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

The rich man had already had his fun and glory. It lasted for only a matter of years - his lifetime. Now Lazarus was going to receive his rewards which would last forever. As Paul put it,

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. . . But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

Philippians 3:1 & 7-8

Abraham went on. “ And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.” “Gulf” χάσμα (chasma) is the word from which we get chasm. Such is an impassible rift in the ground. “Fixed” is in the perfect tense. The

chasm has been established long ago and remains today and will remain until the end of the age. So Lazarus could not bring the rich man a drink - assuming he actually wanted to do so. There is, today, a great chasm. One day it will be even deeper on the Day of Judgement,.

Then he said, (the rich man) 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'

First, Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom - why would he want to return to earth - even for a little time. The same is true for heaven. This gets me to a place I've always wondered about. Strangely it concerned another Lazarus.

These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

John 11:11-15

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came

out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

John 11:39-44

Lazarus was dead and, presumable in Abraham's bosom (Christ had not yet secured our salvation and assurance of heaven. It seems to be rather cruel to make this poor man come back from there and live on earth again!

Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'The judgement was taught in the Law and the Prophets. There was a form of salvation available then because some of the departed dead went to Abraham's bosom and others to Hades. Indeed, an often misinterpreted passage of Scripture is with reference to David.

*When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child (the son) was dead. Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the Lord and worshiped. Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate. Then his servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food." And he said, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? **I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.**"*

2 Samuel 12:19-23

Many say that David expected to meet him in heaven. Today they are, no doubt, there. But at the time, the meeting place would be in Abraham's bosom.

Why not send Lazarus back for a short time?

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

Hebrews 9:27

The rich man's brothers had had their chances, just as he had. He would not quit. 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' Indeed, Jesus had raised several, that we know of, from the dead (there were probably others) but these events had no effect on the brothers. Why should they get special treatment?

And so the two remained with a great gulf between them. Some day it will be even worse when the rich man is cast into the Lake of Fire.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

We have almost four more chapters of parables which Jesus taught as He traveled to Jerusalem. In 19:28 He will finally reach there. In the meantime, we shall continue to learn what we can from these parables.

Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

Luke 17:1-6

And He said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks should come, but woe to him through whom they come! (Luke 17: 1 NASB) is a less confusing translation than that from the NKJV or Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. (Luke 17:1 NIV). God has not promised us sinless and painless lives. He has promised to be with us through them all.

His words are not for you or me. His words are for those who would cause us to fall into sin. These people may be saved or unsaved.

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you

do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

1 Corinthians. 10:31-33

Indeed, Paul wrote to Corinth,

Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

1 Corinthians. 8:13

The pronouncement on them is severe - and very graphic!

Then there are the “little ones.” All four Gospel writers refer to “little ones.” except John who uses it in Revelation. A similar description is found in Matthew.

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Matthew 25:40

Why Jesus should use such a term, μικρός (mikros) is a mystery to me. It would seem to be a term of derision. However, in the next chapter we shall read,

But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Luke 18:16

Jesus had a special place in His heart for little children and, I suspect, He had a special place in His heart for His disciples as well.

Now comes the hard part. *Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.* I don't know what is the hardest - to rebuke a "brother" and to forgive him. I suppose that, over time, I have been able to forgive people. I have been (unfortunately) much better at rebuking them (ask Gail!). But it does not end there. *If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him.*" Forgive the same person seven times in one day? How could anyone possibly do that? There are others who have asked the same question (or implied it). *The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."* They did not have sufficient faith to put such a thing into practice. Faith is the key.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

Hebrews 11:24-25

Faith is the key that would allow the apostles to put this into practice. Faith is the key that will enable us to do so also. Jesus then concludes with a curious statement: *If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.*" First, the mustard seed. We have already considered it. It is very small. That is as much faith as we need.

The tree mentioned is the Black Mulberry tree otherwise known as the Sycamine tree. In the last several months I have attempted to pull small trees and bushes up from my yard. I have used chain saws, hand saws, "weed whackers" with sharp blades on them, pry bars, and about any other tool I thought might do the job. So far I have removed some but I still have quite a ways to go.

I guess I need more faith so I could say to the stumps, “Be pulled up and planted in the sea” (my neighbor’s yard would be sufficient or even my burn pile). Did Jesus mean this literally? Could we actually do such a thing? I suppose it is a moot point. Do you have enough faith to think God would pull up a tree by its roots and cast it into the sea? I don’t! As such, there is no way to test whether this is hyperbole or a statement of actual fact. I suppose it is hyperbole in as much as the mustard seed must also be.

And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' "

Luke 17:7-10

Taken literally, this parable is a disappointment. It would seem to be bad news. It would seem that when our work here in earth is done, there will be no rewards for it in heaven.

Well, consider this.

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. "*

Acts 1:8

Note that it does not say, “I would like you to be My witnesses,” or “It would be nice if you were My witnesses,” it says “you shall!” It is our responsibility.

Then we also have the following

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 13:34-35

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:12

These things I command you, that you love one another.

John 15:17

It does not say "You should love one another." It is a command, "This is My commandment!" The work we have to do here on earth is not an option, it is commanded by our Lord. There is, however something to look forward to.

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. . . . But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2 Timothy 4:1-2 & 5-8

Paul does not tell Timothy to work hard. Paul does not say that he worked hard. He tells Timothy to "fulfill" his ministry. Paul

concludes by saying "he has kept the faith." Paul also wrote to Corinth,

Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

He does not say that a man should be found to be a hard worker. He says that the steward should be found faithful.

Now, how does one show himself to be faithful?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2:26

God wants faithfulness - faithfulness that results in works.

Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

Luke 17:11-19

On His way to Jerusalem, He passes through Samaria. This is

strange because most Jews would have bypassed Samaria for, as the woman at the well said,

Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

John 4:9

Here he met ten men, all lepers. Why ten? We have dealt with ten things on several occasions before. There is probably no significance to the number other than it being a “round” number.

Unlike previous cases where lepers came right up to Jesus, these “stood afar off.” The word, *πρόρωθεν* (*porrothen*) is used only here and in Hebrews in a rather interesting manner.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them **afar off** were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

Hebrews 11:13

These men (presumably they were all men) stood a great distance from Jesus. Many today who need to be “cured” stand a long way off. They need to be brought near. Because they were far off, they *lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"* The word “Master” we have seen six times before and so will not swell on it again other than to say only Luke uses the term and this is his last.

They wanted “mercy.” They really wanted to be healed. *So, when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests."* It is interesting to note that, while in the past Jesus healed immediately, He did not do so here. He told them to go to the priests and show themselves to him. The priest did not cleanse them. Luke writes, *as they went, they were cleansed.* Jesus did not cleanse

them immediately, he waiting until they acted on his command before he cleansed them.

When we plead to the Lord for something we need, often we will receive no answer until we take the first step. It was necessary in this case. Seeing the priest was only to have them pronounced as being clean.

Nine of them obeyed, apparently, Jesus and went to the priest. They did as they were told to do. The tenth one did not. *One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks.* Why did he disobey? Well,

. . . We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

Hebrews 8:1

It is true that the author of Hebrews is speaking of Christ being the high priest after his death and resurrection. Nevertheless, This one man must have recognized whom Jesus really was and was going to be.

And he was a Samaritan. One has to ask “which priest was he to go to?” The Samaritans, being despised by the Jews, had to set up their own places of worship. This is of no consequence because the point of the parable is that he, thought he who was the “dregs” of society, came back to thank Jesus. We presume that he subsequently went to see the priest.

Jesus thus asks the question, *"Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Only one returned. Finally, Jesus said, Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."* The Samaritan's faith had made him well. There is no question about that. But what about the other nine? What made them well? When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan, he used a word we have seen twice before. It may mean “heal” in the physical sense but

it also refers to ones spiritual condition.

The nine may have been cured of their leprous condition, but that is minor compared to their spiritual condition. One had his spiritual condition cured as well. When we pray, we may ask for material things, such as healing and the like, but we should always seek the better gift of God's blessing.

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

Luke 17:20-21

Nearly 20 times in this Gospel, so far, the Kingdom of God has been mentioned. By this time, the Pharisees wanted to pin Jesus down to exactly what this was. Certainly they had heard His messages concerning this. They wanted more, they wanted to know when it would come.

His answer has three negative parts and one positive. First, it is not "observable." The noun παρατήρησις (parateresis) is used only here. It is considered to be a medical term which would refer to positioning ones patient in such a way so as to be able to watch him closely. The related verb is found six times in the New Testament, and four of them are from Dr. Luke's pen. In all instances, it refers to paying special attention and watching for something (Luke 6:7; Luke 14:1; Luke 20:20; Acts 9:24). Mostly it is used of the Pharisees watch Jesus to catch Him in an error. The Kingdom of God can not be found by searching for it and more than one might find an error in Christ's ways.

Second and third, no one will ever be heard saying "See here!" or "See there!" No one will be able to point to it either "here" nor "there." Why not? You see, a "kingdom" might be the equivalent

of “country.” A prime example is the “United Kingdom.” More often, a kingdom is not a place, not a bunch of buildings, it is a people who are loyal to one person, the king. You can not see such a “kingdom.” You may see some of the people who belong to it, but not the kingdom itself.

So far so good, but now we come to Jesus’ statement, “*the kingdom of God is within you.*” The NASB translation has “*For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.*” Now that is saying something altogether different than “within you.” The only other place where ἐντός (entos) is found is here and in Matthew.

Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Matthew 23:26

Here it definitely means “inside,” not “among.” Robertson says,

What Jesus says to the Pharisees is that they, as others, are to look for the kingdom of God within themselves, not in outward displays and supernatural manifestations. It is not a localized display “Here” or “There.” It is in this sense that in Luke 11:20 Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God as “come upon you”, speaking to Pharisees

A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the Greek N.T.*

We are the kingdom of God. A piece of it lies within each of us just as the Holy Spirit dwells within us.

Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. But first He must suffer many things and be

rejected by this generation. And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

Luke 17:22-37

Jesus now turns specifically to His disciples. He states, *"The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it."* They will have a desire. The Greek word θυμός (thumos) means "to burn" or "to glow" or similar things to do with heat. Here it is prefixed with ἐπι (epi) which is a preposition, "upon." Hence "desire" might be translated as "lust," "crave," or other similar words which indicate a strong desire for something.

They would have such a desire to see "one of the days of the Son of Man" Jesus apparently had a desire to make himself known as the "Son of Man." Then there are the "days" of the Son of Man. The

days of the Son of Man were passing by - day-by-day. Over 80 times in the four Gospels He refers to Himself as such. But these days were numbered. The “Son of Man” will only be observed on two occasions after the crucifixion.

"Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

Acts 7:56

. . . and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Revelation 1:13

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

Revelation 14:14

Stephen, as he was dying and being received up into heaven saw “the Son of Man.” John, as he was caught up into heaven saw Him. After the resurrection, no one would see the Son of Man on this side of heaven.

The disciples would have no further opportunity have discourse and fellowship with him on a personal (“manly”) basis like they were then.

And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Just as the Kingdom of God can not be seen by “looking here or looking there,” neither would the Son of Man. There have been, however, many who have said such a thing. There have been those who have claimed to be the Son of Man and have gathered some followers. Their claims, of course, have been false. For this reason, Jesus says, “Do not go after them or follow them.”

Jesus continues. *For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.* He speaks of “lightning” The word is ἀστραπή (astrape) (it is related to our word “astro-” but not with

significance here). In the Greek, the “lightning” “lightnings” from under the heaven (sky) - the verb having the same root as the noun. It is a vivid picture that most of us are familiar with. We have all witnessed thunder and lightning with bolts of lightning flashing from one part of the sky to another (it also flashes from the sky to the ground but this is not the picture here). What is this a picture of?

Most of such references are in Revelation.

And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 4:5

Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

Revelation 8:5

Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

Revelation 11:19

And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.

Revelation 16:18

We have already noted that the “son of Man,” after His resurrection, would only be seen in heaven. Here, too, the lightning is in the presence of the Son of Man. So, Jesus is now referring to the end of the age. As such, He continues with, *so also the Son of Man will be in His day.*

This is in the future. It can not happen before certain other things take place. *But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.* His crucifixion and resurrection had to occur first (as

well as other things mentioned elsewhere).

Jesus then continues with some examples known to His disciples. The first example of a cataclysmic event (other than Genesis 1:2) is the flood. *As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.* This is in reference to Genesis 6.

Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Genesis 6:1-3

God set a time when He would destroy everyone except His own (in this case Noah and his family).

He goes on to the second example. *Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.* Excerpts from this are below.

And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

Genesis 18:20-21

Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the

men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally." So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!

Genesis 19:4-7

The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

Genesis 19:23-26

Again, a terrible judgement from God. *Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.* It will be the same, but worse, in the day to come.

Expediency is the key in the Day to come. He gives a number of examples. If you are upstairs and your possessions downstairs, don't go down ("back") for them. If you are in the field, do not attempt to go "back" home. He reminds them of what will happen if they do - *Remember Lot's wife!*

Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. Different translations are slightly different on this verse. The meaning, however, hangs on two words - "save" and "preserve." Note what this verse does not say. It does not say "He who seek to save his life will loose it and he who loses it will save it." Different words are used.

"Save," in the newer translations it is "keep." the word is περιποέω (peripoēō) and is a medical word, uses of keeping a patient alive. It is found also at Acts 7:19 and 1 Timothy 6:13.

"preserve" is ζωογονέω (zoogoneō) and its normal meaning is to

“bring forth alive.” I believe the picture that is painted here is that those who think they can be saved by the things they do, will not! They are too busy working. Those who surrender their lives to Christ will have a new life “restored” to them. Some will loose one type of life, the others will gain another.

Jesus gives three examples of what he has just said. The first example is a bit off color these days!

There will be two men in one bed:

the one will be taken and the other will be left.

Two women will be grinding together:

the one will be taken and the other left.

Two men will be in the field:

the one will be taken and the other left."

The thrust of these three examples is that, outwardly, each person of the pair appears to be the same as the other. It is that way today. We can not really know who goes to heaven and who does not. External appearances are not the issue, it is the heart.

And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." The answer given in Matthew's account is a bit more vivid.

For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

Matthew 24:28

What happens to those who are outside of Christ? First, you must know about birds of prey. They attack only dead things. Hence, Jesus is saying those who are “left” will be dead and judged. This is the beginning of tribulation for them.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' " Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:1-8

Jesus begins this chapter with yet another parable. The meaning of the parable is quite obvious - the application is far from obvious. *Men always ought to pray and not lose heart.* The parable deals with prayer.

With's begin with the obvious by looking at several other translations. *Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, (NASB) Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. (NIV)* None of the new translations say that "men" ought to always pray - women and children are to pray as well. This is emphasized as we get into the parable.

We are to pray "always." The Greek word is "at all times." Paul said the same thing when he wrote,

pray without ceasing,

Now, we can not prayer 24 hours a day can we? If praying is getting down on our knees and says, “Our Father, who are in heaven...,” No! We can not do that. I still remember the poem the Curtis Mitchell loved to recite concerning the farmer who said his best pray hanging upside down in his well! There are all types of prayer. There is public prayer where we pray with other people. Then there are time when we are commanded to,

*But you, when you pray, **go into your room, and when you have shut your door,** pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

Matthew 6:6

In addition to these forms of pray is the spontaneous prayer which we utter on the spot as we need it. Finally, there are prayers we don't even utter,

*Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but **the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Romans 8:26

With all these forms of prayer, there is no reason why we can not “always pray.” In addition, we are not to “loose heart.” “Despair” might be a better translation and even better, (more literal) “Not give in to evil.”

The parable begins with a “judge” who did not *not fear God nor regard man*. I believe the point here is of contrast. This judge was not a godly man now was he favorably disposed before men.” To put it colloquially, he was a jerk. Serious, the point is that he was not a man whom one would expect to receive any sympathy from, neither because of his love for God nor for his love of his fellow

men.

In the same city was a woman. Note they we said this parable is not limited to men. *She came to him . . .* The verb is in the Imperfect tense indicating that this was not a one time occurrence but a frequent experience. Here reason? She wanted to '*Get justice for from her adversary.*' We are not told who her adversary was or what justice she sought as this is not important to the parable. The point that was important was her want for "justice." In fact, even that is not an important part of this parable. What is important is simply that she wanted the judge to do something for her.

As we would expect, this judge who feared not God nor regarded his fellow man, *would not for a while.* He resisted her incessant pleas. She asked and asked and received nothing.

Now, if there were any "hen-pecked" husbands in this class, they would tell you that, after a while, you get tired of this and finally break down and do what she wishes just to gain some peace. Well, this was a "hen pecked judge." Finally, he thought, '*Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.*' It got to a point where the judge figured it would be easier for him to grant her requests than to have her harping at him continually. (sounds familiar, no references indicated).

I should not that "avenge" is not the correct word to use for ἐκδικέω (ekdikeo). It would be better translated as in the new translations "grant justice." However, there is a difficulty with this as we are nowhere told that this woman's claim was valid. So the judge decided to judge in favor of her regardless of who might have been right.

Now comes the hard part. Jesus says, *shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him.* God is not some sleezy judge as we have been considering (obviously. If this judge would grant the woman's petitions because of her continual asking, why would God not answer the prayers of his saints who cry out to him

day and night?

Before proceeding, let us take note of a small but important point. He speaks of those who cry out “day and night.” The passage began with “always.” So, we should not attempt to relate this parable to those who cry out to God “once in a while.” This parable is often called the parable of the “Importunate Widow.” It only applies to prayers of importunity. In case you do not know what the word means, some synonyms are “imploring, pleading, adjuratory, and supplicant.”

Jesus continues with *though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.* “Speedily” may not be the best word here as it is not the speed of the response but how long before He heeds the response. “Soon” might be a better word.

Now for the problem! Why is it that we can pray morning, noon and night (as did Daniel) for something, seven days a week, and receive no speedy answer to our prayers? We may never receive an answer!

*You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss,
that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

James 4:3

That might be an answer, but often we do not ask “amiss.” We ask for things that are really in keeping with God’s will. In addition, we were never told that this woman had a valid case. The judge answered just to “get her out of his hair.” King Hezekiah asked to have his life extended, which was neither in God’s best interest nor his, but God answered his prayer!

In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, "Thus says the Lord: 'Set your house in order, for you shall die, and not live.' " Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the Lord, saying, "Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how

I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly. And it happened, before Isaiah had gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Return and tell Hezekiah the leader of My people, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. And I will add to your days fifteen years.

2 Kings 20:1-6A

The last 15 years were not good for Hezekiah, it would have been better that he had died on the Lord's schedule. We might conclude that he "asked amiss." Yet, the Lord "soon" answered his prayer - before Isaiah had even left the palace.

Why, then, can we pray for something good - a person's salvation, for example. The person never receives the Lord. Why not? If you have a good answer to this question, please let me know!

One might read between the lines of the parable and say that, perhaps, others came to the same judge but he did not give in to them. Perhaps this woman really did have a good case and the judge was just too busy to bother with it. Perhaps others did not have a valid case.

It was up to the judge to decide whether a case was valid - in his opinion - and grant just where it was due. In the same way, God certainly has the right to decide whether or not a particular prayer is in accordance with His will and either answer it (positively) or reject it (a negative answer).

He ends with, *Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"* This, is, perhaps, the answer to our question. When God returns, will He find faith on earth? If we get everything we ask for we will be like a bunch of spoiled brats. If we have to wait and hope and have faith that an answer will come, we

will still exhibit faith when the Lord returns.

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14

This next parable is rather easy to understand. It is, unfortunately, a bit hard to teach! It involves two men (it could just as well involve to women, or a combination).

The first was a Pharisee. We know all about them by now! However, Jesus refreshes our minds by reminding us of their characters. They were *some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others*. We need not go further with this.

The second was a tax collector. We have seen a number of them also. One may argue whether or not the Pharisee were good people or not with respect to the law. There was no doubt that tax collectors were, almost without exception, a bunch of dishonest men obtaining unjust gain from their work.

Both men prayed. This is commendable unless you ask why they prayed or what they prayed for (if anything).

So, first, *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself*, Note

well two words in this sentence - "with himself." He may have been in the temple where men prayed to God, but this fellow was not praying to God but to himself. One wonders if he realized this. I've heard some say they felt their prayers did not get above the ceiling. It may have been the same sort of thing - God was not hearing his prayer - he was the only one who heard it.

But then, he really wasn't "praying" at all. *I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'*

He was not praying for anything. He was not even praising God for something God had done for him. He was simply patting himself on the back.

Now to the tax collector. *And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'* The tax collector would not even come close to the altar (I guess that, today, it might be the wailing Wall") He did not raise his eyes to heaven (we usually do not either but in those days, that was the practice). What was his prayer. He did not pray for "things," he simply prayed for mercy. He knew he was a sinner and really had no right to ask for more than mercy.

What about you? Where do you fit in? I trust that you are not like the Pharisee. I trust that you are not like the tax collector either! I trust that, like the tax collector, you have already prayed this prayer and have obtained mercy and now may approach the throne with other requests.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." I don't know that anything needs to be added to this. The conclusion is clear.

Then they also brought infants to Him that He might

touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Luke 18:15-17

Luke goes on with something that is not a parable, something that went on. It had, perhaps, gone on for quite some time but it reached a point where action needed (it seemed) to be taken.

It concerned βρέφος (brephos) which sometimes refers to an unborn child as we saw in Luke 1:41 & 44. It may refer to a child just born. We saw this in Luke 2:12 & 16 with the baby Jesus in the manger. It is used in Acts 7:19 and 2 Timothy 3:15. There is one other occurrence we shall save until later. In any case, it refers to newly born children - little babies.

One would not, perhaps, have objected to young children being brought to Jesus but there was no point in bring infants. For this reason, *when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.* "Don't take up the Master's time with infants that do not even know what is going on!" (my interpretation).

Jesus did not see it that way. Instead, He said, *"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.* It is a little difficult here because Jesus refers to παιδίον (paidion) which is used of young children (under 13 years of age). In the context, however, we must assume he was referring to the same persons.

Forbid them not? That would be unthinkable!

*Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, **as newborn babes**, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord*

is gracious.

1 Peter 2:1-3

Here is the last use of βρέφος (brephos). We all must be as these little babes to enter God's kingdom. Jesus said,

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." . . . Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

John 3:3 & 7

If we must be "born again," we must do as Nicodemus suggested.

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

John 3:4

We are not speaking physically, that is impossible as Nicodemus suggested. But we must start at the beginning with Jesus. Jesus said it - *whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.* " and that settles it.

Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' " And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus

saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."

Luke 18:18-30

We now come to some unnamed ruler. As usually, who this person might have been (or even if this is a parable and there ever really was such a person). This ruler addressed Jesus as "Good Teacher." He is the only one who did so (see also Matthew 19:16 and Mark 10:17). He also, in the synoptic Gospels, is the first person to come to Jesus and ask about "eternal life." He wanted to "inherit" it.

I really do not believe he meant the term in its literal sense. If you are in a will and designated to receive an inheritance, you have to do nothing to receive it. This man, however, wanted, so to speak, to be included in the will. He didn't know the right words to say, that he wanted to be in the Lamb's Book of Life, but he had the right general idea.

Jesus asked him why he called Him "good." There is nothing unusual in the meaning of the (Greek for) the word "good." But, as noted above, no one else had called Him that, He went on with the words, *No one is good but One, that is, God.*

Is it true that no one is good? Paul wrote,

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

In that sense, it is true that none of us a good. But Jesus was “good.” It would appear that Jesus is really asking the question, “Who do you believe me to be?” Did the man really believe Jesus to be God in the flesh. What the ruler answered we do not know - Luke did not record it for us.

Instead, Jesus goes on with, *You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'* ***and etc.*** I have added the “etc.” Basically, Jesus is telling him that he has to obey the Ten Commandments (and all the other laws).

The ruler replied, *"All these things I have kept from my youth."* which, of course, is not possible. We would interpret his response as meaning that he kept them to the extent that anyone can do so. He was the type of person we try to reach for Christ today who really has led a good life and obeyed, in a general way, the commandments and is really a “good” person. “I’ve been good all my life, what more would I have to do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus does not contradict the man. Jesus does not say that he didn’t keep the whole law. There is no condemnation here. Instead He says, *"You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."* The man yet had two things to do. The first was the hardest. He had to rid himself of all of his possessions.

If that were the rule today, how many of us would be Christians? Would you sell all in order to be saved? I can tell you, for most of us it would be extremely hard to do. So, are we to take this as applying to all of us?

No! Read on! *He became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.* Jesus’ words applied to this man because wealth was his “god.” We have already studied Luke 16:13 telling us that we can not serve two masters (wealth being one of them). For me it would have

meant giving up something else. It was giving up having a peaceful relation with my parents and accepting the ridicule of being a “Christian” like my (older) sister. That was hard for me. What would be hard for you? Whatever it is (or was) it had to be put out of the way so that we might perform the second act, “*follow Me.*”

"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." How many really rich people in the world today do you know of who are Christians? Is Bill Gates a Christian - I've never heard that he is?

In this statement, we have the source of controversy for a long time. What did He mean about the camel and the needle? There are those who insist that he has reference to a specific act - that there was a gate so named which camels had to kneel down in order to get through. A.T. Robertson says this.

*Jesus, of course, means by this comparison, whether an eastern proverb or not, to express the impossible. The efforts to explain it away are jejune (insubstantial) like a ship's cable, **kamilon** or **rhaphis** as a narrow gorge or gate of entrance for camels which recognized stooping, etc. All these are hopeless, for Jesus pointedly calls the thing "impossible" (Matthew 19:26). The Jews in the Babylonian Talmud did have a proverb that a man even in his dreams did not see an elephant pass through the eye of a needle (Vincent). . The word for an ordinary needle is **rhaphis**, but, Luke employs **beloneô**, the medical term for the surgical needle not elsewhere in the N.T.*

A.T. Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the G.N.T.*”

Since, then, Jesus was really speaking of something that was impossible, “*Who then can be saved?*” This is what the crowd asked. It is a good question. Jesus supplied the answer - “*Things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*” You

can not be saved by anything that you do, it has to be the work of God. In this particular case, you can not be saved by wealth.

Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." Impulsive Peter is quick to point out that they had done the right thing. They had not held on to the riches gained from fishing and Matthew had not held on to his ill-begotten tax money. They had given it all up to follow Him. I suppose Peter wanted to be sure the Lord didn't forget that fact!

Jesus had not forgotten. *"Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life."* There is something to be especially noted in this verse.

The New Testament abounds with promises such as

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Matthew 6:19-20

In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:2

We have promises of rewards in heaven but note what Jesus says here!, *who shall ... receive many times more in this present time.* He indicates that there are not only treasures for us in heaven but rewards for us here and now (as well as in the future). What rewards do we have now? Well . . .

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests

*be made known to God; and the **peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds** through Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7

We can experience peace - great peace.

*Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply **all your need** according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:18-19

We can obtain all we ~~want~~ need And, finally,

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

Ephesians 1:15

since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints;

Colossians 1:4

. . . hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord . Jesus and toward all the saints,

Philemon 1:5

For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.

Philemon 1:7

We have great love (or should) for other believers. Yes, there are rewards on earth as well as in heaven. The Lord observes our hearts and actions and rewards us now and in the future for them.

Then He took the twelve aside and said to them,

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." But they understood none of these things; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

Luke 18:31-34

Jesus is all the time getting closer to Jerusalem and, the closer He gets, the more He explains to the Twelve. Actually, He told them nothing new. He simply reminded them of what the prophets had written. There are places in the Old Testament, such as Psalm 22, which are very explicit in this regard - if you only study them in this light.

With respect to the statement *this saying was hidden from them*, A.T. Robertson writes, *"It was a puzzling experience."* No wonder that Luke tries three times to explain the continued failure of the apostles to understand Jesus. The words of Christ about his death ran counter to all their hopes and beliefs. It is the case where one says, "Don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up!" They, like the others, expected Jesus to set up His earthly kingdom - not to have Him die on the cross. His words made no sense in the light of what they already "knew." Unfortunately, the same is true of many Christians today. "Don't give me all this baloney about the creation being eons ago, my Bible says it was 4004BC and that settles it!" We must all be open to the truth as it is, progressively, revealed to us. Note that this is what Jesus has been doing. He has been leading up to His crucifixion, little by little, for quite some time now. He gets more and more specific.

*as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word,
that you may grow thereby,*

1 Peter 2:2

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you

need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Hebrews 5:12

We begin with milk and are supposed to progress through strong meat. We are to learn progressively as Jesus taught his apostles. The Bible is a long book - 66 of them to be exact. We can spend our entire lives studying it and still not learn it all. We are to continually grow in our knowledge of the Lord.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18

Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Luke 18:35-43

He was coming near Jericho. Jericho was a bit more than ten miles away from Jerusalem so Jesus was getting near His final destination.

This account, with variations, is found in all three synoptic Gospels.

Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"

Matthew 20:29-30

Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Mark 10:46-47

Only Luke says is as was he was “nearing” Jericho - the others indicate He was laving. Mark gives us his name, Matthew says there were two (not necessarily sitting in the same place). This may be a but far fetched, but Luke says He was drawing near the city. *And hearing a multitude passing by* could mean that He had “drawn near” and passed by already. We will not push this.

When he heard the crowd and commotion, as a blind man, he, naturally, asked what was going on. Note the conversation that followed:

- *They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.*
- *And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

By this time the two names for Jesus were synonyms, even for blind men. But why “Son of David?” As Jesus enters Jerusalem, he will be referred to as the “Son of David.” Up until now, none of the Gospels have referred to him this way (except Matt 15:22-28). This blind beggar had more insight into Jesus than all who have come before. It is interesting how, often, handicapped people have more insight into things than we do.

Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more. This is curious. Who were those who “went before?” One then has to ask, “Why were they going?” Were they also not hoping to obtain something from Jesus? Perhaps not a healing but some teaching? If they could do this, why not the blind man?

It is still the same today. There are far too many who follow after Jesus and want to get all they can obtain by doing so but are not the least interested in seeing that others follow Him as well. This may be especially true among handicapped people. Lynn Porter, whom we help support has a ministry among the deaf people in Peru. But I have not heard of many such ministries. Do we have anyone standing up in front and signing as Jim preaches? Well, right now there is no need but maybe there are those who would like to attend but are deaf and know they will get little from the service.

Jesus asked the blind man, *"What do you want Me to do for you?"* The question was not necessary, Jesus knew, but we need to confess our needs - then the Lord provides. *He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."* Then Jesus said to him, *"Receive your sight; your faith has made you well."* It was as simple as that. He asked for what he needed, Jesus gave it to him. Not only did He give it to him, *immediately he received his sight.* The healing was immediate. It is not always this way so why here? Perhaps the blind man had faith that he would be healed immediately. But then we have that he *followed Him, glorifying God.* He had been sitting on the side of the road. Now that he had his sight, he could follow Jesus.

There are many today whose eyes are closed to Jesus and Christianity. With closed eyes, there is no chance they will follow. Someone must open their eyes. In this case, Jesus did - literally.

Paul testified,

*I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, **to open their eyes**, in order to turn them from darkness to*

light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

Acts 26:17-18

Luke concludes with “*And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.*” Actually, “it” is not in the Greek. What did they see? It would be hard to see one regain their sight. It would be easy to see a man who was formally blind “following Jesus” and “glorifying God.” It was the testimony that the blind man gave that caused the others to praise God.

We need more of this. We need to hear more testimonies of people who have had great experiences with God so that we can rejoice with them. We should not continue to sit by the side of the road with our eyesight restored and not say anything. Actually, we could use a much longer “Time of Praise” in the Morning Service.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Luke 19:1-10

For the past few chapters, Jesus has been getting nearer and nearer to His final destination, Jerusalem. He now passes through Jericho. Now if you know much about your Bible, you remember that God used Joshua to destroy this city. However, we also have the following.

In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the Lord, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.

1 Kings 16:34

There is a reference here to Joshua 6:26 in which the rebuilding of the city was prophesied. In case you don't understand the wording, Abiram was buried in the foundation of the city and Segub was buried in the city gates (alive, I think). This would "appease the Gods" and assure the longevity of the city. So the city was again there where it was before.

If you have not seen enough people from the IRS yet, we have yet one more tax collector by the name of Zacchaeus. The name, ζακχαῖος (Zakckaios) is a Hebrew name, hence the Greek here is not significant. The Hebrew name is found in Ezra 2:9 and Neh. 7:14 - זכאי (Zaccai) which means "pure" or "innocent." Some name for a tax collector! But, as this narration continues, perhaps his name really fit him in spite of the fact it says *he was rich*. He was a "big man" amongst the tax collectors as we are told he was a "chief" tax collector. This is the only place in the bible a "chief" tax collector is mentioned.

It is ironic that such a "big" man was so small. *He was of short stature*. The word "stature" we saw in chapter 12.

And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

Luke 12:25

Apparently Zacchaeus could not because, according to the text, he was "small" μικρός (micros). He must have been quite short from the description given. Have you ever wanted to see something or someone really bad and you couldn't get through the crowd to do it? That's where he was at. Seems like he could have said, "Hey, I'm the chief tax collector around here, let me through!" Well, he didn't.



Instead this man was humble enough that he *climbed up into a sycamore tree*. Here was a man who was humble enough in his quest to see Jesus that he really climbed the tree. He did so knowing that Jesus would pass by that way. And, indeed, Jesus did pass that way and what happened?

When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

I can not help but wonder how Jesus saw him perched in the tree! Note that Luke says "He looked up." Zacchaeus was not in the line of sight - Jesus would have to look for him. Did Zacchaeus call to Him from there (Luke does not say so)? Did he kick Jesus in the head as He passed by (I certainly would hope not)? Well, how did Jesus note anyone in a crowd? How does He do so today?

"Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, Calling for you and for me; See on the portals He's waiting and watching, Watching for you and for me." (from the hymn by Will L. Thompson). Jesus was watching for Zacchaeus. There was no question He would see Him.

Jesus said to him, "*Come down immediately.* (NIV)" The verb is in the Aorist tense which is usually used for past action. It is used here in the sense that the action is viewed as past action in that, by the time Jesus finished stating it, Zacchaeus would have scrambled down the tree.

Jesus said He "must" stay at his home. Why? There are two Greek verbs meaning "must." They are $\delta\epsilon\iota$ (*dei*) which is used here and $\chi\rho\eta$ (*chre*). Thayer says, " *$\delta\epsilon\iota$ (*dei*) seem to be more suggestive of moral obligation, denoting especially that constraint which rises from divine appointment; whereas $\chi\rho\eta$ (*chre*) signifies rather the necessity*

resulting from time and circumstance."²⁴ In other words, it was not because Jesus was tired and hungry or because He wanted to see what kind of housekeeper Mrs. Zacchaeus was - it was because He had a spiritual appointment with Zacchaeus. Jesus had spiritual business to conduct with him.

So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. Zacchaeus did exactly as commanded (the Greek words for what he did - come down in haste, are identical to what Jesus spoke). He also received Jesus. That is ὑποδέχομαι (hupodexomai), a compound = "under" + "to take." In other words, to **take** or receive **under** ones roof. He did so with joy. After all, he had gone to great lengths to attract the Master's attention and now, having received it, one can imagine what joy he experienced.

But when they saw it, they all complained, saying. . . When who saw it? You already know - the Scribes and the Pharisees and the rest o those who scoffed at His ministry. You already could have guessed that they would complain. I suspect that even some of the disciples may have complained at their Master's acceptance into the hope of an IRS agent!

He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." Guess what, if you are to fulfil the Great Commission in reaching souls for Jesus Christ, you will have to associate with sinners - maybe even tax collectors! How could anyone reacher sinners without having contact with them? More than just a brief encounter but quality time in which the way of salvation might be explained.

Stephen knew this when he was led to the Ethiopian.

Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

Acts 8:35

²⁴Thayer, "Greek-English Lexicon of the Green New Testament."

Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." Before making spiritual comments here, let's do a little math.

$1 - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{2}$ After giving to the poor,, he had only half of his goods $\frac{1}{2}$ times $\frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{8}$. If he restored fourfold to each person he cheated, then only $\frac{1}{8}$ of his goods could have been obtained by cheating or else he would not have been able to do as he said. Even then, he would be destitute. I believe the math here indicates that Zacchaeus had not cheated anyone or, at least, very few. He was not the "sinner" he was accused of being.

Why did he say this. Well, the Lord had invited Himself to Zacchaeus' home and, I think, Zacchaeus was afraid that, after hearing that he was a "sinner" would not come. This, I believe, shows how intent Zacchaeus was on having the Lord come into his home.

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Here we have a really tough theological problem. Jesus said "*Today salvation has come to this house*" and yet, no one in the house has even seen Jesus and hence never accepted Him as savior. Is "household salvation" a valid spiritual principal? Let's look at two other passages!

Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

Acts 16:14-15

And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Acts 16:30-31

In each of these passages someone was saved - Lydia and the Jailor at Phillipi. But all of Lydia's household were baptized -presumably as believers. Paul told the jailor that if he believe, not only he but his household as well. Seem to indicate that only the head of the house needs to be saved. Maybe it means both parents, if there are two, need to be saved.

But wait, let's not get things out of context!

Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

Acts 16:32

The jailor's family was saved, apparently, after the Word was spoken to them. As far as Lydia is concerned, the time element is missing. There is a gap between verse 14 and 15. Lydia opened her heart to what Paul had to say. Then, it would be logical, that between this verse and the next, Paul came to her house and "spoke the Word of the Lord to them" as he did at Phillippi.

Salvation is personal. But lets go one step further. At this point Zacchaeus has agreed to right and wrong he may have done in collecting taxes but there is nothing to show his acceptance of Christ. Of course, Christ's work on the cross had not completed and so salvation, in the current sense, wasn't possible.

I take the words "*salvation has come to this house*" to mean that as He went to be with Zacchaeus and his family, he would proclaim the way of salvation. In other words, the opportunity for salvation had come to them - it was up to them to accept or reject it.

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because

they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.' "

Now as they heard what things? That “salvation had come.” Jesus then began another parable. This will be His last (in this Gospel). It would be His last because *He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately*. As we have noted, they thought that Jesus, at that time, we going to bring a literal kingdom and they would be part of it. He needed to start preparing them for the fact that this was not going to happen. It does not seem that His message got across to any of them as we will learn in the final chapters of this book. It certainly did not get to the bulk of His disciples. All were still planning on him setting up a kingdom on earth.

How could His disciples be with him so long and here all these wonderful messages and parables and all, and still not understand what Jesus was really speaking about? Well, how can people across the country - and world - sit in pews Sunday after Sunday and (in some churches) hear the Word and still not really comprehend it. They really never learn about the true “Kingdom of God” and thus never enter in. It is a sad thing but I know of no way to prevent this.

So, He starts the parable. *“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.* “Nobleman” is an interesting word, used by Paul only here and once in Acts (17:11) and used by Paul once (1 Corinthians 1:26). It is a compound of a word we have seen many times, εὖ (eu) = “good” and γένῆς (genes) = “birth” or “beginning” and hence εὐγενής (eugenes) = well born. He was a “nobleman” by virtue of his birth. Now he was going, perhaps, to receive his inheritance, his kingdom. In the meantime, had had other plans.

This nobleman went into some far country (this is a parable so the country is not named). But, it says he planned to return. Maybe it was a business trip or maybe he wanted some more “Frequent Camel Miles.” It makes no difference, he would be gone for quite some time.

So he called ten of his servants. Why “ten?” We’ve been through this before (i.e. ten lepers, etc.). I believe it is just because it is a

round number. Technically, “servants” is δοῦλος (doulos), a bondsman. Paul refers to himself as a bondsman of Jesus Christ many times. Each received a μνᾶ (mna) - minas. If you have the old KJV, it reads “pounds.” There is some question as to how much money this really was. There is question in my mind whether each received ten minas or if the ten minas were divided among the ten servants. Some say each received ten, but this is inconsistent with the rest of the parable. We can begin where it first appears.

He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

1 Kings 10:17

Enough gold to make a shield was a considerable sum so it was a fairly large sum of money. Note, however, a mina was an amount, not a coin, so one could also have a mina of silver - which was more common. In the time this parable was given, it was usually considered to be 100 drachmae (which we considered in Luke 15:8 but reached no conclusion as to its value!). But this is a parable so it really is not terribly important other than it is, most likely, a considerable sum of money. With the money came the instructions, 'Do business till I come.'

As you might have guessed by this time in the study, “Do business” comes from a Greek word used nowhere else in the N.T. It is πραγματεύομαι (pragmateuomai). The noun form of this word is found in 2 Timothy.

No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:4

It is the basis of our English word, “Pragmatic,” “pertaining to practical or material affairs.” In other words, they were to do something practical with the mina they received.

But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' It is a bit difficult to know what this statement has to do with what has preceded. It will come into play later on and we will comment on it then.

He eventually returned and, when he did, *he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.* Here we have, in black and white what he had expected them to do. We have, in effect, the definition of the above Greek word. He wanted to know what they had done with his money. The Greek word here, again, is found only here *διαπραγματεύμαι* (diaragmateumai). Now, if you were paying attention, this should sound familiar. It is the previous word with *δια* (dia) prefixed to it. It has the meaning, “to undertake a business for the sake of gain.” He had expected them to invest in the stock market, a mutual fund, or some other enterprise which would increase the value of the money.

Some did. *Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'* That was a pretty good yield. I wonder how long the nobleman was gone. If he had been gone ten years, this would have required a 26% return on the money! The nobleman's response to this was, *'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'* At this point we can see the application of the parable. The nobleman (the one who had a “good birth”) was Christ. The “kingdom” was the kingdom of heaven. The minas, which we really don't know the value of, is what the Lord has given each of his people to use for the sake of the kingdom (both in actual money and in talents and abilities). So this man would receive ten cities in the new kingdom.

Those Christians who accomplish much here will receive much there! All Christians will be saved but the rewards will be different.

The second servant hadn't done quite as well. *“Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.’”* This would have been 17% for ten years. Still a good return. He received five cities.

Now comes the conservative person who does not like to “gamble.” *Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'* This seems worse than putting it under one's mattress but I suppose they may not have had mattresses. Should we feel sorry for this fellow simply because he wanted to be cautious with another's money? Look at what he says!

- ▶ *You are an austere man*
- ▶ *You collect what you did not deposit*
- ▶ *You reap what you did not sow.'*

He recognized that he was an “austere” man. Interestingly, this word comes from the Greek αὐστέροζ (austeros). It means the same thing in the Greek as it does in the English. According to Trench's book, the word implies a harshness and strictness but does not of necessity mean that the man was a bad man. He was just a “good business man” who expected his rightful compensation.

The other two points are parallel in thought. The man expected to get more than what he had to begin with. He expected more. This servant, having known this, consciously did wrong and not doing anything with the money. He would likely have been in better position with the master if he had invested the money and then said, “I invested the money in Enron stock and lost it all.” At least he would have shown that he tried. It is so with us. Christ has left us with things to do. Sometimes we may goof them up but I don't believe he holds us responsible for “goof-ups.” He holds us responsible for investing our time and talents (and money) in as responsible a manner as possible and consistent with what He leads us to do. So this man was without excuse!

The nobleman's response is predictable. *And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'*

He used the man's own words to convict him. He should have put the money in the "bank." I always enjoy the meaning of this word - τράπεζα (trapeza). Its meaning is found in the reference below.

*So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the **tables** of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.*

Mark 11:15

The word is the word for "tables" and, in context, the tables of those who dealt with money. He should have invested the mina down at Midstate Table and Trust! It is clear from this how the servant was supposed to use the money.

Then the man's response seemed a bit amiss. *'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.'* Why him, he already has ten? Well, the man to whom it was given to begin with did not deserve it. If you had some money to invest, which of these three servants would you give it to? Case closed!

So the servant had no minas - he received no city, not even one for the mina he had held. Jesus concludes this section (parable) with, *For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.*

So what happened to this last servant who had no cities in the new kingdom. The Scriptures tell us that.

Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer

loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

1 Corinthians. 3:12-15

All who accept Christ will be received into heaven. You may only get a small apartment down in the “poorer” part of heaven, but you will be there. How much better, though, to receive some rewards when we get there!

This section ends with *but bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.* ' "

The man who earned no money lost all his reward - but he still would go to heaven. Those who had nothing to do with this nobleman will not even receive that. They will never see the Kingdom of God.

When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.' " So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?" And they said, "The Lord has need of him." Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. Then, as He was now drawing near 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 they had seen, saying: "'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the

Lord!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!' And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Luke 19:28-40

Having told His last parable, Jesus now is ready to do what He was sent to earth to do - to enter Jerusalem and be crucified. Three places, in addition to Jerusalem, are noted in the final leg of His journey to Jerusalem - *He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet.* Going ahead of the others He was on His way to Jerusalem. "Going up to Jerusalem" indicates action - He was headed that way, not completion.

He came near two villages or districtes whose names begin with בית "Beth" which means "House." Bethany then has ענייה (hanih) attached to it and so is "House of Misery." It was both a small village and a region. He was probably in the region referred to as "Bethany." Adding פג (phage) to it makes it "House of the Unripe Fig." It was, more or less, a suburb of Jerusalem which last located on the Mount. Interesting that these two villages were named as Jesus would soon suffer misery. He would suffer the fate of the unripe figs that He meted out in Luke 13:6-7.

Finally, there is the mountain itself which is here called Olivete. That was its name. "Mount of Olives" was its description. They are one and the same place. It is more of a large hill than a mountain. A photo of the Mount of Olives today is shown below.



As may be seen, it was not far from Jerusalem.

While in the region of Bethany, He gave instruction to two of His disciples, *“Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here.”* The village “opposite” them would, no doubt, have been Bethphage. The instructions were to go and find a young colt and “steal” it. Well, that’s what we would call it if you took something without asking.

Jesus, however, added the statement, *And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’* “If” is ἐάν (if). We only have one word for “if” while the Greek has two and, in addition, has some grammatical rules governing them. If the word εἰ (ei) = “if” is used when the speaker knows the statement to be true (or, at least believes it to be so). If Jesus knew someone would ask, He should have used εἰ (ei). This is called a Type A (or 1) condition in the Greek.

Using ἐάν (if) (especially with a verb in the subjunctive mood, as here) expresses conditions which might be true (but might not). the speaker does not know one way or the other. This is Type B (or 2).

There is also a Type C condition in which the speaker assumes it is not true and is used mainly for hypothetical statements.

Well, it happened! *So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"*

Geldenhuyts says regarding this the following.

He sends two of His disciples to go and fetch a colt. He informs them that they will find the colt tied and that if the owner should ask them why they are loosing the colt they must tell him: "The Lord hath need of him." From this it appears that the Saviour had probably often passed through Bethphage, so that the owner of the colt already knew him as "Lord " and honoured Him to such an extent that he and his household would allow the colt to be taken.

Geldenhuyts, "The Gospel of Luke."

This conclusion takes away from the omniscience of Christ. Don't you think Christ knew exactly what happened? But He used a "Type B" if in His statement. Have you never stated something different than what you knew. "If you drink that sour milk you may get a stomach ache!" You know the child will but you want him to experience it for himself.

We have covered 18 and one-half chapters of Luke thus far and have not seen Jesus making numerous trips through Bethphage.

Matthew has this event in slightly more detail.

. . . saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. . . . All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'

"

Matthew indicates they brought the colt's mother with it. This is because he is writing to the Jews who would then recognize the prophecy in Zechariah

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah. 9:9

The fact that the mother was brought is not significant to us.

Well, when the disciples returned with the colt, *they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.* They did not have saddles then. Throwing their clothes on it was a sign of respect for the coming king. In spite of all Jesus' teaching, they still expected an earthly kingdom at that time. Indeed, is that not what Zachariah prophesied? But he, like other Old Testament prophets could not see he dividing line between the first and second coming.

And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. This, also, was a sign of respect for the new king. Then it really burst loose *Then, as He was now drawing near 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 they had seen, saying: "'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'"* The now openly proclaimed him to be the new king. The crowd was excited over Jesus. Seven days later they would also be excited over Jesus - but in the opposite sense!

Then, the Pharisees rebuked him - of course! *"Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."* The crowd was out of hand and the Pharisees wanted Him to stop them from proclaiming Him to be king. In a sense, He should have since he was not yet going to be their king. Instead,

however, He replied, "*Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.*" *But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."* Would that have been possible? Can stones actually "cry out." I need not answer that - you know they can't (although God, in His omnipotence, could make them do so). He is speaking in hyperbole to indicate that, first, He does not want to stop them and, even if He did, he couldn't not (other than using His supernatural powers on them).

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Luke 19:41-44

Jesus draws near to the city. As He sees it, He wept. There are only two places in the Scriptures where we are told that Jesus wept. Here and in John.

Jesus wept.

John 11:35

This was over the death of Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha. Well, now it is time for a lesson in weeping (or crying). The Greeks had a lot of ways of doing this. To be specific:

- ▶ δακρῦο (dakruo) "wept" - the word used here
- ▶ κλαί (Klai) "wept" - the word used in John
- ▶ ὀδύρομαι (oduromai) "deep sorrow - mourning" - 2 Cor. 7:7 NIV
- ▶ θρηνέω (threneo) "to wail" - John 16:20

- ▶ ἀλαλάζω (alalazo) “a joyful shout (cry)” - 1 Cor. 13:1
- ▶ στενάζω (stenazo) “a sigh” - Mark 7:34; Romans 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:2; 2 Cor. 5:4; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:9

The last three words simply mean to utter some sort of sound - it may be in sorrow (weep), gladness (praise), or other types of sound. The third word does not, of necessity, imply any outward sign, it is an inward expression.

The word in John refers to an audible weeping whereas the word used here (the first one) implies in inaudible weeping - to cry silently. Sometimes one wishes to make a display of their weeping - to let people know how sorrowful they are. In other cases, the weeping is inward and private. Apparently it was not that private since it is recorded here.

His words for the city were, *If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!* If! We have already discussed the different “if’s” This is the one for certainty. “If you knew, which you did not (but should have)...” The people of Jerusalem did not know. How could they - most of them were ignorant of the Old Testament teachings which referred to the coming Messiah.

So it is today, how many professing (not necessarily possessing) Christians are ignorant today of the details of the Lord’s second return?

But now they are hidden from your eyes. There is a day which the Lord has foreordained that we should accept Jesus Christ. If they day comes and we reject, it will then be too late. It was too late for Jerusalem, and all Israel, to repent.

Jesus then tells of a forthcoming judgement on Jerusalem - a judgement which was executed not many years later when the temple was destroyed (leaving on the “Wailing Wall” and a few other remnants. It was all because they did not know the “time of their salvation.” It is the same with all.

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians. 6:1-2

The time is now! Not next week - not tomorrow, not later today, the time is now - at least it may be now and, since you do not know when it is, procrastination is a huge mistake!

Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' " And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

Luke 19:45-48

We now come to an interesting subject - anger or, if you prefer "righteous indignation." Is it ever ok for a Christian to get mad? No! Not Mad! I once had an English teacher who claimed that only dogs get mad - we get angry. So, is it ever wrong to get angry?

"Anger" (which does not appear in this passage) is from ὀργή (orge) which originally meant "to teem" (or to denote an internal motion). But if our stomach and other organs are "teeming" within us we are angry! There are Scriptures which deal with this.

"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

Ephesians 4:26

Paul does not say “Do not be angry.” He simply says not to let it simmer and smolder overnight.

James speaks similarly,

So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

James 1:19

Even God himself has gotten His anger up.

And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Mark 3:5

So here His anger was kindled against those who were doing business inside the temple grounds. The other Gospel writers are more emphatic than Luke.

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "

Matthew 21:12-13

So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a

'den of thieves.' "

Mark 11:15-17

And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"

John 2:14-16

Sometimes I wonder about churches holding various types of fund raisers in (or at) the church. Is this not the same? Not really, the money changers were in business to make money for themselves, not for the church (temple). But, never-the-less, I think we need to be careful not to get carried away.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?" But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: The baptism of John--was it from heaven or from men?" And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." So they answered that they did not know where it was from. And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Luke 20:1-8

Now it happened on one of those days - that is one of the days after He had finally reached Jerusalem for His final week of ministry and suffering. Now that He is in Jerusalem, he does not have to go to a synagogue to teach, *He taught the people in the temple.*

He not only taught them but He *preached the gospel*. It is no surprise that, as He did so, *the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him*. For many months, as He traveled from place to place, they have been trying to trip Him up and find something to accuse Him of doing.

They wanted to know what “authority” He had for this. He did not need any authority to speak, it was what He spoke to them that provoked this question. Luke uses ἐπίστημι (ephistemi) which means, literally, “to place over.” and is here translated

“confronted.” They “placed themselves over Him (as judges)” and when He was done, confronted Him with their judgement.

They wanted to know who had given Him permission to speak as He did. He had several options:

- “I am the Son of God and need no permission.’
- “As a Jew, I have the right to speak.’
- “No one gave me permission.”
- “Who are you to confront me?”

Had He taken the first choice of action, they could have accused Him of blasphemy and taken Him and stoned him. As to the second, they were not question His right to speak - but what He said. If He said no one gave Him permission, they they could have easily said, “Then stop it!” The last choice would have only led to further confrontation.

Therefore, Jesus, being all-wise, had another alternative. He would turn it around and ask them one question for them to answer. Now, a lot of people don’t like having a question answered with a question, but these Jews didn’t seem to mind that.

He asks about the baptisms that John had performed - specially, who gave him permission to do that? (the inference here is that the same one gave permission in both cases). Jesus gave them a bit of help - He made it a multiple choice question: (1) authority from heaven or (b) authority from men. One might suppose there was a part c, “(c) not of the above.” There was not.

In engineering, I seldom gave multiple choice questions (mostly I gave problems to solve). Those ho did, usually would give 1 point for the correct answer but would subtract 1 point for the wrong answer. That way, if you really didn’t know the answer (or were not pretty sure of it), you were better off to not answer the question. this would give you 0 points rather than -1 point. The situation is somewhat similar here.

“Reasoned” is from συλλογίζομαι (sullogizomai) which, without the prefix is λογίζομαι (logizomai) which Thayer says means “to reckon, count, compute, or to make an accounting.” With the prefix, it means to do this “with” others. These men got together and each had a thought, a contribution to make. They weighed all these ideas. “If we answer (a)” He will catch us up on the fact that we ignored John.” “If we answer (b) we will be in big trouble with the people.” So, rather than to “lose points” they chose not to answer at all. They agreed that they did not know the answer. “We don’t know!”

Now, in a university setting, they would have been told the correct answer, at least, if they had asked for it. This was not such a setting. Why did Jesus not answer? You see there was no part c (none of the above). One of the two had to be the correct answer. This was not a university, this as a court case. If Jesus had given an answer, He would have opened himself up to real problems. But, since these men didn’t know the answer to His question, they had no right to expect an answer to their question.

Divine wisdom can get one out of a situation that human wisdom can not. Would you have thought to respond as Jesus did? I think now. I know I would have not.

Having put to rest the question of authority, Jesus could resume His teaching and preaching. Before we return to that, I would like to comment on two words found at the beginning of this passage - “teaching” and “preaching.” “Teaching” is from διδάσκω (didasko). It means “to deliver didactic discourses.” which is no better a definition than the word itself. However the dictionary says that such discourses are “instructive or explanatory.” In other words, the word means “to explain things.” I try to explain what Luke is attempting to teach in this Gospel. I am a teacher (I trust). Now εὐαγγελίζω (euangelizo) we have seen before - it means “to announce glad tidings (news). In modern day terms it means “to share the Gospel with others.” We are all supposed to do this but some are much better qualified to do it than others.

There is a significant difference between the two. Some are good at doing one, some at the other. Some can do both. I am not much good at “preaching” and so very seldom do it. Many are not much good at teaching and so (most) of them do not attempt that. Jesus, of course, could do both. Both are needed. We need to be taught God’s Word and then we need to be encouraged (prodded) to accept it and take it to others.

Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect him when they see him.' But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others." And when they heard it they said, "Certainly not!" Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone'? "Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Luke 20:9-18

Jesus now begins a rather long parable. It deals with a “vineyard”

which is very common to us here on the California Central Coast. There are two parables which deal with vineyards. One in Matthew 20 and this one which appears also in Mark 12. There are three Greek words which have significance here. These are ἄμπλος (amplos), ἀμπελών (ampelon), and ἀμπελουργός (amplourgos) which are “vine,” “vineyard,” and “vinedresser.” The word for “vinedresser” does not appear in this passage - it is back in Luke 13:7. Here, in its place we have γεωργός (georgos), a compound word; γε (ge) = earth and ὠργός (orgos) = to work. Hence “to work the ground.” This type of person may do anytime of farming.

In this context, since we are dealing with a vineyard, it is not wrong to refer to them as “vine-growers.” It is wrong to call them “vinedressers.” Why?

We need to start with the “vine.” Jesus refers to Himself as the Vine.

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

John 15:1-8

According to the above passage, God Himself is the “vine-dresser” who removes branches that are not bearing fruit. So the “vine-grower” is the one responsible for the vine growing new branches

and expanding. That is clear in the Great Commission where we are commanded to go into all the world and make “new branches.”

The owner of this vineyard (i.e. God) leased it out to the “vine-growers.” to tend. The Greek is, literally, “to let out” which is a term we still use for the “letting out” of property. As noted on previous occasions, one can not push a parable too far. These tenets should have take a portion of the crop for themselves - this makes no sense in terms of the parable.

The owner went into a far country. Actually, the better Greek texts (and newer translations) omit this. While on this subject, it is important to note that places like this where the Greek texts differ are mostly insignificant. Whether the owner went to a far country, near country or another part of the same country, is not important in this parable.

He went for a long time. This is important (and consistent in the texts). There was a long period of time between the time that God kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden and the time when Jesus was born.

As with all rental property, the rent falls due at certain times. In the case of a vineyard, it would not be unusual to collect the “rent” when the crop was harvested, *at vintage-time*. The Greek has simply “in season” for which “vintage-tume” is appropriate. In order to collect, he sent a δούλος (doulos), a slave or servant - the same type of “slave” that Paul considered himself to be. Paul was the New Testament equivalent of a Prophet.

He expected some of the “fruit of the vineyard” He got none. Three times he sent for his due and got none - they beat his servants. God sent many servants - prophets - in the old Testament. All were treated like Samuel.

And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not

rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.

1 Samuel 8:7

Time and time-again God sent prophets who were rejected by Israel. God wanted fellowship with Israel (i.e. the fruit of the vineyard) but got none. Note the slight change in wording each time.

- *the vinedressers beat him.*
- *they beat him also, treated him shamefully*
- *they wounded him also and cast him out*

Each one was treated worse than the previous time. Then came the time Paul spoke of.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Galatians 4:4

Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Where have we heard that expression before? Many places. Peter cited it.

For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

2 Peter 1:17

This was really a dumb idea. If they did such things to the servant, do you suppose they would treat the son any different? Of course not. But God does not do dumb things. God knew what would happen to His Son but sent Him anyway - it was part of His plan.

Actually, they did treat the owner's son differently. *'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.'* This is, perhaps, the hardest part of the parable to interpret. If I were the

owner and the renters killed my son, I would certainly make sure they didn't get any part of my estate. So, what were they thinking and what does it mean in terms of this parable?

Strangely, the fact that this makes little sense, is the heart of the parable. It doesn't make sense to you? It didn't make sense to the Pharisees and Scribes either. The parable was to cause them to ask what the meaning was.

He asks them, "*what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others.*" He also tells them the answer. Israel would not inherit the "vineyard," others, Gentiles, would. The "vineyard" then is the salvation of the Lord.

The response to this varies, depending on your translation. The KJV has "God forbid!" while the NKJV has "Certainly not!" The NASB and NIV have "May this never be!" One thing is clear, "God forbid" is wrong, it borders on profanity to be perfectly honest. I suppose the translators of the KJV wanted something that was very strong, and it is! The other translations are also strong. The phrase is $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$ (me genoito) which is an expression used greatly by Paul: Rom 3:4, 3:6, 3:31, 6:2, 6:15, 7:7, 7:13, 9:14, 11:1, 11:11, 1Co 6:15, Gal 2:17, 3:21 and Gal 6:14, is very strong.

Now wait! Does it not seem realistic that the owner would not take to task those who killed his beloved son? Why are the Jewish leaders so emphatic about denying this? The only explanation possible is this. By this time they had figured out most of the parable and realized that they were the vine-growers and that Jesus was, by means of the parable, telling them that they were going to be disinherited. No way! This would not happen, they thought.

So, because of their disbelief in this, he cites some familiar Scripture. *What then is this that is written: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone'?*

the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:22-24

The Psalmist predicted it. Jesus warned of it, and Peter told of its happening.

This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'

Acts 4:11

At the Lord's resurrection, this all came to pass and the Gospel now belongs to the Gentiles. Jesus goes on with *"Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."*

Peter explains this in some detail

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

1 Peter 2:1-8

Jesus, even though He used this parable, made it clear to the Jewish leaders that by continuing their desires to do away with Him would lead to their being disinherited. Note that this is not a permanent cutting off, for in the years of the Tribulation, which the church gone, God will again be dealing with Israel.

And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people--for they knew He had spoken this parable against them. So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor. Then they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent.

Luke 20:19-26

Say what you will about the Pharisees and other leaders, they were not stupid. *The chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people--for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.* They knew they had "been had" on that round. They would have to seek some other way to trap Him into doing something they could accuse Him of doing. What could that be?

So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous,

that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor. They sent forth spies (a term used only here) of people who are “sent down into” - into the midst of a crowd where they can mix and not be detected.

these spies can pretend to be like those around them. “Righteous” here is not used in an absolute sense but simply means “innocent of wrong doing” like those around them. Robertson says they did this . . . *That they might take hold of his speech. These spies are for the purpose of catching hold of the talk of Jesus if they can get a grip anywhere. This is their direct purpose and the ultimate purpose or result is also stated, “so as to deliver him up, ”to give from one’s side to another. The trap is all set now and ready to be sprung by these “spies.”*²⁵

The spies developed a scheme to get Jesus into trouble with the Roman government. *“Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth”* Talk about buttering someone up. This praise is so thick it almost make you sick. The words are failt clear except “you do not show personal favor.” Literally, the Greek text says, “You do not receive a face. ” In other words, He did not judge according to the “outer appearance.”

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16:7

So these men were “really sincere” in wanting to learn Jesus’ teachings - sure they were!

Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” Now there is a

²⁵A.T. Roberston, “Word Pictures”

simple enough question. The Jews had been paying taxes to him for quite some time. Of course it was lawful. But maybe they could get Jesus to say that they should be having respect for God instead.

"Why do you test Me?" Jesus knew what they were up to and hence asked this question. The newer Greek version do not have this saying. On the other hand, in similar passages in Matthew and Mark (Matthew 22:18, Mark 12:15) the expression is found so He may have said this here as well. Such actions would do no good.

*Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for **God cannot be tempted** by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*

James 1:13

His first response was, *"Show Me a denarius."* This was a simple enough request. This was a silver coin minted by the Romans. It was easy enough to produce one. The next question may seem innocent enough but wait to see what follows it. *Whose image and inscription does it have?"* Well, whose do you suppose it might have had - being a Roman coin? *They answered and said, "Caesar's."* They still haven't got the point of Jesus' questions. So now comes the final question, *"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."* Do you recall the money changers in the temple? They were there to take coins such as these and exchange them for coins suitable for an offering to the Lord. Therefore the denarius was something that belonged to Caesar's world and other things belonged to God. There was no refuting these statements.

But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent. Note the word "in the presence of the people." Had it been in private they could have twisted His words around to their liking. In front of this crowd, there was no chance to change the interpretation of what He said. They went away with "their tails between their legs."

The fact that they marveled at His response would indicate that the

spies sent out were not as dead set against Jesus as those who had sent them out. They probably did not know Jesus that well, if at all, and so were amazed at what had transpired.

Those, today, who have yet to meet Jesus face-to-face have much to marvel over as well - if someone will take the time to introduce them.

Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife." And Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."

Luke 20:27-38

In this passage we come up with another sect, the Sadducees. There were sects among the Jewish leaders just as there are among the churches of today. The Sadducees, as noted in this text, did not

believe in any sort of resurrection. If you would like to remember this, just remember that this is why they were “Sad-u-see!”

They had another test for Jesus in keeping with their beliefs. We will not repeat the rather long question. It had to do with a man dying without issue, and none of his brothers were able to have children by her, what would happen?

To understand this you have to know the law.

"If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6

The reason for this is also stated above. Now the question asked by the Sadducees is a rather exaggerated one. Seven brothers had no success. Perhaps she was unable to have children. This is not the issue. The issue is that she has now had seven husbands. So the question comes . . . *Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become?* Now, since they did not believe in a resurrection, it was a moot question. But, if you did, now there was a problem. Which brother would this poor lady stay with?

All of you who have been married at one time or another know the answer to this question. “. . . till death do us part!” Marriages may be “made in heaven” but they only last while here on earth. When we reach heaven, all of us (including us men) will become brides all over again - to the groom who is Christ.

Jesus successfully answered their question but did not leave it at that. He spoke of the lives we will have in heaven: there will be no more death, they are equal with angels and, best of all, are sons of God.

But, we need proof!

And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. . . . Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

Exodus 3:2 & 5-6

From the brining bush God did not say, "I was the God of your father--I was the God of Abraham, I was the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The word is "am" He was still the God of these people who were long gone from the earth. Therefore, the Old Testament has, at least, one reference to a resurrection. Recall David's comfort when he realized he would see his dead sone again one day - *For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.*

Here is a clear teaching of Jesus with respect to where we will stand after our physical deaths. He instructed, not only the Sadducees, but us as well.

Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." But after that they dared not question Him anymore. And He said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David? Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." ' "Therefore David calls Him 'Lord'; how is He then his Son?" Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, "Beware of the scribes, who

desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation. "

Luke 20:39-47

The Sadducees were, apparently quieted. so the Scribes stepped in. They said, *You have spoken well.* They acknowledged that He had the right answer for all of these questions. The more questions they asked Him and He answered well, the worse their position would become. So, *they dared not question Him anymore.* They know when to quit. and that is the end of the story ... or is it?

No, they wanted to quit but Jesus did not. He wish to continue on answering questions - even if they were not asked. The first question He asked was, *"How can they say that the Christ is the Son of David?* He turns to the Book of Psalms.

A Psalm of David.

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

Psalm 110

Without spending a lot of time on this Psalm, we simply point out it is one of the Messianic Psalms, looking forward to Jesus Christ.

Finally, He “calls a spade a spade” and takes His stand against the Pharisees and Scribes *in the hearing of all the people*. He made sure He had the widest possible audience as He said this condemnation.

"Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, . . . Up to this point there is no overt condemnation. There is an implied one. These were not the sort who went around doing good, they were those who were above everyone else. They wore long robes - that makes you real pious(?) They made loud greetings in the market places so their presence might be made known. Finally, they were so good they deserved the best seats wherever they went. This sounds like condemnation to me!

But now, *who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers*. Here is the real condemnation. They had no regard for widows. Their prayers were prayers for prayer's sake - they were devoid of content. At least, God is fair, *These will receive greater condemnation.*"

What is the result of all this? Well, you will have to wait to another chapter!

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

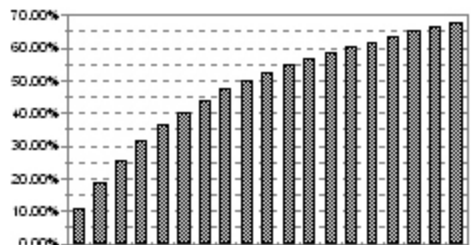
And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Luke 21:1-4

In Marks account He was “sitting opposite” the treasury. In other words, He had sat down to rest and the treasured happened to be opposite of where He sat so, as He rested, He observed what was going on there.

He *saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury*. He says nothing negative about this. There is nothing at all wrong with rich people putting money into the “collection.” As a matter-of-fact, there is a saying which is generally quite true, the “20% of the members provide 80% of the churches income.” This is not so in Berean Bible Church. The giving for the first 8 months of this year looks like this.

If you take the top 19 families in our church (giving-wise), you still do not reach 80%! We are not a typical church!



To continue, the rich were giving to the treasury.

Some were, no doubt, giving out of a “pure heart” and some were giving because “it was the thing to do” and some because they would have felt guilty if they did not. There may have been all sorts of motives.

This is not what He saw. His focus was on a “certain widow” who put two mites in the “plate” Today it would have been equivalent to putting two penny’s in the plate. I suspect that many, today, would not look at such action with much favor. “That’s pretty cheap of her!

What only the Lord could have known, however, is that this is all this poor woman had. It would have been equivalent to you looking at the balance in your check book and writing out a check for that amount in placing it in the offering. In this sense, Jesus commented, *“Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all.”*

Indeed, proportionately speaking, she had put in the most. Jesus then further observed, *“these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God.”* Note that He does not condemn or speak against those who gave thus, it was just an observation. There is nothing wrong with giving according to your income. There is no admonition that one should give everything.

At this point, let us turn to several other Scriptures.

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:44-47

There is evidence that some of the Early Christians practiced a form of communism (note the small c). There is no evidence that this continued and, as a matter-of-fact, later on other churches had to come to the aid of the church at Jerusalem.

Other New Testament references do not teach such a practice. so the

rich were doing nothing wrong (assuming their hearts were right). Jesus does not condemn them.

What Jesus observed was that she *put in all the livelihood that she had.* How would she then live? She would have to put total dependance on God. That is the way we are all supposed to live. According to both Jewish and Christian standards, she was a widow and deserved support. That is where our first Deacons came from (Acts 6).

You do not get to get rid of all your possessions to be a good Christian. You have to “give” them to the Lord - not the church treasurer. You have to allow the Lord to direct you in how they are to be used. This woman must have had a clear direction from God that she should give the two mites or she likely would not have done so.

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "These things which you see--the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." So they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?"

Luke 21:5-7

Jesus was, apparently, near the temple and so some were looking at it and commenting on it. It is the same in church today, as the preacher is preaching some are looking at the stained glass windows and other things and concerning their minds with them.

They say “beautiful stones” and “donations.” This seems like an unlikely pair of words. “Donations” may be, in a sense, “beautiful” but not in the same sense. “Gifts” is from ἀνάθημα (anathema). The word is often translated “accursed.” It refers to something that is set aside for a specific purpose. If that purpose is for judgement, it is “accursed.” If it is for a good purpose, then it

is something set apart for good. Specifically, it was something which was hung on the walls or columns of the temple for adornment. So, the two words do have a common connection.

Perceiving the fact that their minds were wandering, He turned to the temple and predicted that one day this would be totally destroyed - not one stone upon another. Do you see any temple in Jerusalem today?

The reply seems a bit strange. They did not seem to be surprised that it would be destroyed. It had happened before. The question is when? It is like today when we know that some act of terrorism will occur, but when? They want to know the future, presumably they may have made plans based on this.

What “sign” will there be? Sign is σημεῖόν (sameion), a very common word. In the Old Testament times, God used signs to attract the attention of His people.

And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

Luke 2:12

So, it was natural for the people to want some sign that this was going to take place.

At this point I shall insert some comments by Geldenhuys regarding this portion of Luke.

After all the revelations of the determined hostility of the Jewish leaders towards Jesus, it was already clear as daylight that they (and also the majority of the people who followed their example) were not going to turn to God or to acknowledge and honor His Messiah and Son. The end of the people with their leaders, their city and their temple will, therefore, be utter destruction. So terrible, the Saviour warns them,

will be the judgments soon to burst forth over the people of Jerusalem who so persistently rejected Him that the events accompanying those judgments upon the guilty city will be the foreshadowing of the Final Judgment at His second advent. For this reason, Jesus' prophecies in connection with the events of the End-time are so closely linked up with those concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that it is extremely difficult in studying the Prophetic Discourse (Matt. xxiv and xxv; Mark xiii; Luke xxi. 5-36) to distinguish between the portions of it that refer to the Jews and Jerusalem and those referring to the Final Judgments at His second advent in power and glory. This is especially the case with Matthew and Mark. In Luke the classification is much clearer. We must remember that the Gospel writers do not profess to give a full account of Jesus' words and discourses. Each one merely reproduces certain parts of what He said. From the nature of the case it was impossible to commit to writing everything that was spoken by Jesus, with the result that some of Jesus' discourses occur in one Gospel and others in another. In this instance Luke, although he does not give such a full report of the Prophetic Discourse as Matthew, was evidently the most successful in so relating it that we can see comparatively clearly which portions refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and preceding events, and which refer to the Final Judgment. And according to the principle that the more obscure portions of the Word should be understood in the light of the clearer portions, the exposition of the Prophetic Discourse as written down in Matthew and Mark should be given in the light of its clearer account in Luke. As will appear from the exposition, verses 5-24 deal practically throughout (except verses 8, 9) with predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the preceding events, although in a secondary sense even some of these predictions also refer to the

Last Things. But in verses 25-8 Jesus looks beyond the foreshadowings of the Final Judgment to that Judgment itself and its attendant signs, in association with His second advent. In verses 29-33 He exhorts His hearers to watch for the former set of events, which are to be accomplished within "this generation", while in verses 34-6 He warns them (and through them the whole Christian church) to watch faithfully for the latter set of events, which are to take place at a day and hour known to none save God the Father

Geldenhuis, "The Gospel Of Luke" - Pages 523-524

Most Scripture prophecies, especially, those of the Old Testament, but this one too, have a "near" fulfillment and a "far" fulfillment. The far fulfillment is complete and accurate. The near fulfillment is not complete and may not be quite accurate - it is a sign of what is yet to come.

And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them. But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately." Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom

which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls.

Luke 21:8-19

His answer was they should be careful. They should not pay heed to people like the fellow to the right who is a false prophet and means nothing. His message was “*For many will come.*” Many of these guys will come, deceiving the people. Note that they will come “in My name.” They will come saying that Jesus sent them, or, as the last time draw near, they will may claim to be Jesus Himself. He warned them to ignore these. I do not know how many false prophets came between Jesus’ crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. I doubt that there were very many. So, the, . this would likely refer to the full fulfillment of the prophetic words.



What, then, should they look for?

- *When you hear of wars and commotions*

This was the first sign. Matthew and Mark say, “wars and rumors of wars” Commotions is ἀνατασασία (anastasia) which means, primarily, “a state of confusion.” We will leave it at that because it sounds a lot like what we have in the Middle East today. There is great confusion as to whom the Palestinians look to for leadership. There is no planning for peace because we can not even get parties together to discuss it. That’s what the word means. It is a word that is either associated with war or soon leads to war. Hence we come to the other Gospels which have “rumors of war.” So what to do? Nothing! Again, I suspect that this refers to the final fulfillment rather than 70 AD.

- *do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first.*

while these things are signs that the end is coming, they do not mean it is here. We should not be overly concerned about what is going on in the Middle East - it has been going on for years and, no doubt, will continue. These things must happen first, but they are not the end. *"The end will not come immediately."*

- *"Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences."*

He lists a number of "signs." One nation pitted against another. This is not new - it has happened since the beginning of time. Abraham and Lot quarreled over who would get the best land. "Kingdom against kingdom" is a parallel tohugh.

There will be earthquakes in various places. "In various places" is something of an enigma. Some translators associate it with the earthquakes, some with the famines and pestilences, and some with both. Since none can agree, I will take another literal translation, "There shall be great earthquakes and (earthquakes) in various (uncommon) places."

There have been earthquakes in certain parts of the world throughout all recorded history. There have been a number of "great" ones. I suppose there have been some, also, in strange places. But now, earthquakes in strange places will become common. Now, with respect to *famines and pestilences*, I assume we might say the same thing. Abraham and his family went to Egypt because of a famine. Moses and the Israelites were driven from Egypt, in part, because of various petulances. There are people starving today and there are diseases and maladies (usually associated with the starvation) today. They will probably get worse.

- *"There will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven"*

It is not clear from the Greek text whether the "fearful sights" will

be “from heaven” or not. I rather suspect they will be - I have already seen enough “fearful sights.” On the other hand, the whole world witnessed some “fearful sights” on 9/11/2001! It is not of particular importance - the “great signs from heaven” are what are in focus here. I have not yet seen any great signs from heaven. There is one great sign from heaven I am looking for - when Christ comes for His Church.

Again, I wonder if there were any signs before 70AD.

We need not wonder what this sign will be.

But before all these things. . . Before any of these things, one thing will be fulfilled, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD. There is no temple in Jerusalem today - there will be, the plans are there, the materials are stockpiled, all that is needed is the land where it is supposed to be. One day, that temple will be destroyed as well (most likely).

They will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. We must ask, who does this refer to? It does not refer to heathens. It does not refer to Jews (except for Jewish Christians) because no one else would be drug into synagogues for judgement. Ancient historians (i.e. ancient times, not people) give us this:

On July, 19th, 64 AD, a fire started in Rome and burned for nine days, finally destroying or damaging almost three-quarters of the city, including numerous public buildings. Rumors spread that the fire had been planned by Nero. And according to Tacitus (below), to put an end to such rumors, Nero blamed the disaster on the Christians.

"Therefore, to put an end to the rumor Nero created a diversion and subjected to the most extra-ordinary

tortures those hated for their abominations by the common people called Christians. The originator of this name (was) Christ, who, during the reign of Tiberius had been executed by sentence of the procurator Pontinus Pilate. Repressed for the time being, the deadly superstition broke out again not only in Judea, the original source of the evil, but also in the city (Rome), where all things horrible or shameful in the world collect and become popular. So an arrest was made of all who confessed; then on the basis of their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of arson as for hatred of the human race. " (Tacitus, Annales, 15, 44)

"Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or werenailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames. These served to illuminate the night when daylight failed. Nero had thrown open thegardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or drove about in a chariot. Hence, even for crimnals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but glut one man's cruelty, that they were being punished

He ends this thought with this fact would turn to an occasion for testimony - as , indeed, it did and will in the future. How?

Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

"Settle in your hearts" is translated differently in the newer translations - "So make up your minds..." The difference hinges on two Greek words here. τίθημι (tithemi) which means "to set, put, place" or "to put down" or "bend down" and other such actions. The other word is καρδία (kardia) - "heart." So, the NKJV has a fairly accurate literal translation but one sometimes has to take idioms into account. "Hearts" in 30AD are what we consider "minds" today. Hence the newer translations are more accurate

when the idiom is taken into account.

“Make up your minds” to do what? not to προμελετάω (promeletao). The word is found only here in the Scriptures. The NKJV translates it “meditate beforehand.” The “beforehand” comes from the prefix, προ (pro) and the root word μελετάω. Jesus is, therefore saying, not to think about what you are going to say ahead of time. In general this is not good advice! Paul writes to Timothy:

*Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. **Meditate** on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

1 Timothy 4:14-16

Paul says we should meditate on “these things” - the doctrine of our faith. Paul also wrote,

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

So, then, why does Jesus say not to study beforehand? It is not necessary in the situation He describes - *I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist*. Jesus is not talking about witnessing to the unsaved or preaching or teaching the saved. He is referring to times we Christians will “stand trial” for their faith and will have to say just the right things. In this particular case, the Holy Spirit will give us the words to say (if we are ever in this position).

You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated

by all for My name's sake. Thank the Lord that you and are not (yet) living in the situation He describes. Many Christians in centuries past have been persecuted. If we loose the “War on Terrorism” which is really a war between the Jewish-Christian faith and Islam.

But not a hair of your head shall be lost. By your patience possess your souls. It is hard to see how not a “hair of the head will be lost” when He just said that “some of you will be put to death.” I presume this statement to mean that nothing would happen that the Lord did not allow to happen - even to the hairs on your head.

By your patience possess your souls. Patience would be better translated “endurance.”

And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 10:22

But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 24:13

And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Mark 13:13

If we endure, We shall also reign with Him.

If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

2 Timothy 2:12

But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:5

The Christian life is one of endurance. That is why the author of Hebrews said how we must run this race.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Hebrews 12:1

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Luke 21:20-24

While this passage, in general, might be applied to the end of the age, it most definitely applies to the destruction at 70 AD. The last phrase confirms this - . *And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.* This prophecy definitely forshadows the age of the Gentiles (this present age).

These things all happened. There is no temple today. While Jerusalem has been rebuilt, it is not the Jerusalem that existed then.

"And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of

those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

Luke 21:25-28

As noted previously, the events mentioned thus far deal with events already passed - long past. Here, however, the events must refer to things yet to come. There are a number of passages which make mention of the sun, moon, and stars.

*Behold, the day of the Lord comes,
Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,
To lay the land desolate;
And He will destroy its sinners from it.
For the stars of heaven and their constellations
Will not give their light;
The sun will be darkened in its going forth,
And the moon will not cause its light to shine.
"I will punish the world for its evil,
And the wicked for their iniquity;
I will halt the arrogance of the proud,
And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*

Isaiah 13:9-11

*When I put out your light,
I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
And the moon shall not give her light.*

Ezekiel 32:7

*Blow the trumpet in Zion,
And sound an alarm in My holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble;
For the day of the Lord is coming,
For it is at hand:
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,*

*Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains.
A people come, great and strong,
The like of whom has never been;
Nor will there ever be any such after them,
Even for many successive generations.*

Joel 2:1-2

*The earth quakes before them,
The heavens tremble;
The sun and moon grow dark,
And the stars diminish their brightness.*

Joel 2:10

*Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.
Come, go down;
For the winepress is full,
The vats overflow--
For their wickedness is great."
Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision!
For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of
decision.
The sun and moon will grow dark,
And the stars will diminish their brightness.*

Joel 3:13-15

There are also references in the New Testament, a similar one in Matthew and one in Revelation (Rev. 8:12). We have not yet seen such signs - if we are Christians, we will not see such signs!

The rest of the verse is a bit confusing except in the NIV - *On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.* The “nations” are everyone except the Jews (it could include them as well). Everyone will be feeling two emotions which are unique to this passage. συνοχή (sunochē) is related to the verb which is found in a number of passages and means, literally, “to hold together.” When used in an emotional sense it comes out like those expressions below.

*When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia,
Paul was **compelled** by the Spirit, and testified to the*

Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 18:5

*For the love of Christ **compels** us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;*

2 Corinthians. 5:14

*For I am **hard pressed** between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*

Philippians 1:23

Have you ever felt that everything was crushing in upon you? That is the emotion expressed by this word. You just don't know which way to turn.

Then there is ἀπορία (aporia). The alpha, as always, means "without." The rest of the word means "to have resources, a way out or across." Together it means "to have no way out" or "to have no way to turn." The words go together, if you are "hard pressed" "not having a way out of the situation" you have the emotions expressed here.

This is caused, not just by the sun, moon and stars, but by *the sea and the waves roaring*. "Roaring" is from the Greek word for "echo" which is rather much like the ways done when they are stirred up. Did you know that the sea can cause echos? Being on a lightship for two years with the fog horns blasting for part of that time, I have experienced standing on the deck and hearing the fog horns echo off of the wave ahead of us. It has the effect of intensifying sounds.

Signs in the sun, moon, and stars are not hard to visualize (i.e. shooting stars, solar flares, lunar eclipses, etc.) but fear from the sea is something else. If you are out in the middle of a sea in a big storm, it can be a really fearful place but, here, we are not talking about being in the middle of the sea (or are we?).

The term "sea" or "seas" is used, in addition to bodies of water, other things.

*In that day they will roar against them
Like the roaring of the sea.
And if one looks to the land,
Behold, darkness and sorrow;
And the light is darkened by the clouds.*

Isaiah 5:30

*Be still, you inhabitants of the coastland,
You merchants of Sidon,
Whom those who cross the sea have filled.
And on great waters the grain of Shihor,
The harvest of the River, is her revenue;
And she is a marketplace for the nations.
Be ashamed, O Sidon;
For the sea has spoken,
The strength of the sea, saying,
"I do not labor, nor bring forth children;
Neither do I rear young men,
Nor bring up virgins."*

Isaiah 23:2-4

While we are to interpret the Scriptures literally except when it is obvious that they are used figuratively, I believe there is enough figurative use of the "sea" to believe that we are speaking of unrest among the far flung nations of the Earth.

Furthermore, I will stick my neck out and point out a belief I have.

The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Genesis 1:2-5

There are those who, like myself, believe that this passage in Genesis is not a reference to the original creation (Genesis 1:1) but God's restoration of a world that had been judged and condemned (perhaps one inhabited by angels and dinosaurs). Here, again, we have mention of the "waters" and also changes in the sun, moon and stars. Here it is in the reverse order. So, Jesus speaks of a great judgement yet to come.

. . . men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Actually, the Greek text says nothing about "hearts." (Newer translations omit the word). The word, ἀποψύχω (apopsucho) is used only here. It is a compound of ψύχω (psucho) which is "to breath." and ἀπο (apo) which denotes seperation. Thus it is to separate ones breath from him - to take ones breath away literally. In this senses, "hearts failing" is a reasonable translation.

It is easy enough to see how one would melt away in fear from the horrific things taking place. But then He includes the word "expectation." The word, προσδοκία (prosdokia) is used in one other Scripture.

And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."

Acts 12:11

The people knew what to expect when Peter was (would have been) executed. It was a know fact what would happen. The men at the end of the age, similarly, will have ample notice of what is in store and this is the reason for the great fear. These things will be "coming" on the earth. They were not here now, they will be coming from heaven. I do not know what all these will be but *then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*. That will be the most awesome sight. He will be coming in a "cloud" νεφέλη (nephele), the same as below.

Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:17

The clouds are not rain clouds. They are the same as in Hebrews.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Hebrews 12:1

The Lord will return with all His saint to reign.

Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near. Whose redemption? The same that is referred to below.

*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them **in the clouds** to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17

On day, probably not very far away judging from the signs we see today, it will be you and I whose redemption will be completed when we are taken home to be with the Lord “in the clouds” - clouds of saints who preceded us.

Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Luke 21:29-33

When buds appear on a tree, we know that fruit will soon appear (unless it is a “barren fig tree.”) The same is true of events that foreshadow the great events to come.

We now come to a troubling pronouncement. This is that “this generation” would not pass away before all these things take place. How are we to interpret this? The Greek word, γενεά (genea) has various interpretations. It may refer to the life span of a common man. It may refer to the average number of years from one generation to the next. It also, however, may refer to the lift of a particular nation or group of people. Hence we have verses like that below.

*Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of **a crooked and perverse generation**, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

Philippians 2:14-16

Here we are not referencing a specific number of years, but the year of the Gentiles which would continue to be crooked and perverse. This, is the primary interpretation.

However, as we said at the beginning of this discourse, there is also a near fulfilment which, again, referred to 70 AD.

My words will by no means pass away. It has been 20 centuries since Jesus claimed His words would not pass away - and they haven't! We still study what He taught. We still have much to learn of Jesus' teaching. It will continue to be so until the times He has here referred to.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.

Luke 21:34-38

This chapter concludes with a warning - "But take heed to yourselves" This is always a good warning. It is good in both senses - beware that you are not doing what you ought not and neglecting something you ought to be doing.

In this case it is things we should not be doing. We should not let "our hearts be weighed down." I remind you that today the word would be "minds" rather than "hearts". We need to practice good mental health and not have useless or unfruitful things on our minds. Jesus lists three things:

- *carousing*
- *drunkenness*
- *cares of this life*

The first two items, hopefully, are not concerns of ours and we shall not spend time on them. The third item is closer to home. As time goes by, the “care of life” seem to get worse and worse. It is only a couple of years since we had to worry about “Homeland Security” or being blown up in a building or airliner. It has only been recently that we’ve needed to know something about Islam and what it teaches, . . . and school shootings and . . . and . . . and!

Then there is

- *That Day come on you unexpectedly.*

“Unexpectedly” is an unfortunate translation. “Suddenly” would be better. I trust we all “expect” the rapture and tribulation to come. We don’t know when and when it does there will be no warning, it will come “suddenly” and there will be no time to take care of “last minute details.”

It will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Well, that sounds like bad news - if you read it wrong. First, the Greek has “sitting” not “dwelling” on the face of the earth. More important, you and I will not be “sitting” there, we will be caught up in the air. You will if the “cares of this life” have not prevented you from dedicating your life to Jesus Christ (.i.e. being saved).

Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. "

- Watch!
- Pray always!

These are Jesus’ orders for us. If we don’t, He says we will not be saved!? No, He does not say that. He says we should do these two things so that we might be “counted worthy.” When? He says when we *stand before the Son of Man.* Paul writes

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

This is when we stand before Christ. Some will receive rewards, as did Paul (we presume), some will receive nothing but be saved “as by fire.” This is not the final judgement of Revelation.

The rest of this chapter tells what Christ was doing during the days and nights of the final week in Jerusalem. It should really be considered along with Chapter 22 and we shall do so.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people. Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

Luke 22:1-6

We have now arrived at the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry. It was the week of the Passover. Having Jesus present in Jerusalem during this feast was viewed as a strong threat to the priests and scribes and so it became necessary to kill Him. It was necessary in their view of things and, even more important, it was necessary in God's plan for man.

The person who would play an important role in all this was one of the Twelve, namely, *Judas, surnamed Iscariot*. In my opinion, based on the Bible text, this man is wrongly hated. Up until this point in time, so far as we can tell, he was just as faithful and loyal following of Jesus as the other eleven. But, *Satan entered Judas*. In Matthew's Gospel it was not until the actual Passover Feast that Satan did this.

Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

John 13:27 NASB

Is this is contradiction? Three times we are told that the Holy Spirit came upon Samson (Judges 14:6; Judges 14:19; Judges 15:14) In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not enter a person permanently

as He does today. Likewise, Satan could come and go as he pleased. Moreover, it is likely that Satan was in control of him for the entire week. So, it was not, in a real sense, Judas who was the betrayer but Satan himself.

So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them. Interestingly, it was, apparently, not the Jewish leaders who influenced Judas to betray Jesus but only Satan. Satan led him to the chief priests whom, I suspect, would have been surprised to have him come to them. The text says they *were glad*. This indicates a bit of surprise on their part - surprise and delight!

We are told they *agreed to give him money*. This presents another difficult question. If Satan was controlling Judas and causing him to betray Jesus, why was it necessary to offer him money? I believe the answer is the same as why God planted the “tree” in the middle of the garden. Eve did not have to partake of the fruit to become a sinner - she became a sinner as soon as it entered into her heart to consider taking it. While Satan was in control of Judas, he had to be some physical transaction to make it concrete.

So he promised. . . The word is ἐξομολογέω (exomologeō) a compound word meaning “to professes something publicly.” By doing so, in today’s terms, he had become a “contract killer.” But there was more to it than that. What was it he promised? What was it the Jewish leaders really wanted? *Opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.* He Jesus been betrayed publically, there would have been a great protest. They sought to get Him in private. In the previous chapter we were told *in the daytime He was teaching in the temple*. There were people, His followers, around Him each day as he taught. It would not have been a good idea to attempt to do anything then.

In the last chapter we were also told, *at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet*. He did this each night. By now I do not need to say that the purpose of going there (other than to get some sleep) was to have time to pray and meditate. So, for this

week, these were His activities. So, if the daytime was not a good time to betray Him, what was the other choice?

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" ' Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

Luke 22:7-13

The week was drawing to a close. It was time to prepare for the Passover Supper. The day when the *Passover must be killed*. What on earth does that mean? It has two meanings!

*For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.' " Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and **kill the Passover** lamb.*

Exodus 12:19-21

From the day the Lord led Israel out of Egypt, the Passover was celebrated and the key part of this observance was the slaying of the “Passover,” that is, the lamb chosen for this purpose. There had to be the shedding of blood for this to happen. But the more important meaning is found in the following passage.

*Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed **Christ, our Passover**, was sacrificed for us.* **1 Corinthians 5:7**

This would be a unique Passover celebration, one like no other. This time the Passover Lamb would be the Lamb of God, our Passover. It would be His blood that would be shed for us, the entire world, not just the Jews.

He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." This statement may be a bit misleading. I doubt that it meant they were to “cook” the meal. Rather they were to find a suitable room and table where they might “recline at table” for the Passover.

(Note, they likely did not sit on chairs at the table as in the picture but reclined at it as noted above).



Jesus then does something similar to what we read not very far back. When He needed a donkey, He sent His disciples, telling them where and how they would find it. Now we have, *when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters.* You say, “Gee, that could have just about been any man!” Not so. Who was it at the well in Samaria who came to get water for the family? Not the man, the woman. Who was it that came for water at the well and ended up marrying Isaac? Men did not, as a rule, carry water pitchers. Jesus knew they would,

on this occasion, spot one. Geldenhuys has this to say about this occasion.

If Judas could find a good time where the Saviour would hold the paschal repast, he could arrange with the Jewish authorities to arrest him unexpectedly that evening. Because of their violent hatred of Him and their fear of the masses, and also from fear that He might, during the celebrations of the seven days' feast following upon the paschal repast, gain still greater influence among the people, the Jewish authorities would not have shrunk from availing themselves of such a favourable opportunity even though it was Passover Eve. The Saviour was aware of Judas's diabolical plans and of His persecutors' murderous determination to have Him done to death. He had, however, still very much to say to His disciples during that Passover Eve, and in particular He desired first of all to celebrate for the last time with His disciples the Paschal Feast that pointed on to His perfect work of redemption, and then to institute the Holy Communion in its place. Therefore Judas must not succeed in delivering Him to His enemies until everything was completed. And because the Saviour never made use of miracles to defeat the wicked schemes of His enemies when He could do so by taking natural precautions, He kept the place where He was going to celebrate the Passover with His disciples a secret right up to the end.²⁶

Up to this point I would agree with these statements without question. Her then goes on to say,

Probably the Saviour had made arrangements earlier in the week with one of His followers who owned a

²⁶*The Gospel of Luke, Geldenhuys*

house in Jerusalem that he should keep one of the rooms in his house in readiness for Him and His disciples to celebrate the Passover there (verse 12). In addition, He had probably arranged with him that at a given time during the morning before the Passover he should be with a pitcher of water at a certain place near the portal where his disciples would enter the city, so that some of His disciples could meet him there and be taken by him to his house. Because it was the custom in Palestine that only women carried the pitchers of water, it would be easy for the disciples to notice this man with the pitcher and to follow him.²⁷

Here is where we disagree, as before. I don't believe Jesus ever resorted to using cunning tricks to accomplish what His will was. Telling the man to save the room and, especially, to walk around the city with a pitcher of water, is nonsense. Jesus was God in the flesh - truly God, truly man.

Paul wrote,

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Phillippians 2:5-7

While He humbled Himself, He never gave up any of the primary attributes of God, Omnipotence, Omniscience, except Omnipresence (He, as a man, could only be in one place at a time, it would seem). He had the power to cause these things to happen and to know they would.

²⁷Ibid

You shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" They were then to ask the man for the use of the room Jesus knew would be there.

Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover. And so it was. They entered the room and made preparations. And, as noted, they and Jesus only knew where it was.

When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Luke 22:14-18

Finally, the time came. Thirteen men gathered in an upper room at which "Passover" would become "The Lord's Supper." Christ had a *fervent desire* to observe this feast with Him. The reason would be known before the meal was completed. "*Fervent desire*" a Hebraism in the Greek text. The text has, ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα (epithumia epethumesa), literally, "I desired with desire." Biblical Hebrew has virtually no adverbs in it so, if one wish to intensify a verb, it is compounded, as here. I suppose the only point in noting this is to indicate that, contrary to the opinion of many Christians, Christ did not speak Greek but Hebrew (technically, Aramaic).

He knew what awaited for Him later that evening when His suffering would begin. He knew He would never again eat the Passover meal with his apostles in this manner again. Note that He did not partake

of the cup, only His disciples did. Note also that the cup contained the “fruit of the vine” (i.e. wine). But more on that later.

Now, we come to the actual institution of the Lord’s Supper (or “Last Supper” or “Lord’s Table”).

And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

Luke 22:19-20

There is a parallel passage in Matthew 26:29-29 and Mark 14:22-24. The words given here seem to match up the best with those given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:24-26 (but, of course, Luke as Paul’s traveling companion may have got the exact wording from Paul).

This observance or “ordinance” has caused a great division among the three sectors of the “Christian Church. (Roman Catholics, Orthodox Churches, and Protestant Churches).

The Roman Catholics believe in “Transubstantiation.” Simply put, they believe that when the priest blesses the cup, its contents somehow actually change into Christ’s blood. Likewise the bread actually becomes a piece of His body (I don’t know which part of it). Such a belief can certainly not be supported by the Scriptures!

Consider just this: *He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."* If the bread became His body, what was that thing or person holding the bread? He same is true of the cup. If I were to hold up a photograph of my Uncle Henry, I would say, “This is my Uncle Henry.” It would not be necessary to say “This is a photograph of my Uncle Henry.” It would be quite obvious that it was not actually my uncle. The same is true here. It was not

necessary to say “this is a symbol for my body.”

The more “Orthodox” churches (Lutheran, Episcopalian, etc.) Have a somewhat different view called “Consubstantiation.” It is their view that the bread is still bread but becomes the “veritable” body of Christ. Now, according to my dictionary (i.e. my computer’s dictionary), veritable = actual or factual or genuine. So what’s the difference? I believe it is a subtle difference to avoid the ridiculous interpretation of transubstantiation. They claim it is still bread but has the same effect as if it was actually Christ’s body.

We take the “real” literal view (i.e. literal in the sense one would normally interpret such statements) and believe these are only symbols.

Having said all this, I still object to the practice of taking the bread that is left over and putting it on the refreshment table. Yet, it is just plain unleavened bread but it was part of a sacred observance and should be treated as such.

Nowhere is it stated how often this should be done - daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or what? I have seen churches that do it weekly (Episcopal). I have been in churches where it was done quarterly. Most (like ours) seem to do it monthly.

*So continuing **daily** with one accord in the temple,
and breaking bread from house to house, they ate
their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,*

Acts 2:46

It is apparent that the early church met daily and celebrated the Lord’s table daily. Churches no longer meet daily which would seem to indicate that the observance should be done each time the church meets - weekly. There is the problem with this that if you do something too often it becomes common place and loses its meaning. The problem with quarterly is that, if you happen to miss church that day, you go six months between observances. Monthly seems the most practical.

It can also get out of hand as it did in Corinth. Paul condemned them for their practices.

Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22

They were substituting the Lord's Table for their own dinner tables. It is not to be fed physically, but spiritually.

But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

Luke 22:21-23

Jesus now stated that Judas was with Him *on the table*. This expression is a precise translation of the Greek. In those days when they "reclined at table," it would have been needful to rest upon the edge of the table and so he truly was "on the table."

He then states that He will be going "as it has been determined." Judas was only an instrument. The overall plan was the Lord's. Never-the-less, regardless of whether or not it was the Lord's plan, he pronounces "woe" on the one betraying Him (Judas).

Now we see something of the fact that the Apostles were human beings like you and me. They began to "discuss" who would do such

a thing. Since they all were “on the table,” from Jesus’ description, it could have been any of them.

“Is it YOU?!” “No, I wouldn’t do that, what about you?” On the one hand, the Apostles might have surmised that they were all above doing such a thing. Yet, Jesus said that one of them would. It seems to be there is an enigma here. Should we, as Christians, ever have doubts about what a fellow Christian is about to do?

But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.

Galatians 6:4-5

Paul seems to say that we are each responsible for our own actions - not the actions of others. Yet,

*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you **look out** not only for his own interests, but also **for the interests of others.***

Philippians 2:3-4

I wonder what Judas said or thought! If I were at the table, I believe I would have a hard time believing that any of those there would do such a thing. On the other hand, I have seen people who I thought were good Christians (in some cases friends as well) do things nearly as bad.

There is a warning in this that each of us must be on guard against the sort of thing that Judas was about to do.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of

the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:11-12

There is also another aspect of our lives that we need to take careful heed to. This is shown next.

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

Luke 22:24-27

The questioning that went on between them led to a dispute. The word is φιλονεικία (philoneikia) which is found only here. A related form of the word is found in the following.

*Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. **But if anyone seems to be contentious,** we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.*

1 Corinthians 11:13-16

The word is a compound word - "love (brotherly)" and "strive" and so it is a strive amongst brethren. It is the type of strife that happens but should not. One can see how the former questions arrive at such a place. "Is it you that is going to betray our Lord?" "Hey, it is not me, I am one of the most important apostles!" "You are not, I am!"

and so it would go.

It is unfortunate that the same sort of thoughts and questions arise in the church today. Is the person who cleans the toilets to be considered less important than an Elder.

Jesus gives two examples:

- *The kings of the Gentiles*
- *Those who exercise authority*

ἔξῃ

First He mentions “Kings.” They exercise “lordship” over their subjects. In Christ, there is no lordship except the Lordship of Christ. Those who “would be greatest” would not be those who held power over others to make them do their bidding. Likewise, they would not be “benefactors.” This is the only place the noun, εὐεργέτης (eurgetes) is found. The verb is found once.

. . . how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Acts 10:38

Literally, the word means “doing good,” as translated above. In the connotation above it would mean to be “good guys” by giving hand outs from time-to-time. Neither of these are the attributes of a true Christian leader.

Who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Jesus poses an interesting question. I would suspect that if one went into a restaurant today and asked this question, the answer given would be “the one who sits.” That would be the general attitude and this is what Jesus expresses. *Is it not he who sits at the table?* But look at the situation. The Twelve are there eating and drinking. The Lord is serving the food but not partaking. If He is our example, and we wish to be like Him, we must be the ones who do the serving.

There are many “great” TV evangelists today - many are good men and some do considerable good. But it is the person who serves in the church that accomplishes the most for the Lord.

But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 22:28-30

Having rebuked the Twelve somewhat for their bickering, He also compliments them that they continued with Him until the end - in spite of His trials. Jesus would soon leave His earthly ministry behind. If it were to continue, the “kingdom” as manifest here on earth, the baton would have to be passed. So, indeed, He passed it on to the “Twelve.” If one would betray Him, how would the remaining eleven judge the twelve tribes of Israel?

This really is a trick question that involves the use of twelve twice. There were, at that time, twelve apostles. The “Twelve” were not representatives of each of the twelve tribes. Peter and Andrew, James and John were all from the same tribe!

Thus, how many Apostles Jesus would bestow the kingdom to would judge over the twelve tribes. Would Paul be included? Would Judas’ successor be included? We can not say. Someday we shall know.

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." Then He

said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

Luke 22:31-34

Jesus now turns His attention to one of the Twelve - Peter - whom He addresses as "Simon." He informs him that Satan has asked for him that he may "sift him like wheat." The word "asked" is from a Greek word used only here. ἐξαίτέω (exaiteo) without the prefix means "to ask" In the Middle Voice, as used here, it means to "ask for oneself." With the prefix, one might be inclined to say it means "to ask out." Actually, it means to choose someone (or something) for oneself. Satan wanted to have Peter to himself.

He had had Jesus to himself for forty days - to no avail. But going back to the Old Testament, we note the following.

Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

Job 1:8-12

The Lord gave Job over to Satan's control - for a time. Satan was unable to change Job either. Now Satan wants Peter to "sift like wheat."

“Sift” is from σιναίζω (sinaizo) which is a derivative of the greek word for “sieve.” To put it into modern English, he wants to expose the “true” Peter. He wants to tempt him into doing contrary to what the Lord wants for Peter.

Then the Lord says something I think is very unusual and encouraging. Our church has a prayer chain so we can pray for people who need prayer. We have left one person off this prayer chain.

Jesus Christ Himself prays for us! Have you ever considered that fact - the Lord Himself praying for our needs. Matthew enlarged upon this.

For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the

world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

John 17:8-21

These two passages are remarkable in that they teach that Jesus rays for His people (including Peter)!

But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." Notwithstanding His prayers, Peter would deny the Lord. He would deny Him but would also return to Him. When he returned he would be a far different Peter who would become a leader and "strengthen his brethren!"

But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." How many of you would be inclined to say the same thing - especially standing in the presence of the Lord Himself? We all tend to think we are stronger than we are. We think we can do 'most anything; when the time comes, we can not.

In the day-to-day world of Christianity, we tend to think we are like the Lord, all powerful. We are not. We are really weak in our resolve. True, there have been many martyred for their faith but not many who will do so willingly. Peter expected that he would fight for His Lord to the death - if need be. He was not being unreasonably optimistic, that is just the way we are.

Then come the Lord's cutting words! *I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."* The crowing of the cock is significant.

Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming--in the evening, at midnight, at

the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning--

Mark 13:35

The crowing of the cock marker the third watch of the night - 3 AM to 6 AM. It would not take long for Peter's faith to be severely tested. Mark has the cock crowing twice. This is, most likely, of little significance, the cock crows quite a few times.

This must have been a severe blow to Peter's pride. We all need such blows from time-to-time to keep us where we ought to be. We shall see more on this later.

And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing." Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end." So they said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

Luke 22:35-38

And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing." This is a reference to Luke 10:4 where He sent them out to evangelize. As they went, they found that their needs were met - Jesus saw that. They were lacking in nothing. Now the situation will be different.

They will need money, they will need swords. He cites from the Prophet Isaiah.

*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an*

offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand

He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53:10-12

The time of the fulfillment of this was at hand. It was time for His apostles to prepare. They had two swords amongst them and Jesus said that was sufficient. Why the swords? We must move on and find out.

Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation." And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who

was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

Luke 22:39-53

They left the upper room and went to the Mount of Olives. This was His “custom.” (NASB) The word is ἔθος (ethos) from which we get “ethic.” “Custom” is, perhaps, too weak a word. It might be better translated as “rite.” We have already seen that this was His practice every evening. It was a practice that Judas and the Jewish leaders were counting on.

When He came to the place . . . The Greek is specific, “The place,” a certain place. What place? We can only assume that Jesus returned each evening to a certain place on the mount. Robertson says “*The place of secret prayer which was dear to Jesus.*”²⁸ He then instructed them to pray. Specifically, they were to pray they would not enter into temptation. In the Lord’s Prayer we are told to pray “lead us not into temptation.” He instructs them to do so here. After commanding them to pray, *He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw.* How far one could throw a stone is immaterial. The point is that He prayed alone. He did not remove Himself far from

²⁸A.T. Robertson, “*Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament.*”

them. Four times the Psalmist wrote the following.

*Be not far from Me,
For trouble is near;
For there is none to help.*

Psalm 22:11

*But You, O Lord, do not be far from Me;
O My Strength, hasten to help Me!*

Psalm 22:19

*This You have seen, O Lord;
Do not keep silence.
O Lord, do not be far from me.*

Psalm 35:22

*Do not forsake me, O Lord;
O my God, be not far from me!*

Psalm 38:21

Paul also wrote,

*And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, **though He is not far from each one of us**; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'*

Acts 17:26-28

He knelt down and prayed. I find this a bit curious. How are we supposed to pray? How did they pray in Jesus' time? They prayed in various attitudes.

- Standing (the tax collector and the Pharisee)
- Prostrate on the ground
- Kneeling?

There are a few examples of man kneeling for prayer but most of the cases where when a person knelt down before another to beg mercy from them. So then, I would assume that the kneeling position is used when we wish to be face-to-face with our benefactor and converse with them. Here it was between Jesus and His Father.

Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." The "cup" is used in a number of ways in the Scriptures. I suppose, in a way, they all deal with what the future has in store for us. This is what the Psalmist said.

*O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You maintain my lot.*

Psalm 16:5

*I will take up the cup of salvation,
And call upon the name of the Lord.*

Psalm 116:13

This pray has often been a problem for me. I am torn between two thoughts.

- Pray for what you want or need unconditionally - not "If it is your will."
- Don't pray at all, if it is the Lord's will, it will hapopen, if it is not, it won't.

There must be a middle ground. What is it?

And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

Matthew 6:7-8

Then, if He knows what we need before we even ask, there is even

more reason for not bothering to ask. The answer to all this is that we are not supposed to pray to obtain things - we are to pray because the Lord has commanded us to pray. This is why we are supposed to do a lot of things - because the Lord has commanded us to do them.

Still, this seems like an awful weak prayer.

- *if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me*
- *nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.*

In other words, it doesn't matter what I pray, I want the Lord's will for my life. So, why did Jesus pray this way. Paul told us.

who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:6-8

The **man** Christ Jesus: *"take this cup away from Me"*
 Christ, **God in the flesh**: *but Yours, be done.*

Each of us has an old nature and a new nature that are at war within us. We need to be sure that what we ask for is something to fulfill the needs of the new nature and not the old.

Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly

Do you ever feel like you can not pray any more? Do you feel prayed out? Do you not know what to say or pray for?

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with

groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:26

With the aid of the angel, Jesus' prayer became even more fervent. He prayed all the more.

Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. This is the only place that sweat - ἰδρώς (hidros) is used. I guess there wasn't a lot of sweating in those days. But, seriously, there has been considerable controversy over this passage - there need not be. Some say He actually sweat blood. Others say He didn't. The Greek text is quite clear. It clearly says "as (if it were) great drops of blood. Jesus shed His blood on the cross, not in the Garden. Never-the-less, He did sweat profusely - so profusely, it was like blood pouring out of a wound.

When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Had the words "from sorrow" been absent, I would have been very disappointed with the Apostles. But, they were "sleeping from sorrow." I would assume from this that they had prayed but, in their grief and sorrow, sleep had overcome them. Have you ever gone to sleep while you were earnestly praying for something? I have The disciples did.

He woke them and again warned them to pray lest temptation overcome them. It would not be long for, as he spoke, Judas appeared with a crowd behind him.

While He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. It was not enough that Judas was to betray Him, but with a kiss? I suppose this is where the expression "the kiss of death" came from. Now there are a number of passages I tried to use with the girls when I was in high school (Romans 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14) where we are to greet each other with a "holy kiss." Seriously, there is no other place in the Bible where a kiss was so used.

It took the Apostles by surprise. *When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.* Their question about striking with the sword was a natural one. Had not Jesus, earlier that evening, before they went out, instructed them to get swords? Most of them operated in a reasonable fashion - they asked the Lord what they should do. This is what we need to do. When we are faced with a tough situation, we need to ask the Lord what to do before we do anything else.

One of them, however, did not ask. Matthew and Mark, like Luke, do not say who it was or which ear it was. John tells us it was Peter (John 18:10) and that it was the right one. It would be my first guess! Peter used his sword and cut off the priest's right ear. I do not know of any significance to the ear or, especially, the right ear. It was probably what was accessible to him

"Cut off" is used only here and in the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark (Matthew 26:41 and Mark 14:47). It is ἀφαιρέω (aiphereo), a compound word = "to take" and "away" so "to take from." There is no reference in this word to "cutting" although, with a sword, that is most likely how you would take ones ear from them. *But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him.* It was all part of the plan that Jesus should be arrested and cutting of the priest's ear would only lead to complications. It is interesting that "ear" in this verse is not the same as the last - it is a diminutive form of the word. I would assume that Jesus used this to minimize the situation.

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. Jesus rebukes them. They could have taken Him easily, without swords, if they had had the courage to do so. They were cowards and wanted to take him in secret. This is always the way with Satan. He attacks us when we are most vulnerable - alone.

But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Jesus gives Himself up and yields to them. He does not so so without the comment that this is all due to the power of darkness.

Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance. Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Luke 22:54-62

They arrested him and took him to the "high priests home." This seems like an unlikely place to take Him. The punctuation here is unfortunate. There should be a comma after "high priest's house." The comment about Peter is part of the thought of this sentence. BUT Peter! Peter followed at a distance. The good news is that Peter even followed. No mention is made of any of the other apostles following Him. Peter, at least, as going to see what was going to happen.

They had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. Who is the "they" in this sentence? John paints a slightly different picture.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.

John 18:15-16

John must have followed also but not with Peter. John “had connections” with the high priests and thus had access to the courtyard where the mob who had come to arrest Jesus were standing about. They had set a fire to keep warm during the long hours of that dreadful night.

Peter would not have been able to get into the courtyard except that John spoke up for him with “her who kept the gate.”

Peter sat among them. And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." From here we have to put together what happened by looking at the other Gospels as well. From John we learn it was the girl that kept the gate who asked him this question the first time. John had vouched for his admittance and so she would certainly assume that he was with Jesus. She made the accusation after scrutinizing him carefully. Peter’s response is well known. “I don’t know that man!” In a way, he was right, he didn’t really know Jesus. There are many today who would be assured of being Christians but they do not really know the Jesus who is supposed to be their Savior.

And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" There are some apparent discrepancies in the texts here

And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth." But again he denied with an oath, "I do not know the Man!"

Luke says that Jesus said "Man, I am not!" But Matthew says it was another girl who questioned him. Probably, since it was not really a woman's place to do such things, some men joined in the accusation. Either that or Peter was just using "man" as an exclamation as we often do. Anyway, this make twice.

Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" How did this person (actually, there were a number in the group). Know he was a Galilean? There are two ways. First, John tells us the following.

One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed.

John 18:26-27

According to John, this man (or one of the men) had seen him with Jesus. Do others see you with Jesus enough to know that "you are one of them?"

On the other hand, Matthew has this to say.

And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.

Matthew 26:73-74

His Galilean accent betrayed him if nothing else. We might consider this a court of law with different witnesses saying how they recognized this man. In any case, they all did.

Matthew tells us how vehemently Peter denied Christ. He “cursed and swore.” Sometimes our language betrays us. We do not speak like Christians (i.e. “Galileans”) and our language is not always that befitting Christians.

Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So Peter went out and wept bitterly. The Lord was correct in His assessment of Peter. However the Lord assesses you, it is correct also - He knows you through and through.

The crowing of the cock was what turned Peter around, causing him to realize where he stood. It was like the fruit in the garden which allowed Eve, and eventually Adam, to see what kind of persons they were. Peter knew where he stood. The question was, what would he do then? You will have to turn to the Book of Acts to find the answer to that question. There is yet one reference to him in this Gospel, but it does not answer this question.

Now the men who held Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?" And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

Luke 22:63-65

This passage more-or-less speaks for itself. They finally did to Jesus what they had wanted to do for quite some time. They

- mocked Him
- beat Him
- blindfolded Him

- struck Him on the face
- asked Him to prophecy
- spoke blasphemously against Him

“Mock” is ἐμπαίζω (empaizo), a compound word, the root of which is derived from the word for “child” and means to play as a child. Hence,

*And do not become idolaters as were some of them.
As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and
drink, and rose up **to play**."*

1 Corinthians 10:7

The prefix means to “play on another” or, in other words, “To make fun of another person.” You know the old saying “sticks and stones may break my bones but nasty words will never hurt me.” The saying is not true. When they did not get the desired response from Jesus by making fun of him, they took to beating Him. “Beating” is from δέρω (dero) which originally meant “to skin” an animal (or person?). It thus came to mean “beat” in the sense that the beating would remove some of the skin. It describes a very cruel beating. Then they went back to mockery. They blindfolded him. “Blindfold” is not the best word for they did not have a “blindfold” to put on Him, they just covered His face with some sort of cloth. Then they struck Him and wanted Him to identify the one who struck Him. He could have, very easily done so but He did not. He did as was prophesied by Isaiah.

*He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.*

Isaiah 53:7

(This passage is repeated in Acts 8:32). All the while the mob was saying terrible things about Him. It was certainly not a legal trial!

The ACLU would have been on Jesus' side in this case!

As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe. And if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God." Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?" So He said to them, "You rightly say that I am." And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

Luke 22:66-71

When day came the actual (i.e. legal) trial began. They took Jesus, who must have been beaten very thoroughly by this time, into their chambers. The questioning was simple - only one question need be asked. They asked Him whether or not He was the Messiah. If He said "no," they would have most likely warned Him about what He had been doing and let Him go. He could not say "No!" You see, technically, there were four ways this could have gone:

1. He was not the Messiah, said so, and was let go.
2. He was not the Messiah but said He was
3. He was the Messiah but said he was not.
4. He was the Messiah and said so.

The first option was not an option since He was the Messiah. The second option would have been rather dumb and is also not possible since He was the Messiah. Lastly, He could of answered "Yes." Jesus knew His accusers and knew if he were to use option (4), they would have interpreted His answer as being option (2) - He was claiming to be the Messiah but He really was not.

So, Jesus said what He did. He told them they would not believe Him or discuss it with Him so there was no point in giving an

answer. That would have left the trial in a state of limbo. So, Jesus made matters even worse. He went further than to claim He was the Messiah, He made the statement "*Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.*" This was tantamount to claiming to be God. They so interpreted the statement and asked Him flat out, "*Are You then the Son of God?*" He, indirectly, answered their question in the affirmative. He claimed to be the son of God.

The trial was over. He had admitted to what they wanted. He had committed the worst of all blasphemy, claiming to be the "son of God."

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say." So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man." But they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place."

Luke 23:1-5

Having been tried and found guilty, the crowd and the supervision of the chief priest, no doubt, let Jesus away to Pilate. Luke goes not tell us much about the man. Below is a short biography of him as he relates to Jesus.

Pontius Pilate [suicide ca. 38 CE]

5. *The best known Roman governor of Judea to later history because of his role in the accounts of Jesus' execution. Pilate probably came from the ranks of cavalry officers [equites] from which Rome regularly drew the prefects of smaller occupied provinces like Judea. His appointment as prefect of Judea in the latter half of the reign of Tiberius---when the brutal Praetorian captain Sejanus was de facto ruler of Rome---is confirmed by reports in Josephus & a stone found in 1962 at Caesarea Maritima [the capitol of the Roman province of Palestine], inscribed: "[Thi]s Tiberieum [Pon]tius Pilatus, Prefect of Judea, [mad]e."*
6. *The Pilate described by Josephus & the Roman historian Tacitus was a strong willed, inflexible military governor who was insensitive to the religious scruples of his Jewish & Samaritan subjects & relentless in suppressing any potential*

disturbance. This stands in sharp contrast to the impression conveyed in the Christian gospels which, for apologetic reasons, portray him as reluctant to execute Jesus. Pilate's decade long tenure [26-36 CE] testifies to both his relative effectiveness in maintaining order & to the aging emperor's lack of personal attention to administrative affairs. The ruthless slaughter of thousands of Samaritan pilgrims by Pilate's cavalry [ca. 36 CE], however, led to such a strong Palestinian protest that Pilate was eventually recalled to Rome. Tiberius died before his return; but the new emperor [Caligula] relieved Pilate of his command & exiled him to Gaul [Vienne-on-Rhone]. In good Roman military fashion, as one who had suffered defeat & public disgrace, he committed suicide.

For references to Pilate outside the NT see:

Josephus, Antiquities 18.35, 55-64, 85-89, 177; War 2.169-177; Philo, Embassy to Gaius 38; Tacitus, Annals 15.44.

Note, in particular, Pilate was not Jewish - he was a Roman. As such, he was not concerned with Jewish laws or customs and so was not to be expected to have anything to do with Jesus' conviction. However, the Jews were not allowed by the Romans to execute people and hence had to obtain sanction from the Romans in order to do so.

The crowds accused Jesus of claiming to be the Son of God. No, that was not it at all. He would have not been concerned with that - that was something for the Jews to worry about. What did they say? "*We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.*"

Let's break this down into four parts.

1. He was *perverting the nation*.
2. He was *forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar*
3. *He Himself is Christ*
4. *He Himself is a King*

As in most cases such as this, enough truth is mixed in with lies and

errors as to make it difficult for the uninformed to see which is which. Item #1 says He was “perverting” the nation. The word is διαστρέφω (diastrepho) which means to turn one astray, to lead them in the wrong way. From their point-of-view, He was doing this in a way, he was claiming to be the Messiah and had drew a large number of disciples. So, we will give them that accusation #1 is, from their viewpoint, correct.

The second accusation could not be further from the truth. We have already seen that His words were contrary to what they accused Him of (Matthew 22:17-21; Mark 12:14-17; Luke 20:22-25) - they should pay Caesar his taxes. They were completely wrong in this accusation.

Thirdly, they accused Him of claiming to be the Messiah. This he did as we saw in the last chapter. He did not actually use these words, but in claiming to be the Son of God, He, in effect, admitted to being their Messiah. They were correct in this.

Lastly, they accused Him of claiming to be “King.” Is this correct? Well, when He was born the Magi sought he who was born King of the Jews.” He did not their claim it, the Magi did.

When it was time to enter Jerusalem, he had sent his disciples to get a donkey and, ay that time, cited from the Old Testament prophets regarding the coming “king.” (Matthew 21:2-5) This is not really going around claiming to be king. When He entered the city, the people called Him king and he would not rebuke them for it (Luke 19:37-40). Other than this, there is no indication that this accusation is correct. Later, before Pilate, He would admit to such a charge, but that comes later.

So they were right on two out of the four accusations and, to some extent, on a third. The interesting this is noted below.

1 He was *perverting the nation*. If He was, Pilate would not have been very concerned. The Romans were not very concerned with Jewish affairs. The were right, Pilate wouldn't have cared

2 He was *forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar*. This was dead wrong but would have certainly gotten Pilate's attention.

3 They were correct, but, again, Pilate could care less about that.

4. *He Himself is a King*. This was, at the time an incorrect accusation although it might be implied. Pilate would be interested, but not alarmed, if there was to be a change in jurisdiction.

So, the point is, the accusations which were correct were of no interest to Pilate. They had to invent some others in order to get Pilate's attention. Note that Pilate did not speak to the first three accusations. He went straight to the only one he was concerned about.

Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Regardless of what ones assessment of Pilate, he wanted to here the accusations directly from the accused. Was He claiming to be the king of the Jews?

"It is as you say. Jesus here admits it. He was, indeed, King of the Jews (but not a worldly king). So, there the one accusation that might stand up has been made and attested to. *Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."* So long as this man was not usurping his authority, he really did not care. The Jews had had a long string of puppet kings and one more would not make much difference. Pilate wanted nothing to do with their case.

The Jews could do nothing but try harder. *But they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place."* They wanted Pilate to know how wide spread this man's influence had become. Then maybe he would take notice.

When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to

Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

Luke 23:6-12

This was not to the Jew's advantage. When Pilate found out where Jesus was from, he realized he had an out in the case. This was Herod's territory - let him worry about it. So then the Jews would have to take Him to herod. Fortunate for them, Herod was also in Jerusalem.

The meeting would be humorous if it were not for what was at stake. *When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him*

At this point, Jesus had an ally in Herod, not a judge! This was not to last very long. *He questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing.* Herod did not get what he had hoped for and this infuriated him. With this disappointment - and since *the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him,* Herod had to do something. Since the Jewish leaders continued to rail against Him, he joined them, he and his soldiers.

I suppose this is no different than today when, faced with a moral dilemma, go along with "the crowd." When the "fun" was over, Herod clad Him in a "gorgeous robe." Let us stop here for a

moment and examine this “clothing” in detail. The word is ἐσθής (esthesis) and is found 8times in the New Testament. We shall classify it below.

- ἐσθής λαμπρός (Bright Clothing) here & Acts 10:30, James 2:2-3
- ἐσθής ἀστράπτω (Dazzling clothing) Luke 24:4
- ἐσθής λευκός (white clothing) Acts 1:10
- ἐσθής βασιλικός (royal clothing) Acts 12:21
- ἐσθής ρμπαπος (shabby, Also James 2:3, see above)

Clothing provided by God shines as in the second and third words above. That provided here on earth may be white or bright colored or “royal.” This is the type of clothing they put on Jesus - to mock him. All of his adult life He had only owned and wore a plain white robe.

This section, after noting that Jesus was sent back to Pilate, closes with an interesting observation. Pilate and Herod became friends over this incident where they had been enemies before. What does this teach?

Christ is a divider of men. Those who follow Him have fellowship with Him and with each others. Those who do not follow Him seem to band together for their own protection and to share their contempt.

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, "You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed nothing deserving of death has been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him" (for it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast). And they all cried out at once, saying,

"Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas"-- who had been thrown into prison for a certain rebellion made in the city, and for murder. Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will. Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

Luke 23:13-26

The ball was back in Pilate's court. He still had nothing for which He could hold Jesus, nothing serious anyway. So, he had to make a decision, once and for all. To do so, it was needful that he first "convene" the court. He had *the chief priests, the rulers, and the people* brought before him to make his final decision.

He repeated their accusations concerning His leading the people astray. He then reminded them that he had heard Jesus out in their presence. Then, as judge, he issued his verdict - *I have found no fault in this Man*. He also pointed out that Herod had not found anything either. So, the final statement was *indeed **nothing deserving of death** has been done by Him*. He did not say that Jesus was a completely innocent man, but merely He had nothing for which he could impose the death penalty. (The ACLU was not there to protest it either!) This is why he makes the statement that he will "chastize" Jesus. "Chastize" is from $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\upsilon\omega$ (paideuo) the base of which is "child." It thus means to chasten a child (or as a child).

By this time, the word had taken on some stronger meanings including “to flog.” according to Thayer. However, the words “scourge” and “flog” are used a number of times in the New Testament and none of these are the translation of this word. So, what punishment Pilate had in mind will remain unknown to us. It was not, however, capital punishment. After that, Jesus would be free to go.

Then we have a statement of verse 17. Verse 17 is not in most of the better Greek texts. Nor is it really of that much importance. The statement is found, however, in Matthew and Mark.

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished.

Matthew 27:15

Now at the feast he was accustomed to releasing one prisoner to them, whomever they requested.

Mark 15:6

The missing verse probably belongs because the text reads rather awkwardly without it. *And they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas"* With regard to the selection of Barabbas or Jesus, we note the following (obtained from Clark's Commentary on the N.T.)

A notable prisoner-Barabbas.- This person had, a short time before, raised an insurrection in Jerusalem, in which it appears, from Mark 15:7, some lives were lost. In some MSS., and in the Armenian and Syriac Hieros., this man has the surname of Jesus. Professor Birch has discovered this reading in a Vatican MS., written in 949, and numbered 354, in which is a marginal note which has been attributed to Anastasius, bishop of Antioch, and to Chrysostom, which asserts that in the most ancient MSS. the passage was as follows: (Greek text not included here) . . .

Which of the two do ye wish me to release unto you, Jesus Barabbas,

*or Jesus who is called Christ?*²⁹

As Jesus, or Joshua, was a very common name among the Jews, and as the name of the father was often joined to that of the son, as Simon Barjonah, Simon, son of Jonah; so it is probable it was the case here, Jesus Barabba, Jesus, son of Abba, or Abbiah. If this name were originally written as above, which I am inclined to believe, the general omission of JESUS in the MSS. may be accounted for from the over zealous scrupulosity of Christian copyists, who were unwilling that a murderer should, in the same verse, be honored with the name of the Redeemer of the world.

There are two rather interesting (at least if you have a legal background) books called "*The Trial of Christ*," one by Frank John Powell and the other by Alexander Innes. These go into the trial in much more detail and, in general, show that Christ was not given a legal trial, not by Jewish standards and not by Roman standards.

Anyway, apparently it was a custom to release one prisoner on the feast day and so Pilate had a perfect scheme. Offer them Jesus, who had really done nothing to cause any significant uproar or a vile murderer Barabbas. The choice would be obvious - they would not want Barabbas released.

But, that is not the way it was. That was not part of God's plan. *They all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas"* It did not go as Pilate has predicted. So, he went

²⁹Since the words may have been spoken in Hebrew (or Aramaic), there is even a stronger parallel here. "Barabbas" is "Bar-Abbas", son of the father. Secondly, the name "Christ" may not have been used but the term Jesus often used, Son of the Father (2 John 1:3). So then it would be a choice between: "Jesus, son of the Father (God)" or "Jesus, son-of-the father (one word)." An interesting parallel.

on. He was in a tight fix. *Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them.* He attempted to appeal to their sense of decency, to their sense of right and wrong. He hoped they would reconsider and release the right man. *But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"* Their minds were made up. How could they do such a thing? I suppose just as easily as we sometimes do. Our minds are made up and we do not want to be confused with the facts! We are not open to input from others.

Pilate must have thought the people misunderstood and didn't comprehend what they were asking for. This time he would make it very clear! *Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go."* This, again, was to no avail.

But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. One might ask whether or not Pilate should have had the moral courage to resist the people's demand. The fact is that, under the law, assuming anything was being done lawfully at the time, the people were the ones who choose who would be released and so he had no alternative.

And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will. Well, God's will had been done because this had all been foreordained by God. One wonders what Barabbas went on to do after that?

Going back to Pilate for a brief look. He had reasons for wanting to release Jesus. Matthew gives us one.

While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

I wonder what Mrs. Pilate had to say when he arrived home? However, he probably feared his wife less than the Jewish leaders for Mark tells us the following.

Pilate answered and said to them again, "What then do you want me to do with Him whom you call the King of the Jews?" So they cried out again, "Crucify Him!" Then Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, "Crucify Him!" So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

Mark 15:12-15

John spells out Pilate's efforts in greater detail.

Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar." When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that

is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away.

John 19:6-16

Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus. Who this Simon was is not known, Cyrene. Cyrenia was on the Northern tip of what is not Lybia. They were present at Pentecost

But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. Acts 11:20-22

. There were synagogues there as evidenced by

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Acts 11:20-22

It was they who begin to preach the Gospel to Gentiles as well as Jew. Some of them became prominent in the church at Antioch.

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:1

But, as for this man who carried Christ's cross, we know nothing. It is fitting that it be his way. Jesus had already laid down this principal.

Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Luke 9:23

So this man did nothing that each one of us is not supposed to do! So Jesus is treading up the road that led to Golgotha along with this Crynian man.

And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" ' For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers

with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew:

**THIS IS THE KING
OF THE JEWS.**

Luke 23:27-38

There was also a great multitude of people who followed the procession. I suspect it was like any other event such as this. Soe were concerned about Him. Some wanted to put Him to death, but most were just curious. It was the women who did the mourning. I don't know that this means that the men were not concerned - it is just that en do not usually express their feelings this way.

Jesus then gave another prophetic utterance, directed to the women who were mourning. What does it refer to? Remember he is speaking to the women who were mourning - mostly "unsaved" women. Matthew Henry has this to say.

We have here the blessed Jesus, the Lamb of God, led as a lamb to the slaughter, to the sacrifice. Though many reproached and reviled him, yet some pitied him. But the death of Christ was his victory and triumph over his enemies: it was our deliverance, the purchase of eternal life for us. Therefore weep not for him, but let us weep for our own sins, and the sins of our children, which caused his death; and weep for fear of the miseries we shall bring upon ourselves, if we slight his love, and reject his grace. If God delivered him up to such sufferings as these, because he was made a sacrifice for sin, what will he do with sinners themselves, who make themselves a dry tree, a corrupt and wicked generation, and good for

nothing! The bitter sufferings of our Lord Jesus should make us stand in awe of the justice of God. The best saints, compared with Christ, are dry trees; if he suffer, why may not they expect to suffer? And what then shall the damnation of sinners be! Even the sufferings of Christ preach terror to obstinate transgressors.

Jesus knew what he had to do. Do you know what you have to do? Do you know what you have to look forward to? If you do not, you need to turn to Jesus and accept Him as the Lord of your life.

So, He was led up the hill with two others, criminals. Why were there two others? Just chance? Perhaps the reason will be seen later.

They reached the hill called Golgotha. The meaning is explained in John's Gospel.

And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha,

John 19:17

It may be of interest to note that the Greek word used here is κρανίον (karaniun) which we, obviously, get cranium (hence "skull.") .

It received its name from the appearance of the outcropping when viewed from the side. One person has said, "*The place could have been given the name because skulls were found there, or because it was a place where executions were normally carried out, or because it was shaped in the form of a skull.*" Most think it was the latter.

There they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. Previously we described the various crosses used for crucifixion. We have not yet discussed the method

itself. Some form of it existed back in the days when Israel was in Egypt.

Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

Genesis 40:19

It would appear that here, the person was dead before being put on the "tree" or cross. It continued until Constantine abolished it. Since you are all familiar with the primary aspects of crucifixion, we will not go into these. Instead we shall look at some of the things that are not as well known.

Contrary to what we see in pictures, Christ as not clad in anything when He was crucified - the artists have put something on Him for modesty purposes. A person was either nailed to the cross or tied to the cross. While the nailing seemed more cruel, the tying actually was because the prisoner lived much longer and suffered much more that way. Christ was nailed to the cross.

*The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the **nails**, and put my finger into the print of the **nails**, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."*

John 20:25

If it was a standard Roman type cross - the type we think of, His hands would have been nailed to the cross beam. His ankles would have been nailed to the vertical beam, usually with the same nail. It has been said that there was a sort of seat (literally, a large pin) on the vertical member that He could sit on. This relieved the pain in His hand but increased it in His feet - so take your pick.

In most cases, the prisoner was nailed (or tied) to the cross after it was erected. In Jesus' case, tradition, at least, says He was nailed

to it before it was erected. "Medicine" was usually given the prisoner - wine mixed with myrrh (gall) - to somewhat ease the pain of the process. It stupefied the senses. This is why we read the following.

*They also gave me gall for my food,
And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

Psalm 69:21

*they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to
drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.*

Matthew 27:34

Jesus would not be deprived on His senses while on the cross. He bore the entire agony without any "anesthesia." Unger has this to say.

If the nailing was the most painful mode in the first instance the other was more so in the end, for the sufferer was left to die of sheer exhaustion, and when simply bound with thongs, it might take days to accomplish the process; for usually a strong pin projected out of the central stem, on which the body of the sufferer rested. Instances are on record of persons surviving for nine days. Owing to the lingering character of this death our Lord was watched, according to custom, by a party of four soldiers (John 19:23), with their centurion (Matt.

27:66), to prevent the person being taken down and resuscitated. Fracture of the legs was resorted to by the Jews to hasten death (John 19:31). This was done to the two thieves crucified with Jesus, but not to him, for the soldiers found that he was dead already (John 19:32-34). The unusual rapidity of our Lord's death was due to the depth of his previous agonies, or may be sufficiently accounted for simply from peculiarities of constitution. Pilate expressly satisfied himself as to the actual death by questioning the centurion (Mark 15:44). In moot cases the body was suffered to rot on the cross by the action of the sun and rain or to be devoured by birds and beasts. Sepulture was generally,

therefore, forbidden, but in consequence of Dent. 21 :22,23 an express national exception was made in favor of the Jews (Matt. 27:58).

Unger, "Ungers Bible Dictionary"

Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." This is, traditionally, the first of Jesus' last "seven words from the cross."

1. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."
2. "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." Luke 23:43
3. "Woman, behold your son!" John 19:26
4. "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Mark 15:34
5. "I thirst!" John 19:28
6. "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Luke 23:46
7. "It is finished!" John 19:30

One has to ask, who is He forgiving? Is He forgiving the Jews for this? the Roman authorities? The Roman soldiers who actually did the work? Robertson says, "Jesus evidently is praying for the Roman soldiers, who were only obeying, but not for the Sanhedrin."³⁰ The argument has gone on for centuries as to who is responsible for His crucifixion. Was it the Jews? Was it the Romans? The ans is, it was you. He had to do go through with it for you so that you could inherit eternal life.

And they divided His garments and cast lots. This was prophesied in Psalm 22.

*I am poured out like water,
And all My bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;*

³⁰A.T. Roberston, "Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament."

*It has melted within Me.
My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And My tongue clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the dust of death.*

*For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
They pierced My hands and My feet;
I can count all My bones.
They look and stare at Me.
They divide My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.*

Psalm 22:14-18

John adds to this.

They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

John 19:24

The remainder of this section will be divided into parts.

- *And the people stood looking on*
- *The rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God."*
- *The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself."*
- *An inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS*

Four groups of people were involved. There were the people in general. Luke says they were "looking." He doesn't say what they were thinking. As in any crowd, they were probably think many

things. Some probably had pity on Him, some probably hated Him, some may have simply been curious. It is the same today. Jesus Christ affects different people differently. Some will accept Him, some will reject Him. Some will wait to form an opinion until it is too late!

Luke doesn't say whether the second group was Jewish leaders or Roman leaders. Perhaps it was both but probably it was mostly Jewish leaders. They are like many world leaders today (as well as other leaders of large groups of people). If there is anything to Christianity, let it take care of itself. We don't want to be involved

The soldiers made up the third group. They followed suit after the leaders - that is what a soldier is trained to do. But not that they offered Him "sour wine." I always thought this was an act of cruelty - it was not. As noted above, wine with myrrh in it had the property that it would dull the senses and hence the pain. At least the soldiers had some mercy in their actions. There are many today who are "kind" to Christianity yet will not go so far as to embrace it.

Finally, the Roman officials got into the act - from afar. They had a sign placed over Him. I don't suppose this was unusual. It would be natural to place a sign over a man on a cross giving the charges for which he was being crucified. In this case, the sign read only, "This is the king of the Jews." The sign was partly right. He was their king. He is, however, also our king!

John amplifies on this.

Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews." ' " Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

The sign was correct. The Jews were not happy with it because it proclaimed to all the world that Jesus was, in fact, king. The Jews wanted the sign to indicate that He just claimed to be king but Pilate would not comply. As bad a man as Pilate may have been, he did a few things right.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Luke 23:39-43

Previously, we looked at four groups of people. There are yet two more to consider. These are the two criminals who were crucified with Him, one on one side, one on the other.

- *One of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us."*
- *The other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."*

These two are examples of the world. The world then, the world today, the world as it has been since the crucifixion. One mocked Him as did the other groups. But one of them realized that Jesus was who He claimed to be. He recognized Jesus as a righteous person - a righteous God. He also recognized that he was a sinner and bound

for Hell. He, therefore, pleaded with the Lord to remember Him when He went to Paradise.

Jesus' answer was more encompassing. He would not remember the man when He went to Paradise, He would take him with Him. This was great but it leaves us with a few problems to solve.

First, there is no indication that the thief died the same day as Christ. We shall have to assume he did. But, more important, where did he go? Where is (or was) Paradise? The word itself is of Greek origin -παράδεισος (Paradise) of which Thayer has the following to say.

1. among the Persians a grand enclosure or preserve, hunting-ground, park, shady and well-watered, in which wild animals were kept for the hunt; it was enclosed by walls and furnished with towers for the hunters: . . . 2.it passed into the Hebrew. language, thus for that delightful region, 'the garden of Eden,' in which our first parents dwelt before the fall: 3. that part of Hades which was thought by the later Jews to be the abode of the souls of the pious until the resurrection: Lk. xxiii. 43, 4 Others understand that it to be the heavenly paradise. an upper region in the heavens: 2 Co. xii. 4, to which true Christians will be taken after death, Rev. ii. 7 (cf. Gen.xiii. 10; Ezek. xxviii. 13; xxxi. 8). According to the opinion of many of the church Fathers, the paradise in which our first parents dwelt before the fall still exists, neither on earth nor in the heavens, but above and beyond the world;³¹

The fact is, there are all correct because all of these interpretations make the same error. They all assume that Paradise is is some fixed location. It is not.

*The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden,
and there He put the man whom He had formed. . .
Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the*

³¹Theyers *GreekEnglish Lexicon*

garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

Genesis 2:8 & 15

This is strictly in keeping with the original meaning of the word. The Lord created the Garden of Eden as His hunting grounds. He placed Adam (and later, Eve) there to be the “grounds keepers.” But, as you well know, man was evicted from there and we hear no more of this garden nor has any one ever found it. The Hebrews, as noted by Thayer, considered it to *be the abode of the souls of the pious until the resurrection* - a place we noted before as being Abraham’s Bosom.

When Christ died, where did He go? He did not go to heaven for we know that several days later He appear on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13). It was not until just before Pentecost He ascended into heaven. So, the real truth is that Paradise is truly “the Lord’s hunting ground” and it is wherever the Lord is. It was on earth to begin with (Genesis 2), It then became the place for those who died in the expectation of the Messiah, and, today is in heaven where we will go when we die. **Paradise is where the Lord is!**

For our Roman Catholic friends it might be well to note that this prisoner did not have to wait his time in purgatory before he could go to Paradise!

Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' " Having said this, He breathed His last. So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at

a distance, watching these things.

Luke 23:44-49

The “sixth” hour, I according to the time keeping of the day, as 12 noon. At noon the earth became dark - dark for three hours. Why it became dark is the “sun was darkened.” We need to take things overly literally. The sun itself was, no doubt unchanged. “Darkened” is from a little used Greek word, used almost exclusively by Luke in the Bible, is ἐκλείπω (ekleipo) q= which is, literally, to take away. It is used in classical Greek sometime for an eclipse of the sun. Moulton & Milligan say this is an impossible interpretation here.

Notwithstanding Field (Notes, p. 79) and Moffatt, it seems more than doubtful that in Lk 23:45 any reference is intended to an eclipse. To find such a reference is to involve the Evangelist in a needless blunder, as an eclipse is impossible at full moon.

Moulton & Milligan *The Vocabulary of the G.N.T.*

The most logical interpretation is that clouds filled the sky, blotting out the sky. One of the Gospel writers mention an earth quake in connection with this but they do mention that the *veil of the temple was torn in two*. This could have most likely be cause by a great earthquake. In short, there were very so very unusual weather phenomena occurring during these three hours. Why the veil of the temple?

“You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring the ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between the holy place and the Most Holy.

Exodus 26:31 & 33

The view is what separated God from man. With Christ's resurrection and ascension, there was to be no more separation.

*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has **broken down the middle wall of separation**, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,*

Ephesians 2:13-15

When this happened, Jesus spoke the "sixth word from the cross - "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Jesus was broken for our sins. His work complete, he placed his spirit back into the hands of the Father. John records,

I and My Father are one."

John 10:30

After being forsaken for three hours on the cross, Jesus and the Father were again one. Jesus spirit was united with the Father's. *Having said this, He breathed His last.* His work was done. One can not really tell from the text whether He just died or whether He had the power to determine when He would die. He cited the word from Psalm 31.

*In You, O Lord, I put my trust;
Let me never be ashamed;
Deliver me in Your righteousness.
Bow down Your ear to me,
Deliver me speedily;
Be my rock of refuge,
A fortress of defense to save me.
For You are my rock and my fortress;*

*Therefore, for Your name's sake,
Lead me and guide me.
Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me,
For You are my strength.
Into Your hand I commit my spirit;
You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.*

Psalm 31:1-5

In John His last words are listed as: “It is finished” (John 19:30). This leads me to believe that as soon as He had finished His work on the cross, he, of His own volition, gave up His life. Whatever the reason, it had great impact - it still has great impact.

There were three reactions:

- *So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"*
- *The whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned*
- *His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things*

The centurion was an intelligent man or he would not have been a centurion. He saw the whole thing up close. He could tell there was something different about Jesus' crucifixion. He could tell that Jesus was a righteous **man**. He did not see further than this. The other Synoptic Gospels have the centurion saying “Surely this was the Son of God,” but it is by no means clear that this constitutes an acceptance of the salvation obtained through Him. There are many who see Jesus in this light. Even the Moslems see Jesus in this light.

(RECALL the time) when Allah said, 'O ' = Jesus! I will cause you to die a natural death, ' and will exalt you to Myself and I will clear you of the unchaste accusations of those who disbelieve. I am going to make your followers prevail over the disbelievers till the Day of Resurrection, then to Me (O people!) shall be (your return, and I will judge all your differences.

There are others. The other day I had some Jehovah's Witnesses at my door. They claimed they believed as I do. I said they believe a Bible that denies that Jesus is God. I gave them John 1:1 in my Greek New Testament and asked that if it didn't say Jesus (the Word) was not God. They didn't know Greek. They only knew what they had been taught to believe - poor misguided people. There are many misguided people who hold Jesus in high esteem but reject Him as their Savior and Lord. Make sure you are not one of them.

The second group, the crowd slowly returned to the city. Basically, they knew they had seen something extraordinary, but they did not (apparently) understand its significance. There are many today who know about the crucifixion and about Jesus Christ. They don't know what to make over it either. The result is that they usually don't do anything about it. Some, if approached by you or another Christian who can explain it all to them, will turn to Jesus Christ.

The last group were His followers and relatives who *stood at a distance*. It is still the same with many of his "acquaintances" who stand at a distance. They are not at or near the center of the church life and activities. They can watch great events happening in the church but they keep their distance. They do not get involved, they simply observe from afar.

Such it was when Christ was crucified. This was a one time occurrence. There would never be another as the author of Hebrews states.

*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, . . . if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since **they crucify again** for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

The argument here is that one can not loose his or her salvation because, to regain it would require that Christ be crucified again - and that is not going to happen!

Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

Luke 23:50-56

Thanks goodness, there are a few who really care. One was Joseph of Arimathea. This man was:

- *a council member,*
- *a good man,*
- *a just man*
- *He had not consented to their decision and deed.*
- *He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews,*
- *He himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God.*

There are six things for which this man might be commended. Of these only two would be important to Christ. He had no part in the crucifixion, he was opposed to that, and he was waiting for God's kingdom. As far as having no part in the crucifixion, Luke uses a word, found only here, for this - συγκατατίθωμι (*sunkatatithomi*) which means, literally, "to deposit together with another." In other words either he voted against crucifying Jesus or he did not vote at all. The Greek text would suggest he did not vote at all. John says

he followed Jesus “secretly” (John 19:38)

John also tells us he was helped by Nicodemus in the burial (John 19:39). Nicodemus was introduced in the third chapter of John’s Gospel.

As far as His place of burial is concerned, I can not help but cite a rather long passage from Isaiah.

*He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
 Yet He opened not His mouth;
 He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
 And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
 So He opened not His mouth.
 He was taken from prison and from judgment,
 And who will declare His generation?
 For He was cut off from the land of the living;
 For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.
 And they made His grave with the wicked--
 But with the rich at His death,
 Because He had done no violence,
 Nor was any deceit in His mouth.
 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;
 He has put Him to grief.
 When You make His soul an offering for sin,
 He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,
 And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His
 hand.
 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
 By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify
 many,
 For He shall bear their iniquities.
 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
 And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
 Because He poured out His soul unto death,
 And He was numbered with the transgressors,
 And He bore the sin of many,
 And made intercession for the transgressors.*

Returning to Joseph and Nicodemus, *This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.* This was, no doubt, the grave that Joseph had purchased for himself - there would not have been time to obtain one elsewhere. Thus, is perfect fulfillment of the prophet Isaiah, *And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death.* As prophesied, Jesus lay in the grave of a rich man. He died in great humility and disgrace. He was buried with pride and with dignity. It is amazing how much differently people will treat Jesus. To this day there are those who sneer at Him, use His name in vain, or simply will have nothing to do with Him. There are others who will give Him the best they have.

This reminds me of the words of a hymn.

*Give of your best to the Master, Give of the strength of your youth;
Throw your soul's fresh, glowing ardor Into the battle for truth.
Jesus has set the example - Dauntless was He, young and brave
Give Him your loyal devotion, Give Him the best that you have.*

*Give of your best to the Master, Give Him first place in your heart;
Give Him first place in your service; Consecrate every part
Give, and to you shall be given. - God His beloved Son gave;
Gratefully seeking to serve Him, Give Him the best that you have*

*Give of your best to the Master, Naught else is worthy His love;
He gave himself for your ransom, Gave up His glory a - hove;
Laid down His life with-out murmur, You from sin's ruin to save;
Give Him your heart's adoration, Give Him the best that you have*

Words by Howard B Gross 1851-1939
Music by Charlotte A Bernard, 1830-1869
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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " And they remembered His words. Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

Luke 24:1-12

For several chapters we read about the birth and childhood of Jesus. Then, for about twenty chapters we have been studying the earthly ministry of Christ. But now, Christ has been crucified. Paul was always quick to point out,

. . .we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,

We have entered into a new era of mankind. One that is explained in depth in the remainder of the New Testament (excluding most of Revelation). The beginning seeds of this new era begin here in this, the final chapter of Luke.

We have made mention of the synoptice Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and the many parallels in them. Each devotes one chapter to this part of the Gospel account but there is very little parallism in the accounts. John devotes 2 chapters to it. But Kule, in one chapter, covers more material (53) verses than any of the other three. We shall, therefore, spend most of our time in Luke.

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb, Several questions needs answers here. The “first day of the week, on the Hebrew calendar, was Sunday. This is why we celebrate Easter on Sunday.

They, it say “they” along with certain “other women” went to the tomb. Who are they “they” referred to here? According to the other three Gospels, one was Mary Magdalene. They had to be women because of the word “other” women. Matthew has also Mary “the mother of Joses” and Mark “the other Mary.” The “other” Mary was most likely the wife of Cleophus, the parents of Joses (hence the agreement). It is interesting that it was the woman who went to the tomb. It is written,

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Hebrews 11:6

I believe more women are apt to receive the Gospel message than men. Why? Don’t ask me, I am not a philosopher. In any case, All for Gospel writers are agreed on this fact. The women came to the tomb. They did not come empty handed, they brought spices for His

body. Why was this needed? Did not Joseph or Arimathaea and Nicodemus prepare the body the evening before? From experience, I can tell you that, no matter how good a job I do with something, my wife can always improve on it. That is the way with women. I suppose that is what is meant by God's statement in the Garden.

And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Genesis 2:18

None of the four translations we have been using accurately translates the Hebrew word for "comparable." The Hebrew word is נָדָב (neged) which is a word used if one were standing and looking in a mirror. He would see the exact opposite of himself. That is what Eve was. Where there were weaknesses, as his counterpart, she was strong. Where He was strong, she was weak and would rely on him. In other words, they complemented one another.

What Joseph and Nicodemus failed to do, the women would handle. They would add the spices that only a woman would think of adding. It is still the same today. The Lord has need of men who will serve Him but He also has need for women who can do what the men can not.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. This is a simple statement. Someone had rolled the stone away so they could gain access: but who? A stone large enough to cover the entrance to a tomb would be very heavy. One man could not move it. It would take a number of men. In addition, Matthew sheds more evidence.

Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know

how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. Matthew 27:64-66

There were probably, according to the custom of the day, four soldiers and a centurion guarding the tomb. There was a seal set upon it so it could not be opened without detection. So, who rolled the stone away? Let's wait and see if we find out?

With the stone rolled away, *they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus*. He had said He would rise the third day, and He did. He was not there. Imagine how the women felt. Perhaps He was risen as He said He would? Perhaps his body was stolen? What could have happened?

Well, of course, it was stolen so as to make it look like He rose from the dead. That's what our non-believing friends have to say. If this be so, who did it. The only people who would have had access to the tomb and been able to do it were the Roman guards (or them and other accomplices). This is not an acceptable answer because, first, it was not in the interest of Rome for Christ's body to be stolen away and would not have ordered it done/ Secondly, the soldiers who allowed this would have had to commit suicide before they were tried and executed!

Well, in any case, we need not speculate because Matthew has the whole story.

And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed

He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you. "

Matthew 28:2-7

This answers one question with another. It was the Lord Himself who rolled the stone away. But then, how did He get out so that He could do this. I will not answer that - you know the answer - with God nothing is impossible. Matthew tells us that the guards became like "dead men." In the end, they no doubt became dead men.

The narrative then turns to "the angel." Who was this angel and what happened to Christ? The accounts in the other Gospels do not help much. John is of no help at all. Matthew parallels Luke. Mark has them entering the tomb and finding a "young man" sitting beside the grave. This only sheds greater mystery to the situation.

I believe the answer is this. Prior to this, Christ had been with them in the flesh. They saw Christ then. Soon they would see Him in His resurrection body - a body like you and I shall have some day. But then, He was in the form of a spirit - an angel. They saw Christ but as an angel. Paul confirms this.

For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,

Acts 27:23

Paul only served one person, Jesus Christ. But here he refers to Him as "an angel of God."

Getting back to Luke, *as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them.* According to Luke, it was two men, or angels.

This presents us with a problem. Did they see two or one? I would assume that there have been many suggestions as to how these might

be reconciled. There are probably an equal number of citations that claim that this proves the Bible to be in error.

Can we reach any conclusion? Let's see if we can put these together. They reach the sepulcher and are met by *the angel* who, after greeting them said, *Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* As they went in they saw *two men (who) stood by them in shining garments. . . .they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, saying, 'The Son of Man*

If you put these accounts together there were three angels. Actually, three men who appears as angels. Remember back many chapters ago?

As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, . . . Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said.

Luke 9:29-30 & 33

I believe we have the same three here! More on this later Anyway, to go on.

They remembered His words. Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles

Remember, there were "other women" who went to the tomb, not just the two Mary's. So they return in haste to where the Apostles were gathered and are very excited in relaying the information. Now there were only "eleven" along with the other disciples of Jesus. I can imagine the scene. All these women trying to speak at once

telling what they saw (I am not putting the women down, men would have done the same thing).

Anyway, the message did get across although, most likely, not very convincingly. Why do I say this? *And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. But Peter arose and ran to the tomb. The general opinion was that of disbelief. "These women are imagining things!" Yet, there was a certain truth to what they said so Peter, as impetuous as ever, decided to see for himself. Stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.*

John elaborates on this and also clears up the mystery of the angel

Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

John 20:3-10

John, apparently, went with Peter - John was a better runner! Both Peter and John went to their homes. What would they do there? I don't know. Something else happened.

Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they

have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' "

John 20:13-17

Apparently, Mary returned to the tomb with them and, with their support, she investigated further. The two angels inside the tomb asked her why she was weeping. She then turned to the one outside, not recognizing it was Jesus.. He gave her the message to bring to the apostles and disciples. Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist. She was the first to carry the good news of the risen Christ. What, do you suppose, would have happened if she, too, had just returned home and said nothing?

Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What

things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Luke 24:13-27

Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. We have no idea which "two of them" this was. It is not important. What happened is very important.

Luke says, *they talked together*. The word is ὁμιλέω (omileo) which is only used four times in the New Testament - twice here. The only appearance of this word as a noun is found below.

*For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.' Every shipmaster, **all who travel** by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance*

Revelation 18:17

Here, it implies that they two were deep in conversation with each

other and not much aware of what was going on around them.

They conversed and reasoned. “Conversed” is the same word as “Discussed” above. “Reasoned” is from a Greek word that indicates argument. They were probably debating as to how these things may have come about which would explain the fact that they were little aware of that which was around them. This made it possible for Jesus to draw near and ask, *“What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?”*

Unaware of who this stranger was, one of the men, *Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”* Note that “Cleopas” is not to be confused with “Cleophus” who was mentioned later as the husband of one of the Marys. We know nothing of this man other than what is written here. It is reasonable to assume that most people that day were discussing the events of the previous few days. These two were no exception. But this “stranger” seemed to know nothing about it as He approached them. When questioned, they answered with an interesting outline:

The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth

1. *He was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.*
2. *The chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.*
3. *We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.*
4. *Today is the third day since these things happened and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us when they did not find His body.*
5. *They came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.*
6. *Certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see*

We have seen all through this book the facts stating that item #1 is correct. We have seen His deeds. We have read His words. He was mighty indeed. We have also seen, time and again, how the

chief priests and other leaders of the Jews wanted to put Him to death - and succeeded.

Now we get to the more difficult part of the outline. They were hoping that He would redeem Israel. Six times in the Prophet Isaiah we find references to the one who would redeem Israel.

“Your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” 43:14

“His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts” 44:6

“Our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name” 47:4

“Your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel 48:17

“The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One” 49:7

“Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel 54:5

“You, O Lord, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name” 63:16

It was only natural then, that the people expected something different than what had happened. It is the same with many Christian today - they expect things that are not promised in the Word. Some evangelists claim if we accept Christ as Savior, all our problems will vanish - which is far from the truth. So, naturally, the people were disappointed because their expectations had not been met.

Next in the outline is the fact that they discovered His body missing from the grave. Why were they astonished? At least eight times He had told his disciples this would happen (Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:19; Mark 9:31; Mark 10:34; Luke 9:22; Luke 18:33; Luke 24:7). How often has Pastor Jim taught something from the Word and it slips by our recognition. I am sure that Jesus taught many other things as well and so this one escaped them.

Next, they saw angels. Angels appear to man infrequently. So, when it does happen, it must be of great significance. These two, as they walked along, were probably attempting to find out what the significance was.

The one thing they knew for sure was the last on the list. Men whom they trusted went and found everything as the women had

said. It was a fact. He was gone - but where?

I hope that the response Jesus gave to these men He never has to give to you (or me). *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.* As they traveled along the road, Jesus held a Bible class. In it He pointed out all of these Scriptures that predicted what was to happen and that were fulfilled with His death and resurrection. How important it is to study, carefully, God's word to know what God's plan is.

Paul was intent on teaching the Word.

Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Acts 18:9-11

This must have been the world's longest Bible conference - a full one and one-half years. Everywhere Paul went, he taught the word.

Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

Acts 17:10-12

You may recognize this verse as part of our logo. It is not enough to hear, we must get into the Word ourselves and verify the truth of what we have heard. Years ago I used to reply quite heavily on Bible commentaries in preparing my lessons. Nut then I found I was spending more and more of my time checking to see “whether these things were so” that the commentators taught. A quite a number of them were not. So I stopped that practiuce and decided to just stick with the Bible itself.

Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He

said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

Luke 24:28-45

Since the day was far gone, they were able to convince Christ to stay over with them. Of course, one does not change Christ's mind, He would have done so anyway. You see, the word προσποιέω (prospoiew) which is used only here means "to pretend" or "to act as if." I don't like to lower the level of this concept, but you and I sometimes acts as if we are going to do something simply to get someone else to change. This was the case here. Jesus was testing them to see how serious they were and wanting to learn more.

The test worked because the two *constrained Him*. The word is παραβιάζομαι (parabiazomai) and indicate the use of force. Not necessarily physical force, but the force of persuasion. It is used only here and of Lydia, the first convert in Europe who constrained Paul to stay the night. The words of persuasion were - "*Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.*" It would be too dark to travel, it would not be too dark to teach.

Not much teaching occurred. They sat down to eat. Then, Luke tells us, *He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them*. I am not an expert on manners in the first century but it seems to me that it would not have, normally, been Jesus' position to break the bread. That would belong to the host. There was a reason for His doing so. *Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him*. Was this some sort of miraculous revelation? I really don't think so. I believe it was the manner in which he broke the bread - precisely as he had done before He was betrayed. As He did this, they then realized who He was.

Some strange event. Spending hours with Him and not recognizing Him and them with the breaking of the bread, sudden recognition. Well, it is the same with us. Jesus promised us.

*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.** So that we may boldly say, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**

Hebrews 13:5-6

Jesus is always with us as we travel the road of life. Unfortunately, most of the time it is only when He does something unusual that we are aware of His presence.

Next, He vanished from their sight. This is an exciting thought. Jesus could come and go as He wished. Three times we see that in this Gospel.

Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Mark 16:9

After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country.

Mark 16:12

Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

Mark 16:14

Wouldn't that be neat. Just wish yourself to be somewhere and there you are. There have been few in the Bible who have experienced this. One was Phillip.

Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw

him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

Acts 8:39-40

Some claim that the words here only make it appear that Phillip mysteriously appeared at Azotus. Others that it was a sudden snatching away and others that it was just at some later time.. I would prefer to believe the second. Perhaps a short lesson on our bodies is in order here.

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" . . .It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:35 & 44

“Natural” body is an unfortunate term here. The word is ψυκικός (psychikos) is refers to the soul. It would be more accurate to say we now have a “soulicual” body, and someday will have a spiritual body. The body we now have meets the needs of our souls, just as the bodies of animals meet the needs of their souls. One day, we will have a spiritual body like Jesus that meets the needs of our spirits. Our spirits often long to be somewhere else. With out spiritual bodies, we can just “be there.” For now, we have to rely on various means of transportation. Jesus had no need of a donkey or any other form of transportation now since he had His glorified Spiritual Body to meet His needs.

Returning to the dinner with the missing guest. They all said, *to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

Did you know that Christ was the cause of heartburn? That’s what it says, but what does it mean? The Greek is not much help because this is a fairly literal translation of the Greek.

It is interesting to note that He “opened” their eyes as He taught the Scriptures. The word is the same one we just studied when their

eyes were opened when He broke the bread. It has always been that way. When you open the Scriptures to someone, you open their eyes to Christ. That is your part. It is Christ's part to cause their hearts to burn within them so that might receive the Scriptures and, hence, Jesus Christ Himself.

So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. Where He appeared to Simon we don't know. Was Simon the other man on the road or was he at the dinner or where? Why was it important that He appeared to Simon? The problem here is one of English (or Greek) grammar. The group entered the place where the eleven were staying. That is clear. But, who was it that said, *"The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon?"* The logical answer is it was the eleven that had gathered there. It was of sufficient importance that Paul writes about it.

. . . and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

1 Corinthians 15:5

We will not get into a discussion about the "twelve" mentioned by Paul.. The two groups then exchanged experiences they each had experienced. It was a moment of excitement.

As they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. It is interesting how fast people can change. The one from Emmaus had just seen Him and, in fact, has seen Him disappear. So, then, why be so terrified when He returned in like manner. I suppose to be startled would be natural but to be afraid?

Well, suppose you had been traveling with someone for three years and thought you knew Him pretty well. Then, all of a sudden He is

crucified and then He begins showing up all over the place? Is this the same Jesus? Maybe they were seeing things or hallucinating.

Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

An examination of His hands and feet would show them that He was not simply a spirit. He had a body - a resurrected one. But, there is something strange here. We all look forward to that perfect body we will receive when we go to be with the Lord. As the hymn goes, "no more sorrow, no more tears." No headaches or backaches or whatever. But Jesus said to look at His hands and feet! Why? To see how perfect they were? No! You see, Thomas was not with them that day and when he heard about it he did not believe

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

John 20:26-27

No, He still had holes in His hands and feet. He still have the cut in His side. His resurrected body is marred so that we may have perfect ones!

To prove that He was no spirit, He said, *Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.* Can spirits eat? No! Jesus was not just a spirit. Does Jesus really need feed to eat now and will we? No, He could consume it, He did not need it.

These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you,

that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Unless Jesus, or the Holy Spirit "opens our understanding," the words of the Bible are just words on a page. They are nonsense to many in this world. They had heard His words for three years. They had read the Hebrew Bible for many years. Until their understanding was opened, they meant little to them. Now a whole new revelation was being made known to them; Not to them only, but to you and I as well!

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.

Luke 24:46-48

Then He said to them, "Thus it is written. This statement is somewhat misleading due to the use of the word "is." It gives one the impression that it is in the state of being written or has just been written. However, a check of the Greek verb clears this up and expands on the meaning. Simply put, it is in the perfect tense which, in Greek, indicates some that happened in some time in the past but the effects of which continue into the present. In some Greek grammars this is illustrated as below.

	Past	Present	Future
Present	-----		
Past	-----		
Future			-----
Aorist Past	o		
Present perfect			o-----
Past Perfect	o-----		

The difference is between continuous action and "punctiliner" action

- action that continue of veru a long period of time and actions which just occur at one point of time. Most of the regular Greek tenses are continuous in nature, the Aorist being the exception. The Aorist tense is general used in historical narratives because it describes things which took place at some specific point on time in the past.

The Perfect tenses combine both aspects. Action which occurs at a particular point in time but whose affect continues over an extended period of time. The past perfect, which we are looking at here, indicates that what was “written” was written in the past but the significance of that writing continues in the present and on into the future.

We will rewrite this, paraphrasing it a bit, *Then He said to them, "It has been written and still stands today..."* What He is referring to, of course, is His crucifixion and ascension from the dead. He did not stop there. The was the beginning of the work which needed to be done and He did it. He goes on, *and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name.* Here we meet yet another tense, the (Aorist) infinitive. In has many uses in the Greek, used on the context. Here it is similar to the perfect. It tends toward more future time. Stating right then, the preaching was to begin. It was then to continue on and on. Not only in time, but, these text indicates, in space - *beginning at Jerusalem . . .* I have noted an ellipsis here. Why?

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. "

Acts 1:8

Let's put these together. *Beginning at Jerusalem . . . and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* Acts 1:8 completes the sentence begun here in Luke. Indeed, the Book of Acts is, for all practical purposes, a continuation of Luke's Gospel - they were both written by the same person. And, further, Like writes,

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

Acts 1:1-4

Conclusive evidence that these two books are, in essence, one very long book. We will not be going into Acts at this time because another class is currently doing it, but someday we shall return!

And you are witnesses of these things. The disciples were the first missionaries, the example for all those who were to follow. They would, to use football parlance, to pick up the ball and run with it, passing it off to others at the proper time and place. May think the Great commission was in Acts 1:8 and/or Matthew 28:19. Well, actually, this passage is a parallel to Matthew 28:19 although not stated so eloquently.

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you. What promise? In Acts 1:4 we have the following.

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

Acts 1:4

This does not answer the question, it merely repeats it. Well, Peter answers the question for us very directly.

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself."

Acts 2:38-39

The promise was the promise that, as Christians, we would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who would come upon us and enable us to do the things related to the Great Commission.

But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. " It would do no good for them to go forth with the Gospel message then. They had to be empowered by the Holy Spirit before their work would be effective - they had to wait. It is no different with you or I. We have to have the empowerment of the Holy Spirit within us if we are to be effective and, sometimes, this involves waiting! Zeal, ambition will not take its place. Guilt or the coaxing of others will not take its place. A ton of bible lessons or lessons on soul winning and discipleship will not do it (although, eventually, they may be of some help). The one thing we all need is the indwelling Holy Spirit to enable us to fulfill Christ's commission.

So we come to the fond farewell (of sorts). *And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.* Little needs to be said about this statement. “Parted” is “to stand away from,” hence its translation.

However, there is another Greek concept (English as well) which needs to be noted.

“Parted”: Indicative, Aorist, Active

“Carried up” Indicative, Imperfect, Passive

The words are both in the Indicative “mood.” They are both statements of fact rather than statements of desire or hope. “Parted” is Aorist - a one time even (as noted above). “Carried up” is Imperfect - action that continued (for a time, not forever). But then we come to Active and Passive. When you do something, it is Active - Jesus Himself parted company with them. When someone (or something) does something to you (or for you) it is Passive. Jesus did not Himself ascend into heaven, He was taken up into heaven, or, as the text has it, “carried up into heaven.”

By whom was He carried? There is no way of telling from the Biblical accounts. It was probably angels (or, perhaps, departed saints).

And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. I don’t know what more needs to be said here. When Luke says they were “continually” in the temple, I don’t believe he meant 24 hours a day. I think it meant they spent their all their time there.

Amen

If you want to know what happens from here on, consult the book of Acts. “*Amen*” - *so be it!*

Acts 18:9-11

Acts 18:9-11 Page 672

Greek

εὐγγέλιζω (evangelizo)	Page 217
ἐφίστημι (ephistemi)	Page 84
διαπραγματεῦμαι (diaragmateumai).	Page 546
οἶκος (oikos)	Page 481
σαρόω (sarao)	Page 370
ἄβυσσος (abyssos)	Page 260
ἄγγελος (angelos)	Page 23
ἁγιάζω (hagiazō)	Page 355, Page 361
ἅδης (Hades)	Page 388
ἄμπλος (amplos)	Page 563
ἀνορθόω (anorthoo)	Page 423
ἀποκρίνω (apokrino)	Page 433, Page 444
ἀπόστολος	Page 178
ἄπτω (apto)	Page 214
ἀσώτως (asotos)	Page 462, Page 463
αὐξάνω (auzano)	Page 86
ἀφρός (aphros)	Page 302
βαπτίζω (baptizo)	Page 94
βλασφημέω	Page 159
γέεννα (gehenna)	Page 388
διηγέομαι (diagromai)	Page 14
εἶδω (eido)	Page 220
εκατοντάρχον (ekatoniarchon)	Page 205
ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα (epithumia epethumesa)	Page 605
ἔρημος (eremos)	Page 456
ἔρχομαι (erchomai)	Page 73
Ἰησοῦς (Iesous)	Page 38
καθαρίζω	Page 150
κάρφος (karphos)	Page 200
κατασκάτω (kataskapto)	Page 421
κεχρημάτισμαι (kechrematismai)	Page 78
κηρύσσω (kerusso)	Page 273
κλίνη (kline)	Page 246
κρανίον (karaniun)	Page 645

κραταιῶ (kratiaiōo)	Page 87
κράτιστος	Page 15
κύριος (kurios)	Page 80
Μαριάμ (Mariam)	Page 34
μικρός (micros)	Page 399
παραβολή (parabole)	Page 197
παραλύω	Page 160
πως (pos)	Page 250
σκανδαλίζω (skanlalizo)	Page 218
σπαργάνω (spargano)	Page 60
σπλαγχνίζομαι (splanxnizomai)	Page 213
σωματικός (somatikos)	Page 101
Τό δέ (To de)	Page 86
χάσμα (chasma)	Page 497
ᾠρα (hora)	Page 85
(κόραξ korax)	Page 396
(sumplerao)	Page 310
ἄγρός (agros)	Page 472
αἰδώς (aidos)	Page 362
ἁμαρτία (hamartia)	Page 358
ἀναάσσομαι (anotassomai)	Page 14
ἀνάθημα (anathema).	Page 578
αναίδεια (anaideai)	Page 362
ἀναληψις (analepsis)	Page 310
ἀναταστασία (anastastasia)	Page 582
ἀνίστημι (anistemi)	Page 44
ἄννα (Hanna)	Page 82
ἄννοια	Page 177
ἀνταπροκρίνομαι (antaprokrinomai)	Page 434
ἀντιπαρέρχομαι (antiparerchomai)	Page 344
ἀπογράφω (apographo)	Page 57
ἀπόλλυμι (apollumi)	Page 455
ἀπολύω (apoluo)	Page 80
ἀπορία (aporía)	Page 591
ἀποστέλλω (apostello)	Page 272
ἀποτάσσω (apotasso)	Page 450
αποψύχω (apopsucho)	Page 593
ἀργύριος (argurions)	Page 275

ἄρτος (artos)	Page 275
ἀστραπή (astrape)	Page 512
ἀφαιρέω (aiphereo)	Page 623
ἀχιόω (axioo)	Page 209
βάτος (batos)	Page 477
βηθλεέμ (Nethlehem)	Page 59
βίος (bios)	Page 462
βοάω(Boao)	Page 301
βρέφος (brephos)	Page 44
βρέφος (brephos)	Page 525
γενεά (genea)	Page 595
γεωργός (georgos)	Page 563
γινώσκω (ginosko)	Page 249
γραμματεῦομαι (gragmateuomai)	Page 545
δε	Page 140
δει (dei)	Page 539
δειλία (deilia)	Page 53
δέομαι (deomai)	Page 321
δέρω (dero)	Page 628
δεσπότης (despotes)	Page 80
δευτερόπρωτος	Page 171
δια (dia)	Page 38
διανεύω (dianeuo)	Page 31
διαπορέω (diaporeo)	Page 278
διασκορπίζω (diaskorpizo)	Page 462
διαστρέφω (diastrepho)	Page 633
διδάσκω(didasko)	Page 561
διηγορήσαντες (diagregoresantes)	Page 297
δίκαιος (dikaios)	Page 77
δοκός (dokos)	Page 200
δούλος (doulos)	Page 564
δούος (doulos)	Page 80
δραχμή (drachma)	Page 460
δύναμις (dynamis)	Page 271, Page 272
δώσουσιν ... (dodousin)	Page 194
ἐάν (if).	Page 551
ἐγείρω egairo)	Page 214
ἐγένετο δέ	Page 145

ἔθος (ethos)	Page 618
εἰ (ei)	Page 551
ἐκδικέω (ekdikeo)	Page 520
εκλείπω (ekleipo)	Page 654
ἐκτείνω	Page 177
ἐμπαίζω (empaizo)	Page 628
ἐνέχω (enecho)	Page 383
ἔντιμος (entimos)	Page 207
ἐντός (entos)	Page 510
ἐξαιτέω (exaiteo)	Page 613
ἐξάιφνης (eksaiaphnes)	Page 301
ἔξοδος (exodus)	Page 296
ἐξομολογέω (exomologeō)	Page 600
ἐξουσία (eksousia)	Page 272
ἐπαισχύνομαι (epaischunomai)	Page 292
ἐπέρχομαι (eperchomai)	Page 41
ἐπί (epi)	Page 511
ἐπίκειμαι	Page 142
επισκαζω (episkiazō)	Page 299
ἐπισκιάζω (episkiazō)	Page 41
ἐπιστάτης (epistates)	Page 256
ἐρίφιον (eriphion)	Page 471
ἐσθής (esthesis)	Page 636
εὐαγγελίζω (euangelizo)	Page 70
εὐγγέλιον (evangelion)	Page 217
ευγενής (eugenes)	Page 544
εὐεργέτης (eurgetes)	Page 611
εὐλαβής (eulabēs)	Page 77
ἐφίστημι (ephistemi)	Page 559
ζωογονέω (zoogoneo)	Page 515
ἡσαχάζω (hesachazo)	Page 433
ἦχος	Page 132
θαυμάζω (Thaumazo).	Page 31
θεάομαι (Theaomai)	Page 220
θεωρέω (theoreo)	Page 335
θορυβάζω (thorubazo)	Page 351
θυμός (thumos)	Page 511
ιατρός (iatros)	Page 9

ιδρώς (hidros)	Page 622
ιερεύς (heireus)	Page 343
ικανός (ikanos)	Page 208
ιώτα (iota)	Page 486
καθ (kath)	Page 289
καθίστημι (kathistemi)	Page 406
Καί ἐγένετο	Page 145
καρδία (kardia)	Page 585
καταβαίνω (katabaino)	Page 344
καταδέω (katadeo)	Page 347
κεραία (keraia)	Page 486
κόρος (koros)	Page 478
κρυπτός (kruptos)	Page 249
κύπτος (kyptos)	Page 422
κύων (kuon)	Page 492
Λαζαρος (Lazarus)	Page 491
λάμπω (lampo)	Page 68
Λεγών (Legeon)	Page 259
λογίζομαι (logizomai)	Page 38, Page 561
λῶγος	Page 132
Λουκάς (Loukas)	Page 9
μαλακία (malakia)	Page 221
μαλακός (malakos)	Page 221
μαμωνάς (mamonas)	Page 482
μέτρον καλόν (metronlaion)	Page 194
μη γένοιτο (me genoito)	Page 566
μίκρος (micros)	Page 538
μικρός (mikros)	Page 502
μνᾶ (mna)	Page 545
μόγις (mogis)	Page 302
μόσχος (moschos)	Page 471
μυριάς (myrias)	Page 386
μυρίος (myrios)	Page 450
νεανίσκος (neaniskos).	Page 214
νεύω (neuo)	Page 31
νομίζω (nomizo)	Page 102
ξηρός	Page 176
ὀδεύω (hodeuo)	Page 347

οίκονόμος (oikonomos)	Page 475
οίκονόμος (oikonomos)	Page 406
ὀμιλέω (omileo)	Page 669
ὄνος (onos)	Page 434
ὄργή (orge)	Page 556
οὐ (ou)	Page 52
οὐσιά (ousia)	Page 461
Ούχι (Ouchi)	Page 52
ὀφείλημα (hophilema)	Page 358
παιδεύω (paideuo)	Page 637
παιδίον (paidion)	Page 525
παρα (para)	Page 306
παραβιάζομαι (parabiazomai)	Page 674
παράδεισος (Paradise)	Page 652
παράκλησις (paraklesis)	Page 77
παράπτωμα (paraptoma)	Page 358
παρατηρέω (paratereo)	Page 432
παραχρήμα	Page 135
παρθένος (parthenos)	Page 35
πεδινό	Page 181
πεπιεσμένον (pepiesmenon)	Page 194
πεπληροφορημένων (peplerophoremnon)	Page 14
περιβλέπω	Page 176
περικρύτω (perikrupto)	Page 32
περιποέω (peripoeo)	Page 515
περισπάω (perispao)	Page 351
πήρα (pera)	Page 275
πόρρωθεν (porrothen)	Page 507
πρακτωρ (praktor)	Page 416
προμελετάο (promeletao)	Page 586
προόβατον (probaton)	Page 453
προσδέχομαι (prosdexomai)	Page 77
προσδοκάω (prosdokao)	Page 31
προσδοκία (prosdokia)	Page 593
προσποιέω (prospoiew)	Page 674
προφήτις (prophetis)	Page 83
ράβδος (rapbdos)	Page 274
ραρατήρησις (parateresis)	Page 509

ρυρά (pyra)	Page 411
σάκκος (sakkos)	Page 332
σεσαλευμένον (sesaleunenon)	Page 194
σημηιόν (sameion)	Page 579
σίναπι (sinapi)	Page 425
σινιάζω (sinaizo)	Page 614
σιτευτός (siteutos)	Page 471
σκάπτος (skaptos)	Page 420
σκάπτω (skapto)	Page 476
σκάφη (skaphe)	Page 476
σκεύος (skeuos)	Page 244
σκύλλω (skullō)	Page 208
σοφός (sophos)	Page 337
σπεύδω (speudo)	Page 44, Page 73
στηρίζω (sterizo)	Page 311
στρατιά (stratia)	Page 71
συγγενής (sungenes)	Page 46
συγκατατίθομι (sunkatatithomi)	Page 658
συλλογίζομαι (sullogizomai)	Page 561
σύμπωνος (symphonos)	Page 468
συναγωγή (synagoge)	Page 115
συνετός (sunetos)	Page 337
σunoχή (sunoche)	Page 590
ταράσσω (tarasso)	Page 38
τάχεως (taxeos)	Page 478
τελειόω (teleioo)	Page 429
τελώνης	Page 162
τέφρα (tephra)	Page 333
τηρέω (tereo)	Page 432
τίθημι (tithemi)	Page 585
τράπεζα (trapeza)	Page 548
ὕδρωπικός (hydropikos)	Page 433
υἱός (huios)	Page 102
ὑπερεκχυννόμενον (hyperkchunnomenon)	Page 194
υπνός (hypnos)	Page 255
ὑποδέχομαι (hypodexomai)	Page 350, Page 540
ὑπόκρισις (hypokrisis)	Page 387
ὑποχωρέω	Page 151

ὑψιστος (hupsistos)	Page 39
φανέρος (phaneros)	Page 249
φιλάργυρος (philarguros)	Page 484
φιλονεικία (philoneikia)	Page 610
φόβος (phobos)	Page 263
φῶβος (phobos)	Page 53
φραγμός (phragmos)	Page 444
φρεάρ (phrear)	Page 434
φρονίμως (phronimos)	Page 479
χαρίζμαι (charizomai)	Page 37
χιτών (kiton)	Page 275
χορίος (chorios)	Page 260
χορός (choros)	Page 469
χρή (chre)	Page 539
Χριστος (Christos)	Page 70
χρίω (chrío)	Page 70
ψυκικός (psychikos)	Page 676
John 19:17	Page 447
they chose the best places. “Notoce” is ἐπέχω	Page 437
ἄποστοματίζω (apostomatizo)	Page 384
Ἐπειδήπερ (Epipeper)	Page 13
Ἰάϊρος (Jairos)	Page 264

Hebrew

חנה (Hannah)	Page 82
זכאי Zaccai	Page 538
בית-לחם (Beth-lehem)	Page 59
עניה (hanih)	Page 550
(ערב horab)	Page 396
בַּת (bath)	Page 477
קֹר (kor)	Page 478
פֶּגֶע (phage)	Page 550
שֶׁקֶט (saq)	Page 332
כלב (caleb, dog)	Page 493
עפרא (ephra)	Page 333
נגד (neged)	Page 663
רֶחַף (rehaph)	Page 324
עלמה (alma)	Page 35

משיח (Messiah)	Page 70
מרים (Miriam)	Page 34
יאיר (Yair)	Page 264
בית "Beth"	Page 550
פרשין	Page 153
אלעזר (Eleazar)	Page 491
יהושע (Yashua)	Page 39
Images	
Jesus and Jairus	Page 263
Jesus and Jairus' Daughter	Page 269
Jesus and the storm	Page 254
Jesus Calms the Storm	Page 257
The Good Samaritan	Page 342
The Loaves and Fishes	Page 279
The Sower	Page 238
Three types of cross	Page 288
Woman with flow of Blood	Page 264
Job 1:8-12	
Job 1:8-12	Page 613
John 18:15-16	
John 18:15-16	Page 625
Maps	
Nazareth to Bethlehem	Page 58
The Town of Nazareth	Page 34
Mark 13:35	
Mark 13:35	Page 616
New Testament	
John 19:25	Page 236
John 19:30	Page 14
John 20:25	Page 125
Matthew 24:13	Page 587
1 Corinthians 1:22	Page 70
1 Corinthians 1:23	Page 662
1 Corinthians 10:7	Page 628
1 Corinthians 11:13-16	Page 610
1 Corinthians 11:20-22	Page 608
1 Corinthians 12:13	Page 414
1 Corinthians 15:35 & 44	Page 676

1 Corinthians 15:5	Page 677
1 Corinthians 3:13-15	Page 476
1 Corinthians 3:16	Page 84
1 Corinthians 5:7	Page 602
1 Corinthians. 1:19	Page 337
1 Corinthians. 1:2	Page 164
1 Corinthians. 1:22	Page 372
1 Corinthians. 1:27	Page 338
1 Corinthians. 10:13	Page 107
1 Corinthians. 10:15	Page 480
1 Corinthians. 10:23	Page 489
1 Corinthians. 10:24-28	Page 327
1 Corinthians. 10:31-33	Page 502
1 Corinthians. 12:12, 14-16, 22-24	Page 237
1 Corinthians. 13:2	Page 154
1 Corinthians. 14:19	Page 450
1 Corinthians. 14:33	Page 283
1 Corinthians. 15:44	Page 291
1 Corinthians. 15:51-52	Page 403
1 Corinthians. 16:13	Page 87
1 Corinthians. 16:20	Page 231
1 Corinthians. 16:3	Page 400
1 Corinthians. 2:7	Page 250
1 Corinthians. 3:12-15	Page 251, Page 549
1 Corinthians. 3:13-15	Page 410, Page 412
1 Corinthians. 4:1-2	Page 242, Page 475
1 Corinthians. 4:10	Page 480
1 Corinthians. 4:15	Page 449
1 Corinthians. 4:5	Page 249, Page 250
1 Corinthians. 5:6-8	Page 386
1 Corinthians. 6:12	Page 489
1 Corinthians. 6:9	Page 221
1 Corinthians. 7:5	Page 167
1 Corinthians. 8:13	Page 502
1 Corinthians. 9:16	Page 142
1 Corinthians. 9:5	Page 134
1 John 1:8-9	Page 472
1 John 1:9	Page 467

1 John 2:13-14	Page 368
1 John 2:16	Page 109
1 Peter 1:13	Page 402
1 Peter 1:7	Page 412
1 Peter 2:1-3	Page 526
1 Peter 2:1-8	Page 567
1 Peter 2:2	Page 86, Page 532
1 Peter 2:24	Page 304
1 Peter 3:5	Page 370
1 Peter 3:7	Page 245
1 Peter 5:14	Page 231
1 Peter 5:2-3	Page 399
1 Thesalonias 5:19	Page 79
1 Thessalonians 1:9	Page 371
1 Thessalonians 2:9	Page 68
1 Thessalonians 4:14-17	Page 594
1 Thessalonians 4:17	Page 594
1 Thessalonians 5:1-2, 5-9, and 12-13	Page 409
1 Thessalonians 5:17	Page 84, Page 519
1 Thessalonians 5:2-6	Page 404
1 Thessalonians 5:26	Page 231
1 Thessalonians 5:5	Page 246
1 Timothy 1:3-7	Page 154
1 Timothy 2:7	Page 274
1 Timothy 2:9	Page 362, Page 370
1 Timothy 3:1-7	Page 377
1 Timothy 4:14-16	Page 586
1 Timothy 4:16	Page 437
1 Timothy 4:7-8	Page 101
1 Timothy 5:17	Page 209
1 Timothy 5:17-18	Page 326
1 Timothy 5:18	Page 276
1 Timothy 5:3-9	Page 213
1 Timothy 5:9-10	Page 228
1 Timothy 6:7-8	Page 276
2 Corinthians 1:21	Page 70
2 Corinthians 13:1	Page 269
2 Corinthians 4:6	Page 69

2 Corinthians. 11:19	Page 480
2 Corinthians. 11:27	Page 168
2 Corinthians. 12:7-9	Page 147
2 Corinthians. 13:12	Page 231
2 Corinthians. 4:6	Page 246
2 Corinthians. 5:1	Page 204
2 Corinthians. 5:14	Page 591
2 Corinthians. 5:18-20	Page 179
2 Corinthians. 6:1-2	Page 556
2 Corinthians. 6:14-17	Page 166
2 Corinthians. 6:5	Page 168
2 Corinthians. 8:19-20	Page 178
2 Peter 1:13-14	Page 482
2 Peter 1:17	Page 565
2 Peter 1:19	Page 246
2 Peter 1:21	Page 15
2 Peter 2:22	Page 493
2 Peter 2:5	Page 274
2 Peter 3:10-12	Page 412
2 Peter 3:12-14	Page 31
2 Peter 3:18	Page 533
2 Peter 3:3-13	Page 408
2 Peter 3:9	Page 460
2 Thessalonians 1:11-12	Page 210
2 Thessalonians 3:6	Page 178, Page 273
2 Thessalonians 3:8	Page 68
2 Timothy 1:11	Page 274
2 Timothy 1:12	Page 292
2 Timothy 1:16	Page 293
2 Timothy 1:7	Page 53
2 Timothy 1:8	Page 292
2 Timothy 1:9	Page 164
2 Timothy 2:12	Page 587
2 Timothy 2:15	Page 586
2 Timothy 2:2	Page 201
2 Timothy 2:4	Page 545
2 Timothy 2:8	Page 218
2 Timothy 4:1-2 & 5-8	Page 505

2 Timothy 4:11	Page 8
2 Timothy 4:2	Page 85, Page 393
2 Timothy 4:5	Page 587
2 Timothy 4:6-8	Page 598
Acts 1:1-2	Page 10, Page 166
Acts 1:1-4	Page 681
Acts 1:1-5	Page 98
Acts 1:11	Page 310
Acts 1:12	Page 173
Acts 1:2	Page 310
Acts 1:22	Page 310
Acts 1:3	Page 108
Acts 1:4	Page 151, Page 682
Acts 1:8	Page 41, Page 242, Page 273, Page 504, Page 680
Acts 10:1-6	Page 206
Acts 10:14-15	Page 326
Acts 10:22	Page 78
Acts 10:38	Page 611
Acts 10:9	Page 155
Acts 11:15-18	Page 99
Acts 11:16	Page 414
Acts 12:11	Page 593
Acts 12:7	Page 69
Acts 12:8	Page 401
Acts 13:2	Page 167
Acts 13:52	Page 26, Page 129
Acts 13:9	Page 26
Acts 14:23	Page 167
Acts 15:16	Page 423
Acts 16:10-12	Page 9
Acts 16:14-15	Page 541
Acts 16:25	Page 47
Acts 16:30-31	Page 542
Acts 16:32	Page 542
Acts 16:6-9	Page 8
Acts 17:10-12	Page 672
Acts 17:26-28	Page 619

Acts 18:5	Page 591
Acts 2:2	Page 132
Acts 2:38-39	Page 682
Acts 2:4	Page 129
Acts 2:44-45	Page 400
Acts 2:44-47	Page 577
Acts 2:46	Page 607
Acts 20:28-29	Page 399
Acts 20:36-38	Page 231
Acts 20:37	Page 466
Acts 20:9	Page 256
Acts 22:25-26	Page 207
Acts 22:3	Page 90
Acts 23:26	Page 15
Acts 24:10	Page 32
Acts 24:3	Page 15
Acts 26:12-14	Page 69
Acts 26:17-18	Page 536
Acts 26:25	Page 15
Acts 26:7	Page 177
Acts 27:16,30, & 32	Page 477
Acts 27:17	Page 245
Acts 27:20	Page 142
Acts 27:23	Page 665
Acts 27:43	Page 207
Acts 4:11	Page 567
Acts 4:31	Page 129
Acts 4:8	Page 26, Page 129
Acts 5:15	Page 42, Page 299
Acts 5:37	Page 57
Acts 6:12-13	Page 381
Acts 6:8	Page 381
Acts 7:46	Page 482
Acts 7:52	Page 382
Acts 7:56	Page 512
Acts 7:57-60	Page 382
Acts 8:35	Page 540
Acts 8:39-40	Page 676

Colossians 1:26-27	Page 250
Colossians 1:27	Page 168
Colossians 1:4	Page 531
Colossians 1:9	Page 87
Colossians 2:13	Page 467
Colossians 3:16	Page 47
Colossians 4:14	Page 8
Ephesians 1:15	Page 531
Ephesians 1:6	Page 37
Ephesians 2:11-14	Page 444
Ephesians 2:12-13	Page 466
Ephesians 2:8	Page 472
Ephesians 2:8-9	Page 156
Ephesians 3:20-21	Page 483
Ephesians 3:3-4	Page 250
Ephesians 4:14-15	Page 86
Ephesians 4:26	Page 556
Ephesians 4:30	Page 79
Ephesians 4:8	Page 495
Ephesians 5:19	Page 47
Ephesians 5:8	Page 246
Ephesians 6:10-12	Page 190
Ephesians 6:11-12	Page 114, Page 610
Ephesians 6:11-13	Page 368
Ephesians 6:12	Page 130
Ephesians 6:14	Page 402
Ephesians 6:2	Page 464
Galatians 1:15	Page 26
Galatians 2:20	Page 447, Page 503
Galatians 2:9	Page 295
Galatians 4:27	Page 456
Galatians 4:4	Page 565
Galatians 5:24	Page 447
Galatians 6:14	Page 447
Galatians 6:4-5	Page 609
Galatians 6:6	Page 16
Hebrews 1:7	Page 412
Hebrews 11:13	Page 495, Page 507

Hebrews 11:21	Page 275
Hebrews 11:24-25	Page 503
Hebrews 11:6	Page 234, Page 303, Page 662
Hebrews 11:7	Page 79
Hebrews 12:1	Page 588, Page 594
Hebrews 12:12	Page 423
Hebrews 12:19	Page 132
Hebrews 12:2	Page 311, Page 316
Hebrews 12:25	Page 79
Hebrews 12:29	Page 412
Hebrews 13:5-6	Page 675
Hebrews 2:18	Page 106
Hebrews 4:12	Page 81, Page 159
Hebrews 4:15	Page 106, Page 110, Page 280
Hebrews 5:12	Page 533
Hebrews 8:1	Page 508
Hebrews 8:5	Page 79
Hebrews 9:27	Page 419, Page 500
James 1:12	Page 107
James 1:13	Page 570
James 1:13-14	Page 106
James 1:19	Page 557
James 1:5-8	Page 220
James 1:6	Page 257
James 1:9	Page 439
James 2:17, 20, 24-26	Page 410
James 2:26	Page 506
James 3:8	Page 203
James 4:2	Page 363
James 4:3	Page 521
James 4:7-10	Page 114
James 5:15	Page 156
James 5:3	Page 412
John 1:1	Page 132
John 1:18	Page 495
John 1:26-33	Page 100
John 1:44	Page 281
John 10:11-16	Page 458

John 10:28-29	Page 241
John 10:30	Page 340
John 11:11-15	Page 498
John 11:13	Page 256
John 11:35	Page 554
John 11:39-44	Page 499
John 12:38	Page 487
John 13:18	Page 487
John 13:23	Page 495
John 13:24	Page 31
John 13:27	Page 599
John 13:3-6	Page 228
John 13:34-35	Page 505
John 14:2	Page 530
John 15:1-8	Page 563
John 15:12	Page 505
John 15:17	Page 505
John 15:18-20	Page 187
John 15:25	Page 487
John 17:8-21	Page 615
John 18:26-27	Page 626
John 19:23	Page 96
John 2:14-16	Page 558
John 2:3-5	Page 254
John 2:4	Page 90
John 20:13-17	Page 668
John 20:26-27	Page 678
John 20:3-10	Page 667
John 21:16	Page 68
John 21:16-17	Page 458
John 21:3-7	Page 144
John 3:3 & 7	Page 526
John 3:30	Page 86
John 3:4	Page 526
John 4:34-38	Page 321
John 4:7-9	Page 313
John 4:9	Page 507
John 4:9b	Page 348

John 7:40-44	Page 366
John 8:6-8	Page 422
John 9:5	Page 246
Leviticus 20:10	Page 487, Page 488
Luke 1:19-20	Page 158
Luke 1:3	Page 11
Luke 1:34	Page 36, Page 250
Luke 1:36	Page 34
Luke 1:41	Page 129
Luke 1:46-55 NIV	Page 49
Luke 1:52	Page 439
Luke 1:67	Page 129
Luke 1:68-79 NIV	Page 56
Luke 10:3-4, 10-12	Page 244
Luke 11:22	Page 41
Luke 11:23	Page 276, Page 277
Luke 11:33	Page 245
Luke 12:25	Page 538
Luke 12:8	Page 467
Luke 13:35	Page 456
Luke 14:3	Page 148
Luke 15:15-16	Page 261
Luke 15:18-20	Page 231
Luke 15:6	Page 242
Luke 15:7	Page 336
Luke 16:13	Page 289
Luke 16:26	Page 264
Luke 17:31	Page 155
Luke 18:10-13	Page 96
Luke 18:16	Page 502
Luke 2:12	Page 579
Luke 2:8,15,18 & 20	Page 457
Luke 22:42	Page 147
Luke 23:26	Page 448
Luke 23:47	Page 206
Luke 23:7-8	Page 428
Luke 24:7	Page 181
Luke 3:15-16	Page 216

Luke 3:21-22	Page 216
Luke 4:17, 20-21	Page 93
Luke 4:18-19	Page 150
Luke 4:35	Page 159
Luke 5:13	Page 211
Luke 5:16	Page 280
Luke 5:16 NASB	Page 152
Luke 5:16 NIV	Page 152
Luke 5:17 NASB	Page 155
Luke 5:34	Page 223
Luke 6:10	Page 211
Luke 6:14	Page 162
Luke 6:9	Page 148
Luke 7:23 Living Bible	Page 219
Luke 7:23 New English Bible	Page 219
Luke 7:23 Phillips	Page 219
Luke 7:23 RSV	Page 219
Luke 7:23 Wuest	Page 219
Luke 8:10	Page 197
Luke 8:24	Page 135
Luke 9:1	Page 303
Luke 9:10	Page 151
Luke 9:29-30 & 33	Page 666
Luke 9:32	Page 256
Luke 9:34	Page 42
Luke 9:57-62	Page 67
Luke 9:58	Page 247
Mark 1:1	Page 17
Mark 1:10-11	Page 217
Mark 1:16-20	Page 141
Mark 1:30	Page 134
Mark 1:35	Page 137
Mark 1:45	Page 150
Mark 1:6	Page 221
Mark 1:7	Page 422
Mark 10:35-40	Page 413
Mark 10:43-44	Page 290
Mark 10:45	Page 403

Mark 10:46-47	Page 534
Mark 10:7	Page 446
Mark 11:15	Page 548
Mark 11:15-17	Page 558
Mark 13:13	Page 587
Mark 13:32	Page 340
Mark 14:36	Page 355
Mark 14:7	Page 138
Mark 14:72	Page 226
Mark 15:17	Page 491
Mark 15:40	Page 235
Mark 15:46	Page 492
Mark 15:47-16:1	Page 236
Mark 16:	Page 675
Mark 16:12-14	Page 128
Mark 16:19	Page 310
Mark 16:9	Page 236, Page 675
Mark 2:27-28	Page 174
Mark 3:4	Page 148
Mark 3:5	Page 557
Mark 4:2 & 10-13	Page 198
Mark 4:21	Page 245
Mark 4:30-32	Page 425
Mark 4:36	Page 255
Mark 4:39	Page 135
Mark 5:26	Page 266
Mark 6:19	Page 383
Mark 6:3	Page 252
Mark 6:31	Page 281
Mark 6:37	Page 283
Mark 6:53	Page 141
Mark 6:56	Page 267
Mark 7:36	Page 151
Mark 9:2	Page 295
Mark 9:23	Page 45
Mark 9:3 NIV	Page 296
Matthew 1:16-17	Page 17
Matthew 1:18-23	Page 36

Matthew 1:21	Page 39
Matthew 1:24	Page 255
Matthew 1:24-25	Page 64
Matthew 1:4-5	Page 104
Matthew 10:10	Page 275
Matthew 10:14-20	Page 277
Matthew 10:16-23	Page 187
Matthew 10:32	Page 467
Matthew 10:32-33	Page 390
Matthew 10:6	Page 66
Matthew 11:28-30	Page 448
Matthew 13:10-15	Page 198
Matthew 13:43	Page 69
Matthew 14:21	Page 282
Matthew 14:25	Page 403
Matthew 14:34	Page 141
Matthew 14:35-36	Page 266
Matthew 15:24	Page 66
Matthew 16:16	Page 285
Matthew 16:18	Page 162
Matthew 17:2	Page 68
Matthew 17:2	Page 295
Matthew 17:20	Page 42
Matthew 18:16	Page 136
Matthew 18:19-20	Page 137
Matthew 18:24	Page 449
Matthew 18:4	Page 465
Matthew 18:6-9	Page 219
Matthew 19:16, 20-22	Page 96
Matthew 19:5	Page 445
Matthew 2:12	Page 78
Matthew 2:22	Page 78
Matthew 2:8, 11	Page 85
Matthew 20:2	Page 233
Matthew 20:26-27	Page 290
Matthew 20:29-30	Page 534
Matthew 21:12-13	Page 557
Matthew 21:2 & 4-5	Page 553

Matthew 21:4	Page 487
Matthew 21:9	Page 430
Matthew 22:14	Page 97
Matthew 22:17-21	Page 150
Matthew 22:2-10	Page 441
Matthew 22:36-40	Page 148, Page 342
Matthew 23:12	Page 439, Page 465
Matthew 23:25-33	Page 379
Matthew 23:26	Page 510
Matthew 23:27	Page 485
Matthew 23:39	Page 430
Matthew 24:13	Page 587
Matthew 24:28	Page 516
Matthew 25:31-33 & 41	Page 471
Matthew 25:32	Page 81
Matthew 25:40	Page 502
Matthew 26:36-41	Page 297
Matthew 26:53	Page 260
Matthew 26:6-13	Page 229
Matthew 26:73-74	Page 626
Matthew 27:42	Page 125
Matthew 27:57-60	Page 97
Matthew 27:64-66	Page 664
Matthew 28:18	Page 112
Matthew 28:19-20	Page 240
Matthew 28:2-7	Page 665
Matthew 5:1	Page 181
Matthew 5:13	Page 451
Matthew 5:15	Page 68
Matthew 5:17	Page 75, Page 486
Matthew 5:18	Page 486
Matthew 5:28	Page 488
Matthew 5:3-10	Page 183
Matthew 5:7	Page 346
Matthew 6:13a	Page 106
Matthew 6:16-18	Page 168
Matthew 6:18	Page 137
Matthew 6:19-20	Page 393, Page 530

Matthew 6:19-21	Page 395, Page 497
Matthew 6:31-33	Page 186
Matthew 6:31-34	Page 483
Matthew 6:34	Page 357
Matthew 6:6	Page 137, Page 519
Matthew 6:7-8	Page 620
Matthew 7:13	Page 427
Matthew 7:16-23	Page 241
Matthew 7:20-23	Page 409
Matthew 7:22-23	Page 389
Matthew 7:6	Page 261, Page 493
Matthew 8:14	Page 134
Matthew 8:17	Page 486
Matthew 8:23-26	Page 89
Matthew 8:26	Page 135
Matthew 9:14	Page 167
Matthew 9:21	Page 266
Matthew 9:9	Page 97
Philemon 1:5	Page 531
Philemon 1:7	Page 531
Philippians 1:15-16	Page 131
Philippians 1:21-23	Page 497
Philippians 2:14-16	Page 595
Philippians 2:15	Page 303
Philippians 2:16 NASB	Page 437
Philippians 2:3-4	Page 609
Philippians 2:6-8	Page 621
Philippians 3:1 & 7-8	Page 497
Philippians 3:2	Page 493
Philippians 3:3-6	Page 51
Philippians 4:14	Page 147
Philippians 4:17	Page 243
Philippians 4:18-19	Page 531
Philippians 4:6-7	Page 531
Philippians 4:8	Page 191
Philippians 2:5-7	Page 604
Psalms 118:22-24	Page 567
Revelation 1:13	Page 512

Revelation 1:13 & 16	Page 295
Revelation 11:19	Page 513
Revelation 14:14	Page 512
Revelation 16:18	Page 513
Revelation 17:3	Page 494
Revelation 18:17	Page 669
Revelation 19:17	Page 442
Revelation 19:5-9	Page 402
Revelation 19:9	Page 441
Revelation 2:1	Page 24
Revelation 2:1-5	Page 248
Revelation 2:20	Page 83
Revelation 20:13-14	Page 389
Revelation 20:14-15	Page 496
Revelation 21:2	Page 370
Revelation 22:15	Page 493
Revelation 3:7-8	Page 361
Revelation 4:5	Page 513
Revelation 5:11	Page 450
Revelation 8:5	Page 513
Romans 1:16	Page 292
Romans 10:9-10	Page 467
Romans 11:25	Page 480
Romans 11:3	Page 421
Romans 11:3 KJV	Page 421
Romans 12:16	Page 480, Page 481
Romans 12:20	Page 188
Romans 13:1-7	Page 149
Romans 13:11	Page 256
Romans 16:16	Page 231
Romans 16:20	Page 303
Romans 16:25	Page 249
Romans 3:10	Page 20, Page 528
Romans 3:23	Page 419
Romans 6:6	Page 447
Romans 8:1-11	Page 292
Romans 8:15	Page 355
Romans 8:26	Page 519

Romans 9:20	Page 435
New Testament	
Acts 11:20-22	Page 642
Acts 13:1	Page 643
Ephesians 2:13-15	Page 655
John 10:30	Page 655
John 19:17	Page 645
John 19:19-22	Page 650
John 19:24	Page 649
John 19:6-16	Page 642
John 20:25	Page 646
Luke 9:23	Page 643
Mark 15:12-15	Page 641
Mark 15:6	Page 638
Matthew 27:15	Page 638
Matthew 27:19	Page 640
Matthew 27:34	Page 647
Old Testament	
1 Chronicles 11:2	Page 66
1 Chronicles 15:27	Page 492
1 Chronicles 24:7-19	Page 20
1 Chronicles 4:9-10	Page 359
1 Kings 1:9	Page 469
1 Kings 10:1-9	Page 374
1 Kings 10:17	Page 545
1 Kings 16:34	Page 537
1 Kings 17:9	Page 126
1 Kings 18:36-38	Page 314
1 Kings 21:19	Page 493
1 Kings 21:23	Page 493
1 Kings 22:19	Page 71
1 Kings 22:38	Page 493
1 Kings 4:22-23	Page 470
1 Samuel 1:1-2	Page 82
1 Samuel 1:11	Page 24
1 Samuel 16:6-7	Page 484
1 Samuel 16:7	Page 161, Page 241, Page 569
1 Samuel 17:16	Page 108

1 Samuel 18:6	Page 469
1 Samuel 21:3-6	Page 174
1 Samuel 28:20-25	Page 470
1 Samuel 8:7	Page 565
2 Kings 2:11	Page 285
2 Kings 20:1-6A	Page 522
2 Kings 22:14	Page 83
2 Kings 5:1-3	Page 210
2 Kings 5:1-5	Page 126
2 Kings 5:14	Page 94
2 Kings 5:9-11	Page 211
2 Kings 6:15-17	Page 72
2 Samuel 12:19-23	Page 499
2 Samuel 5:2	Page 65
2 Samuel 6:13	Page 469
2 Samuel 7:7	Page 65
Acts 20:37	Page 466
Daniel 12:1	Page 29
Daniel 3:3-5	Page 273
Daniel 4:33-35	Page 53
Daniel 6:10	Page 353
Daniel 6:10 & 13	Page 138
Daniel 6:3	Page 129
Daniel 7:13-14	Page 287
Daniel 8:1 & 15-16	Page 29
Daniel 8:16	Page 29
Daniel 8:17	Page 287
Daniel 9:1-2	Page 30
Daniel 9:20-22	Page 30
Daniel 9:21	Page 29
Daniel 9:25-26	Page 286
Daniel 9:3	Page 332
Deuteronomy 14:8	Page 261
Deuteronomy 17:6	Page 136
Deuteronomy 20:10-18	Page 190
Deuteronomy 23:25	Page 172
Deuteronomy 25:5-6	Page 572
Deuteronomy 32:11	Page 324

Deuteronomy 33:12	Page 459
Deuteronomy 6:13	Page 112
Deuteronomy 6:16	Page 113
Deuteronomy 6:4-5	Page 341
Deuteronomy 8:15	Page 336
Deuteronomy 8:3	Page 110
Deuteronomy. 22:23-28	Page 37
Ecclesiastes 10:6	Page 439
Ecclesiastes 3:11	Page 305
Esther 4:1-3	Page 332
Esther 8:15	Page 492
Exodus 12:19-21	Page 601
Exodus 15:1	Page 32
Exodus 15:20	Page 83
Exodus 15:21	Page 32
Exodus 16:12-14 & 19-20	Page 357
Exodus 16:29	Page 173
Exodus 17:9-10	Page 39
Exodus 20:10-11	Page 172
Exodus 20:14	Page 487
Exodus 24:1	Page 318
Exodus 24:15-25:1	Page 299
Exodus 24:18	Page 107
Exodus 26:31 & 33	Page 654
Exodus 3:2 & 5-6	Page 573
Exodus 4:4-6	Page 158
Ezekiel 16:4	Page 60
Ezekiel 21:26	Page 439
Ezekiel 22:25	Page 397
Ezekiel 32:7	Page 589
Ezekiel 34:11-13	Page 455
Ezekiel 34:5-6	Page 454
Ezekiel 5:2	Page 462
Ezra 3:7	Page 331
Ezra 7:21-23	Page 478
Genesis 1:2	Page 260, Page 324
Genesis 1:2-5	Page 592
Genesis 13:13	Page 329

Genesis 14:18-20	Page 40
Genesis 17:11	Page 372
Genesis 17:12-14	Page 50
Genesis 17:15-17	Page 28
Genesis 18:14a	Page 110
Genesis 18:16-21	Page 330
Genesis 18:2-4	Page 227
Genesis 18:20-21	Page 514
Genesis 18:32	Page 330
Genesis 18:9-12	Page 28
Genesis 19:1-2	Page 227
Genesis 19:15-17	Page 330
Genesis 19:23-26	Page 515
Genesis 19:24-26	Page 330
Genesis 19:4-7	Page 515
Genesis 2:24	Page 445
Genesis 2:24	Page 339
Genesis 2:8 & 15	Page 653
Genesis 27:26-27	Page 230
Genesis 27:27	Page 466
Genesis 29:13	Page 466
Genesis 29:33	Page 77
Genesis 3:6	Page 109
Genesis 4:1	Page 40
Genesis 4:17	Page 41
Genesis 4:25	Page 41
Genesis 40:19	Page 646
Genesis 41:42	Page 491
Genesis 46:27	Page 319
Genesis 48:15 NIV	Page 65
Genesis 49:24	Page 65
Genesis 50:3	Page 107
Genesis 6:1-3	Page 514
Genesis 7:12, 12	Page 107
Genesis 9:12-13	Page 372
Habakkuk 3:18	Page 336
Hebrews 6:4 & 6	Page 657
Isaiah 13:9-11	Page 589

Isaiah 23:2-4	Page 592
Isaiah 29:14	Page 337
Isaiah 31:4	Page 457
Isaiah 35:9	Page 397
Isaiah 40:1-2	Page 93
Isaiah 40:11	Page 459
Isaiah 40:4	Page 325
Isaiah 46:11	Page 397
Isaiah 49:22	Page 459
Isaiah 5:30	Page 592
Isaiah 5:5-7	Page 421
Isaiah 53:10-12	Page 617
Isaiah 53:6-7	Page 454
Isaiah 53:7	Page 628
Isaiah 53:7-12	Page 659
Isaiah 61:1	Page 218
Isaiah 63:8-9	Page 494
Isaiah 65:7	Page 195
Isaiah 7:10-14	Page 372
Isaiah 7:14	Page 35
Isaiah 8:3	Page 84
Jeremiah 23:1	Page 454
Jeremiah 25:8-12	Page 320
Jeremiah 32:18	Page 196
Jeremiah 33:16-18	Page 40
Jeremiah 47:4-7	Page 331
Jeremiah 50:17	Page 454
Jeremiah 50:6	Page 66, Page 454
Jeremiah 6:26	Page 332
Jeremiah 8:13	Page 322
Jeremiah 8:17	Page 336
Job 1:6	Page 335
Job 1:6-10	Page 111
Job 25:4	Page 20
Job 38:41	Page 396
Job 42:12-13 & 15	Page 196
Job 9:2	Page 20
Joel 2:1-2	Page 590

Joel 2:10	Page 590
Joel 2:24	Page 195
Joel 3:13-15	Page 590
Jonah 3:6	Page 332
Joshua 2:1	Page 104
Joshua 5:14-15	Page 71
Judges 13:5	Page 26
Judges 14:19	Page 27
Judges 14:6	Page 26
Judges 15:14	Page 27
Judges 4:4	Page 83
Judges 5:1	Page 33
Lament. 2:3	Page 176
Leviticus 11:7	Page 261
Leviticus 12:1-4 & 6-7	Page 76
Leviticus 13:45-46	Page 146
Leviticus 15:19-27	Page 266
Leviticus 15:2-3, 5-7, 9-10	Page 345
Leviticus 16:7-10	Page 22
Leviticus 19:10	Page 139
Leviticus 19:18	Page 341
Leviticus 19:19	Page 174
Leviticus 19:23-25	Page 322
Leviticus 22:6	Page 147
Leviticus 23:22	Page 322
Malachi 4:5-6	Page 27
Matthew 19:5-6	Page 339
Micah 5:2	Page 58
Micah 6:15	Page 194
Nehemiah 6:14	Page 83
Numbers 11:25	Page 320
Numbers 13:25	Page 108
Numbers 15:32-36	Page 173
Numbers 18:12	Page 322
Numbers 19:16	Page 379
Numbers 26:59	Page 35
Numbers 3:6-9	Page 346
Numbers 5:2	Page 148

Numbers 6:2-5	Page 25
Proverbs 16:33	Page 22
Proverbs 21:9	Page 155
Proverbs 25:21-22	Page 188
Proverbs 26:11	Page 494
Proverbs 30:17	Page 397
Proverbs 6:27	Page 196
Psalms 110	Page 574
Psalms 118:26	Page 430
Psalms 119:11	Page 110
Psalms 119:175-176	Page 453
Psalms 127:4-5	Page 21
Psalms 147:9	Page 396
Psalms 22:11	Page 619
Psalms 22:14-18	Page 649
Psalms 22:15-16	Page 494
Psalms 22:19	Page 619
Psalms 23:1	Page 66
Psalms 28:9	Page 66
Psalms 31:1-5	Page 656
Psalms 35:22	Page 619
Psalms 38:21	Page 619
Psalms 49:13-14	Page 453
Psalms 69:21	Page 647
Psalms 78:52-53	Page 453
Psalms 79:12	Page 196
Psalms 80:1	Page 66
Psalms 85:12	Page 322
Psalms 9:17	Page 496
Psalms 91:10-13	Page 113
Ruth 1:1-4	Page 104
Song 1:8	Page 457
Song 4:5	Page 398
Song 5:13	Page 398
Song 6:2	Page 398
Song 7:2	Page 398
Zachariah 10:2	Page 455
Zechariah. 9:9	Page 553

Old Testament

Genesis 2:18 Page 663

Other

Clement, Book 7, Chapter 23 Page 134

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 Page 121

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COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPELS, VOLUME 1, John
 Calvin Page 13

Dr and Mrs. Edward Taylor, "Hudson Taylor and the China
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Easton's Bible Dictionary Page 312

Geldenhuys "The Gospel of Luke, Page 62 Page 23

Geldenhuys, The Gospel of Luke, Page 215 Page 193

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Geldenhuys, "The Gospel of Luke" Page 296

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COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE, Page 188	Page 157
Psalm 16:5	
Psalm 116:13	Page 620
Psalm 16:5	Page 620
Romans 8:26	
Romans 8:26	Page 622