

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

LUKE

BY BOB WINTON



**GOSPEL
BROADCASTING
NETWORK**

This material is the intellectual property of The Gospel Broadcasting Network. It is not to be altered, posted online, or printed without written permission. Questions about use can be sent to info@gbntv.org.

© 1987, Revised 2003, 2013. Enlarged and Updated 2022.



**This Commentary is Dedicated
to the Memory of**

Marie Winton

**My Beloved Wife for More Than
Sixty-Three Years**

**My Constant Companion, Help-Meet and Confidant
For All of Our Married Life**

**Marie Departed this World
November 25, 2022
“Bound For the Promised Land”**



Acknowledgment and Preface

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, doing full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received.

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie help as much as she could despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches. She moved into eternity on November 25, 2022.

Bob Winton

January 26, 2023

bwint38@hotmail.com

(931) 728-7610 * (931) 639-0317

Table of Contents Luke

Table of Contents	Page 5
Introduction	Page 6
Chapter 1	Page 16
Chapter 2	Page 58
Chapter 3	Page 75
Chapter 4	Page 92
Chapter 5	Page 106
Chapter 6	Page 119
Chapter 7	Page 145
Chapter 8	Page 161
Chapter 9	Page 189
Chapter 10	Page 221
Chapter 11	Page 237
Chapter 12	Page 259
Chapter 13	Page 285
Chapter 14	Page 299
Chapter 15	Page 313
Chapter 16	Page 325
Chapter 17	Page 341
Chapter 18	Page 351
Chapter 19	Page 365
Chapter 20	Page 382
Chapter 21	Page 394
Chapter 22	Page 411
Chapter 23	Page 443
Chapter 24	Page 476
Bibliography	Page 496

Introduction to the Gospel of Luke

A. The Author of the Book of Luke.

1. The inspired author was obviously the same as the writer of the Book of Acts.
 - a. Luke 1:1-4: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."
 - b. Acts 1:1-2: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen."
2. Each Gospel account has its own theme, and each account was written to a specific group as noted below:
 - a. Matthew was written to the Jews, and it shows Jesus' Messianic work as a king over His everlasting spiritual kingdom, which is His church.
 - b. Mark was written to the Romans, and it shows that Jesus is the one with power and strength through His miraculous works.
 - c. Luke was written mainly to the Greeks, and it shows the human side of Jesus and portrays Him as being a perfect man.
 - d. John was written to all Christians, and its primary focus is Jesus being Deity, and that He is the Son of God (John 20:30-31).
3. To establish the writer of the Book of Acts is to identify the writer of this account of the gospel.
 - a. The book of Acts meets all the requirements of inspiration. No contradiction can be established within itself or with any other part of the inspired record. It claims to be an inspired record. There are certain references in the book that were beyond the knowledge of uninspired writers. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, guiding the human writer, is the real Author of the book.
 - b. Although the human writer is not directly identified in the book, his identity may be reached by logical deduction. The following information leads to the conclusion that Luke, the beloved physician, was responsible for the writing of the book: The same writer penned both Luke and Acts, as seen above.
 - c. The writer of Acts, speaking in reference to the book of Luke, states that he authored both books. The same writer penned both books, addressing each to the same individual. The evidence pointing to Luke's authorship of the book of Luke, therefore, also shows that this same Luke wrote Acts.
4. "Christian writers of the second century identify Luke as the writer of the gospel account which bears his name. The first writers who definitely name Luke as the author of the third Gospel belong to the end of the second century. They are the canon of Muratori (possibly by Hippolytus), Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria" ("The Gospel of Luke," *ISBE*, 1955 edition, Vol. 3, p.1937).
5. There is also a natural connection between the ending of Luke and the beginning of Acts. The writer of Acts uses pronouns which indicate that he was present during some of the events being described, and absent during others.
 - a. In Acts 16:1-9, the writer uses the pronouns "he" and "they" in reference to Paul and his company. But beginning with verse ten, the writer uses the pronoun "we," thus including himself with the company.
 - b. Acts 20:5—21:18 contains other "we" references, indicating again that the writer was present in Paul's company.
 - c. Acts 28:16 shows that Luke was with Paul in Rome when the apostle was under arrest there, awaiting trial before Caesar. Colossians 4:14 also places him in Rome with Paul at that time. Second Timothy 4:11 reports that Luke was with Paul in Rome on the occasion which may or may not be the same imprisonment. Luke was with Paul in Rome when the book of Philemon was written (Phile. 23-24).
 - d. The author "...is distinguished in the account of the company which started with Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem (20:4-6); for there Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus, are mentioned as going before Paul to Troas, and there waiting for 'us,' meaning the writer and Paul. As then the writer was none of these, and yet he journeyed with Paul on this visit to

Jerusalem, and thence to Rome, we can identify him with no other than Luke. True, some others besides Luke were with Paul when the two epistles just mentioned were written, but none of these journeyed with Paul as did the author" (McGarvey, NC, p.ix).

- e. Robertson: "But, whether one of Paul's converts or not, [Luke] was a loyal friend to Paul. If he lived at Antioch, he could have studied medicine there and the great medical temple of Aesculapius was at Aegae, not far away. As a Greek physician, Luke was a university man and in touch with the science of his day. Greek medicine is the beginning of the science of medicine as it is known today. [Word Pictures in the New Testament, Biblesoft].

6. The conclusion follows that Luke, the physician, was the writer of both the Book of Luke and the Book of Acts.

B. To Whom Were the Two Books Addressed?

1. Luke identifies the recipient as Theophilus. "Theophilus" is a Greek name, and presumably he was of a Grecian background. The name means "lover of God" or "friend of God." A different form of the same Greek words are used of Abraham in James 2:23. Some have postulated that the term is used by Luke in reference to all those who love God, and was not intended for any one person. But "Theophilus" was a common personal name, being used from the third century B.C. onward (Bruce, quoted by Coffman, p.13). There is good reason to believe that a particular individual named Theophilus is addressed. In the absence of information to the contrary, we are to accept the statement at face value.
2. Contained in the former treatise [Gospel of Luke] were details of what Jesus had begun to do and teach until his ascension. The order of the verbs is significant: Jesus did and taught [Acts 1:1]. A teacher must practice what he teaches. The statement is not intended to say that the writer had included *all* that Jesus did and taught (cf. John 21:25). The word *all* is used in reference to the most important matters (cf. Acts 13:10; I Tim. 1:16). Luke included in the former narrative the most significant parts of the Lord's actions and words. Many volumes would be required to record all that he did and said.
3. The former work [the Gospel of Luke] related to what Jesus had *begun* to do and teach. The many aspects of his works and teachings which could be done in his public ministry were concluded at his death on the cross: "It is finished" (John 19:30). He had fulfilled the Law, the sacrifice for sin had been offered, all the instructions the apostles had been able to bear had been given to them (John 16:12), all of the Old Testament prophecies that pertained to his personal ministry had been fulfilled, and all the necessary evidence and confirmation of his divinity and message had been given. Indeed, the foundation of the great plan of salvation had been completed; it only needed to be presented to the lost, together with confirmatory miracles to the first auditors, and recorded, in order to be finalized. It is true that the Lord continues to operate in heaven as Mediator, King, Priest and Savior. However, the word translated "begun" is also used idiomatically: Luke 8:3; 11:29; 13:25; 14:9,29. What Jesus began, the apostles continued; and our efforts are likewise to continue the Lord's work (2 Tim. 2:2).

C. When Was the Gospel of Luke Written?

1. It was written some time before the Book of Acts was penned. This latter book carries no express mention of a date when it was written, but there is enough internal evidence available to narrow down that time to about the year 63 A.D. This being so, the information contained in the book embraces about thirty years of time, from the ascension of Christ in A.D. 33 to the time Paul had been imprisoned in Rome for two years.
2. If the fall of Jerusalem had occurred prior to the writing of the book, Luke would have doubtless included at least some reference to that momentous event. But there is not a breath of an indication that it had occurred. In fact, Luke places Paul in Jerusalem about two years before his deportation to Rome; the large part of a year was required for the journey to appear before Caesar; he had been in Rome for two years when Acts is brought to a close. Other evidence indicates that Paul was executed in Rome prior to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The book closes without reporting the outcome of Paul's defense before Caesar, which is clear evidence that his liberation or execution had not taken place at that time; and further, since nothing is said about Jerusalem's fall, it is obvious that it still was standing. [At the end of this chapter an article is inserted regarding Paul's release from Roman Imprisonment and subsequent experiences].
3. Commenting on these matters in Acts, McGarvey states: "This proof is greatly strengthened when we

consider it in connection with the course of the narrative in the last four chapters. In chapter 25, the writer gives the account of Paul's appeal to Caesar, which broke off his trial before Festus, and which led to all the subsequent proceedings....Now, if his trial before Caesar had taken place when this book was completed, whether it resulted in acquittal or conviction, it is unaccountable that the book was closed without a word on the subject. This would have been, not a mere omission like many others which we know to have occurred in the course of the narrative—the omission of matters the mention of which was not required by the historical context—but the omission of the culminating fact to which a long series of events previously mentioned led forward, and concerning which the writer had deliberately awakened the curiosity of his reader" (NC, pp.xxiv, xxv).

4. It is both obvious and natural that the date of the writing is to be placed at the time of the last recorded reference in the book. Since the last location identified in Acts is Rome, it must have been in this city that the book was written by Luke.
5. It has been established that Festus was sent to be ruler in Judea in the year 60 A.D. Paul appeared before him soon after his taking office. He had been arrested two years earlier (A.D. 58), and was sent on to Rome in the fall after appearing before Festus. He arrived in Rome the following spring (A.D. 61), and remained there in his own hired house for two full years (Acts 28:30), until the year 63 A.D. Hence, the book was very logically written in 63 or 64 A.D. See McGarvey, NC, pp.xxvi-xxxiv.

D. Characteristics and Purposes of the Gospel Account of Luke.

1. It contains certain songs and expressions of praise.
 - a. Prominent among these is the song of Mary: Luke 1:46-55.
 - b. There is also the song of Zacharias: Luke 1:68-79.
 - c. The angels also sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (2:14).
 - d. The song of Simeon is given in Luke 2:29-32: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."
2. Prayer has an important part in this book.
 - a. Our Lord prayed at his baptism: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened" (Luke 3:21).
 - b. Following the cleansing of a certain leper, Jesus entered into prayer: "And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Luke 5:16).
 - c. Christ prayed before he selected the Twelve: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (Luke 6:12).
 - d. He prayed at his Transfiguration: "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray" (Luke 9:28).
 - e. The Lord prayed before he taught the disciples to pray: "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1).
 - f. He prayed for his enemies as he suffered the agonies of crucifixion: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (Luke 23:34).
 - g. He prayed [spoke directly to the Father even as he died]: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46).
 - h. He commanded those who follow him to pray: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).
3. Luke inspired account of the Gospel of Christ emphasized the importance of womanhood.
 - a. Luke 1:42-55: "And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from

henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.”

- b. Luke 2:36-38: “And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”
 - c. Luke 7:12-15: “Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.”
 - d. Luke 8:1-3: “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.”
 - e. Luke 10:38-42: “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”
 - f. Luke 23:28: “But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.”
4. Luke's account also takes note of the poor and outcast.
- a. Luke 3:12 : “Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?”
 - b. Luke 5:27: “And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.”
 - c. Luke 5:29-30: “And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?”
 - d. Luke 7:36-50: “And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint:
-

but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

5. The Gospel of Luke was directed especially toward the Gentiles.
 - a. Luke 2:10, 32: “And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”
 - b. His genealogy traces Christ back to Adam, not to Abraham.
 - c. The Good Samaritan was not a Jew.
 - d. The leper who returned to thank Jesus was not a Jew: “And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole” (Luke 17:11-19).
6. His account had the Greeks in mind especially.
 - a. The Greek was the representative of reason and humanity; Luke presented Christ as the perfect example of humanity. Compare: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).
 - b. In writing directly to Theophilus, Luke’s account confirmed that individual’s faith, and also presents sufficient evidence about the life and work of the Messiah to make it possible for countless others to confidently accept Jesus as the Son of God: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed” (Luke 1:1-4).
7. Penitence is prominently presented in the Book of Luke.
 - a. His account of the Great Commission names only the condition of repentance: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).
 - b. An emphasis is placed on repentance throughout the book.
 - 1) Luke 3:3: “And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”
 - 2) Luke 5:31-32: “And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
 - 3) Luke 11:32: “The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.”
 - 4) Luke 13:3: “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
 - 5) Luke 15:7: “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”
 - 6) Luke 16:30: “And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.”
 - 7) Luke 17:3: “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.”
 - c. Faith and baptism are not named in Great Commission in Luke.
 - 1) Repentance is separated from these in order to emphasize its vital importance.
 - 2) Repentance is a highly important part of the plan of salvation; it is also imperative in Christian

living. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 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. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:7-10). This passage is addressed to Christians, not to alien sinners.

- 3) Luke's book was mainly directed to the Gentiles; they were steeped in sin and needed a complete change in their attitudes, beliefs and practices. Paganism permeated their society and their religion was that of idolatry, with all the perversities it included; a large number of religious prostitutes served at the temple of Diana at Ephesus.

E. The Chronology of Events in Acts. (Adapted from Boles, p.16; McGarvey, NC, p.xxxiii,xxxiv):

YEAR	EVENT	ROMAN EMPEROR
33	Day of Pentecost	Tiberius (A.D. 14-37)
36	Martyrdom of Stephen	
37	Conversion of Paul	Caligula (A.D. 37-41)
40	Paul Goes to Jerusalem (Gal. 1:15-19)	
41	Conversion of Cornelius	Claudius (A.D. 41-54)
42	Church in Antioch Began	
43	Barnabas and Saul in Antioch (Acts 11:22-26)	
44	Martyrdom of James	
44-49	1st Missionary Journey (Acts 13,14)	
50 or 51	Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15; Gal. 2:1f)	
51-53	2nd Missionary Journey	
54-58	3rd Missionary Journey	Nero (A.D.54-68)
58	Paul Arrested in Jerusalem	
58-60	Paul's Imprisonment in Caesarea	
61	Paul's Journey to Rome	
61-63	Paul's Imprisonment in Rome	
63 or 64	Luke Wrote Acts in Rome	

1. Barnes offers the following information:
 - a. Little is "certainly" known concerning the time and place of writing this Gospel, or concerning the author. The first time we have any mention of the author is in his own history, Acts 16:10-11. He was then the companion of Paul in his travels, and it is evident that he often attended Paul in his journeys,

- compare Acts 16:11-17; 21:1-6. In each of these places the author of "the Acts" speaks of "his" being in company with Paul. That the same person was the writer of this Gospel is also clear from Acts 1:1.
- b. From this circumstance the ancients regarded this Gospel as in fact the Gospel which Paul had preached. They affirm that Luke recorded what the apostle preached. Thus, Irenaeus says, "Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the gospel preached by him." He also says, "Luke was not only a companion, but also a fellow-labourer of the apostles, especially of Paul." Origen, speaking of the Gospels, says, "The third is that according to Luke, the gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the Gentile converts." The testimony of the fathers is uniform that it was written by Luke, the companion of Paul, and was, therefore, regarded by them as really the gospel which Paul preached.
2. Barnes also wrote:
 - a. It has been made a matter of inquiry whether Luke was a Gentile or a Jew. On this subject there is no positive testimony. Jerome and others of the fathers say that he was a Syrian, and born at Antioch. The most probable opinion seems to be that he was a proselyte to the Jewish religion, though descended from Gentile parents
 - b. Yet the "preface" to his Gospel, as critics have remarked, is pure classic Greek, unlike the Greek that was used by native Jews; from which it seems not improbable that he was by birth and education a Gentile. Second. In Acts 21:27, it is said that the Asiatic Jews excited the multitude against Paul because he had introduced "Gentiles" into the temple, thus defiling it. In Acts 21:28 it is said that the Gentile to whom they had reference was "Trophimus," an Ephesian. Yet "Luke" was also at that time with Paul. If he had been regarded as "a Gentile" it is probable that they would have made complaint respecting "him" as well as "Trophimus;" from which it is supposed that he was a Jewish proselyte.
 - c. But again, in the Epistle to the Colossians, Col 4:9-11, we find Paul saying that Aristarchus, and Marcus, and Barnabas, and Justus saluted them, "who are," he adds, "of the circumcision," that is, Jews by birth. In Col 4:14 he says that "Luke," the beloved physician, and Demas also saluted them; from which it is inferred that they were "not of the circumcision," but were by birth Gentiles.
 - d. Most writers suppose that Luke, the writer of this Gospel, was intended in the above place in Colossians. If so, his profession was that of "a physician;" and it has been remarked that his descriptions of diseases are more accurate and circumstantial, and have more of "technical" correctness than those of the other evangelists. [We remember that inspired writers were guided by the Holy Spirit, who selected certain words from the author's natural vocabulary].
 3. Who was Luke?
 - a. Luke does not profess to have been an eye-witness of what he recorded. See Luke 1:2-3. It is clear, therefore, that he was not one of the seventy disciples, nor one of the two who went to Emmaus, as has been sometimes supposed. Nor was he an apostle. By the early writers he is uniformly called the "companion" of the apostles, and especially of Paul.
 - b. If he was not one of the apostles, and if he was not one of those expressly commissioned by our Lord to whom the promise of the infallible teaching of the Holy Ghost was given, the question arises by what authority his Gospel and the Acts have a place in the sacred canon, or what evidence is there that he was divinely inspired? [The books of James and Jude were written by half-brothers of Jesus, not by an apostle of Christ].
 4. In regard to this question the following considerations may give satisfaction:
 - a. These books were received by all the congregations on the same footing as the first three Gospels. There is not a dissenting voice in regard to their authenticity and authority. The value of this argument is this—that if they had been spurious, or without authority, the *fathers* [early writers in the church] were the proper persons to know it.
 - b. They were published during the lives of the apostles Peter, Paul, and John, and were received *during* their lives as books of sacred authority. If the writings of Luke were not inspired, and had no authority, those apostles could easily have destroyed their credit, and we have reason to think it would have been done.
 - c. It bears the same marks of inspiration as the other books. It is simple, pure, yet sublime; there is nothing unworthy of God; and it is elevated far above the writings of any uninspired man.
-

- d. If he was *not* inspired—if, as we suppose, he was a Gentile by birth—and if, as is most clear, he was not an eyewitness of what he records, it is inconceivable that he did not contradict the other evangelists. That he did not "borrow" from them is clear. Nor is it possible to conceive that he could write a book varying in the order of its "arrangement" so much, and adding so many new facts, and repeating so many recorded also by the others, without *often* having contradicted what was written by them. Let any man compare this Gospel with the spurious gospels of the following centuries, and he will be struck with the force of this remark.
- e. If it be objected that, not being an apostle, he did not come within the "promise" of inspiration [John 14:26; 16:13-14] made to the apostles, it may be replied that this was also the case with Paul; yet no small part of the New Testament is composed of his writings. The evidence of the inspiration of the writings of Luke and Paul is to be judged, not only by that "promise," but by the early reception of the churches; by the testimony of the fathers as to the judgment of "inspired men" when living, and by the internal character of the works. Luke has all these equally with the other evangelists.

F. Remember That the Gospel Account of Luke Places Emphasis on Penitence.

1. The Great Commission in Luke names only the condition of repentance: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).
2. Repentance is emphasized throughout the Gospel account of Luke.
 - a. Luke 3:3: "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
 - b. Luke 5:32: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
 - c. Luke 11:32: "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."
 - d. Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - e. Luke 15:7: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."
 - f. Luke 16:30: "And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."
 - g. Luke 17:3: "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."
3. Faith and baptism not named in the Great Commission in Luke. Repentance is separated from them to emphasize its vital importance. Repentance is an essential part of the plan of salvation; it is also imperative in Christian living. Luke directed mainly to Gentiles, who were steeped in sin, and needed a complete change.
4. Repentance is not a one-time requirement.
 - a. One is baptized only once but we must repent many times: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). [This was written to Christians].
 - b. We will be lost if we do not repent whenever we sin:
 - 1) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - 2) 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - 3) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - c. We must not forget the awful nature of sin. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa 59:2). Repentance demands new directions (2 Cor. 7:10; Acts 17:30). This fact shows us that sin must be awful in God's sight.
 - d. Repentance is necessary to develop proper attitudes. Impenitent people in Luke had wrong attitudes (Luke 7:36ff; 18:9-14). Repentance gives people the right attitude. Joy is tied to penitence (Luke 15:7; cf. Acts 8:39; 16:34).
5. One of the greatest needs in Lord's church is penitence.
 - a. We often err through omission and commission, thus do we need penitence.
 - b. We live too fast, with not enough time to meditate on deep spiritual matters.

- c. We might repent too quickly, thus our penitence is rushed and therefore shallow. Little impression is made on us of the awfulness of sin.
 - d. Compare: “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (Luke 3:8). The proper fruit of repentance comes if we consider sin.
 - 1) We can develop an attitude of loathing toward sin, and a fear of falling into sin again.
 - 2) By having a sense of contamination when we sin, and cultivate a revulsion toward it, we will be less likely to transgress.
 - e. True repentance goes to the very soul of a man. It cannot be pretended or bought; it is a turning away from sin in disgust.
 - f. If we love sin and long for sinful practice, we have not repented.
- G. Psalm 51 Helps Us See the Proper Attitude Toward Sin.
1. In this passage, God uncovered David’s mind and we can see what goes on in the heart of one struggling under guilt. It shows how repentance works in that heart.
 2. The words David used describing sin show its awfulness: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my **transgressions**. Wash me thoroughly from mine **iniquity**, and cleanse me from my **sin**” (Ps. 51:1-2).
 - a. He described his sin plainly, and saw its foulness; his heart was filled with sorrow and grief.
 - b. He had wronged Bathsheba and Uriah—but especially God: “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest” (Ps. 51:4).
 - c. He admitted to himself his rebellion and iniquity (lawlessness). True repentance comes when we face sin for what it is.
 3. David compared sin to leprosy: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psa. 51:7).
 - a. Lepers were banished from fellowship with family, friends and society. But sinners lose fellowship with God: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).
 - b. Sin generates a sense of loss and emptiness within a child of God. If not, then we do not know or care about our condition.
 - c. When sin overwhelms us, we have a sense of helplessness, and are in a state of hopelessness.
 - 1) Ephesians 2:12: “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”
 - 2) Psalm 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”
 - 3) Proverbs 28:9: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”
 - 4) Psalm 46:1: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”
 - d. God will not accept the worship or service that comes from an impenitent heart: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination” (Prov. 28:9).
 4. David realized this and prayed: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit” (Ps. 51:10-12).
 - a. He asked that his desire for sin could be overcome.
 - b. He asked for God’s mercy.
 - c. He wanted the joy of salvation to be restored to his heart.
-



Luke 1

A. Luke 1:1-4: The Certainty of the Gospel.

1. Verse 1: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed" (Luke 1:1-4).
 - 2) NKJ: "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).
 - b. Luke reports that various other efforts had been made by other unidentified writers to produce brief histories of the life and work of the Messiah. Luke does not criticize or reprove their work, but rather is guided to provide a full narrative of the subject. These earlier account of the gospel have long since disappeared from view. Together with Matthew, Mark and John, Luke's treatise provides us with a complete record of the story of Christ and his work.
 - c. Luke here states that his material will put into written form all those things which were believed among the Christians. The apostles of Christ had been loyal in dispensing the gospel throughout Palestine, Samaria, and many other locations. There were others who with zeal preached the gospel:
 - 1) Acts 8:1, 4: "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
 - 2) Acts 11:18-21: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."
 - d. Paul and Barnabas had carried it into Asia Minor, and it was soon spread by Paul and Silas into Europe. Eventually, this apostle to the Gentiles reached Rome, and the gospel went even farther. Paul was later released by Nero, and made his way into Spain. Paul had earlier planned to go to Rome, but the circumstances were not what he thought:
 - 1) Romans 15:19-24: "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ...For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*."
 - 2) Romans 15:30-31: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed."
 - e. The Gospel could not be stopped!
 - 1) Colossians 1:3-6: "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."

- 2) Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."
 - 3) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
- f. Vincent:
- 1) Forasmuch as *epeideeper*. Only here in the New Testament. A compound conjunction: *epei* "since," *dee*, "as is well known," and *per*, giving the sense of certainty. Have taken in hand *epecheireesan*. Used by Luke only. A literal translation. The word carries the sense of a difficult undertaking (see Acts 19:13) It occurs frequently in medical language. Hippocrates begins one of his medical treatises very much as Luke begins his gospel. "As many as have taken in hand *epecheireesan* to speak or to write concerning the healing art."
 - 2) To set forth in order *anataxasthai*. Only here in the New Testament. The King James Version is true to the core of the word, which is *tassoo*, "to put in order, or arrange." The English Revised Version (1885) happily gives the force of the preposition *ana*, "*up*," by the rendering "draw up."
 - 3) A declaration *dieegeesin*. Only here in the New Testament. From *dia* "through," and *heegeomai*, "to lead the way." Hence, something which leads the reader through the mass of facts: "a narrative," as the King James Version, with the accompanying idea of thoroughness. Note the singular number.
....
 - 4) Which are most surely believed *toon pepleeroforeemenoon*. From *pleerees*, "full," and *foreoo*, the frequentative form of *feroo*, "to bring," meaning to bring "frequently or habitually." Hence, "to bring full measure; to fulfil." Compare 2 Tim 4:5,17. Also of "full assurance." Applied to persons. Rom 4:21; Heb 10:22 Render as the English Revised Version (1885): "have been fulfilled." The word is chosen to indicate that these events happened in accordance with a preconceived design. Wycliffe, "been filled in us." Among us. Explained by the words in the next sentence, "who were eye-witnesses and ministers."
- g. Boles: The failure of those referred to by Luke and their partial account imposed the necessity on Luke to give a complete record. However, some think that nothing more is meant here by Luke than the simple undertaking of the task before him without any reference to the incomplete work of others. The motive of others was to give to the world the story of Jesus; hence they had drawn "up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us." Luke purposes to give to the world a complete history of the facts of the Christian faith; he designs to substitute an inspired account in the place of those accounts written by the "many" to which he here refers.
2. Verse 2: "Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word."
 - a. The Twelve Apostles instilled into the minds of countless people the great truths of the Gospel; this they began to accomplish on the Pentecost Day of Acts Chapter Two. About three thousand obeyed the gospel on that occasion, with uncounted thousands of Jews and proselytes from the far reaches of the Empire being present on that momentous day. Wherever those new Christians henceforth traveled, it is doubtless that they told about what they had heard and seen.
 - b. The apostles were first-hand eyewitness of the Lord and his message of truth: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).
-

- 1) Acts 1:1-7: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto **the apostles** whom he had chosen: To **whom** also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of **them** forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 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. For John truly baptized with water; but **ye** shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When **they** therefore were come together, **they** asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto **them**, It is not for **you** to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."
 - 2) Notice that the pronouns in bold have as their antecedent the word "apostles" back in verse two. The commandment of verse two was given to the apostles; the infallible proofs were demonstrated to the apostles; it was the apostles who assembled with the Lord in verse four; it was to these same apostles the promise of the Holy Spirit was given in verse five; it was these apostles who asked the question of verse six; it was to the apostles that the Lord made the remark in verse seven; and again, it was to these same men that the statement of verse eight was directed.
 - 3) Acts 10:36-41: "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And **we are witnesses of all things** which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."
 - 4) These men were to be the Lord's witnesses. It was the apostles who gave witness in Acts 4:33. The thing they were to bear witness to was the resurrection of Christ. We have not seen the risen Lord; no one on earth today has seen him; therefore, no one today can be a witness of the risen Savior. There is no such thing as a substitute witness; we either saw the thing we are to testify about or we did not see it.
 - c. Christianity is based on truth, not supposition; it is founded on verified realities, not subjectivity. God selected good witnesses to testify to the world that Jesus was indeed raised from the dead. They devoted their lives, and even forfeited them, in proclamation of this truth. Their work was to be done first in Jerusalem, which they did with great results. It was sensible to begin here where the first great enemy of the gospel was entrenched. Then they were to extend their labors to Judea, Samaria, and to the most distant lands where men dwelled.
 - d. "One reason, suggested by the commentators generally, for the beginning in Jerusalem, was the propriety of first vindicating the claims of Jesus in the same city in which he was condemned. But the controlling reason was doubtless this: the most devout portion of the Jewish people, that portion who had been most influenced by the preparatory preaching of John and of Jesus, were always collected at the great annual festivals, and hence the most *successful* beginning could there be made. Next to these, the inhabitants of the rural districts of Judea were best prepared, by the same influences, for the gospel; then the Samaritans, who had seen some of the miracles of Jesus; and, last of all, the Gentiles. Thus the rule of *success* was made their guide from place to place, and it became the custom of the apostles, even in heathen lands, to preach the gospel 'first to the Jew' and 'then to the Gentile.' The result fully justified the rule; for the most signal triumph of the gospel was in Judea, and the most successful approach to the Gentiles of every region was through the Jewish synagogue" (McGarvey, Acts, p.17).
 - e. But before the apostles could begin this great work, indeed before they were *able* to do it, they must receive the miraculous power which the Holy Spirit would provide. "...Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).
 - 1) The source of this power was heaven, specifically through the coming of the Holy Spirit. Notice Mark 9:1 (ASV): "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." The promised kingdom was to come with power; the power was to be given to the apostles in
-

- Jerusalem (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5); the power would be received when the Holy Spirit came upon them; the Holy Spirit came upon them on the Pentecost day of Acts 2 (1-4).
- 2) From these facts, the following deduction can be made with certainty: the kingdom came on the Pentecost day of Acts 2. This is so because God implied it by the facts he gave in the divine Record, not because we inferred it!
- f. The apostles were eyewitness of the resurrected Christ, as well as to many of his activities and presentations. They were empowered to become able ministers of the word of the Gospel. They fulfilled their work perfectly. Their eyewitness testimony and their message were fully authenticated by the miracles they performed.
 - 1) Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 2) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will" (ASV).
 - g. "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). The apostles continued their great work of bearing witness of the reality of the Lord's resurrection; this they did with great power. Their testimony consisted not of mere assertion, for in that case, there would have been no convincing power. Their testimony was joined to miraculous signs which proved beyond question that their witness was true: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27, cf. Acts 1:8; 10:37-43; Mark 16:15-29; Heb. 2:1-4).
3. Verse 3: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus."
 - a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Boles: "Luke, guided by the Holy Spirit, was incited to write on this subject because he had peculiar qualifications and facilities for the task; he had the perfect knowledge of all the things relating to his narrative. 'All things' refer to all things of importance, such as Luke deemed by the Holy Spirit essential to his narrative; he had traced all these accounts 'accurately from the first' and was prepared to give them in the order that he follows in his narrative. The word 'accurately' gives the emphasis to what he states as being perfectly reliable; these are given by Luke 'in order'; that is, they are arranged in his account in their proper connection; he does not mean here that he is going to relate everything in his gospel in chronological order" [p.16].
 - c. Christians in the first century had opportunities that we today do not have. Some of them saw and heard first-hand, things that were spoken by the Lord and by his apostles. Many of them were present at the vast assembly in Acts 2. Many were privileged to know some of the apostles personally. Some of them were beneficiaries of miraculous powers from those apostles.
 - d. The unbelievers today who find fault with what New Testament writers knew, and who were directly guided to receive and record heaven-revealed information, are not qualified to find fault with what
-

- those inspired writers gave us. Every Christian believes the truth of the gospel. The gospel forms the basis of their life, the foundation of their hope, and source of their speech, thoughts, motives and worship. Faithful, mature children of God today honestly believe that Christ died for their sins, shed his blood for their souls, and arose on the third day to die no more. We are ready to suffer for his Cause.
- e. Luke wrote his account of the Gospel in order that Theophilus might know the certainty of the truth of the Gospel. Our study of what Luke wrote similarly benefits readers of our time.
 - f. Fourfold Gospel:
 - 1) Forasmuch as many [of whom we know nothing and have even no tradition] have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled [completed, or accomplished according to the divine will] among us,
 - 2) Even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses [the apostles were necessarily such ...] and ministers of the word [the apostles were ministers, and not ecclesiastical dignitaries],
 - 3) It seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first [and being therefore thoroughly fitted to write the gospel], to write unto thee in order [not in chronological but in topical order], most excellent Theophilus [Luke also dedicated the Book of Acts to this man. Nothing is known of Theophilus, but he is supposed to have been a Greek of high official rank];
 - 4) That thou mightest know the certainty [might have a fixed written record, and not trust to a floating, variable tradition or a treacherous memory] concerning the things [the gospel facts] wherein thou wast instructed.
 - g. Coffman:
 - 1) Having traced the source of all things accurately from the first ... The words "from the first" are a translation of the Greek term ... the same word which is rendered "from above" in John 3:3. G. Campbell Morgan insisted on the latter meaning here, which would make this an affirmation by Luke of the fact of his inspiration. Hobbs said that there is no reason why both meanings should not apply here.[5] To write unto thee in order ... There is no way to know exactly what Luke intended by this, other than the inherent truth that his record is systematic. It does not seem to be strictly chronological in every instance; but it is not affirmed here that it is.
 - 2) That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed ... The Greek word here rendered "things" is actually "words" (English Revised Version (1885) margin); and the last clause means "which thou wast taught by word of mouth," unmistakable references to the oral instruction received by Christians in those times, prior to and after their acceptance of the faith. This makes the implications of this passage to be of epic proportions. Despite the fact of there having been "many" written portions of the gospel message, even so important a person as Theophilus had received only word-of-mouth teaching, indicating the universality of the word-of-mouth method of instruction Luke's Gospel was written for the precise purpose of confirming the accuracy of the oral instruction Theophilus had already received.
 - h. The Gospel of John was not written until late in the First Century; Luke would not have even seen that inspired publication at the time he penned his account of the gospel. We have no evidence that Luke was acquainted with the writings of Matthew and Mark; if he had their accounts before him, some mention of them seems proper. Also, Luke would not have had reference to the two other inspired accounts of the gospel, since he said "many", which is not a clear reference to only two. Scholars often speak of certain terminologies of the various New Testament writers, which to them offers powerful evidence about the identity of the author.
 - i. Words and phrases used in one treatise are ascribed to certain writers based on the use of this phraseology. But since these men were inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen Heaven's revelation, it was the Spirit who chose the words. It is evident that the words chosen by the Spirit were those in the writer's vocabulary. Since Luke was a physician, there were certain medical terms already in his possession, and some of these were picked to be included in the revelation Luke was enabled to receive and record.
-

- j. An infallible unchanging standard was needed and was given. The four separate inspired accounts of the Gospel were provided; each was written especially with certain distinct audiences in mind, but they all furnish mankind with information that the world and all Christians need.
- 1) Matthew is an account of the gospel especially directed toward the Jews. This is seen in the use of Jewish terms and numbers without explanation [*corban* in Mark 7:11-12; cf. Matt. 15:5-6]. "He omits explanations of Jewish customs and local references which Gentile readers would naturally expect (cf. Mark 7:3-4; 13:3)" (Boles). Matthew traces the genealogy of the Lord back to Abraham by three great Jewish historical events (1:17). Sixty-five quotations from the Old Testament are given in Matthew.
 - 2) Mark's account was the Gospel for the Romans. The Romans were men of great power, mighty workers who left behind them great accomplishments for the blessing of humanity. So that what Mark recorded would especially appeal to them by recording of Jesus' mighty deeds. He lets them see one who has power to still the storm, to control disease and death, and even power to control the unseen world of spirits. The Roman, who found deity in a Caesar as head of a mighty kingdom, would bow to one who had shown himself King in every realm and whose Kingdom was both omnipotent and everlasting, both visible and unseen, both temporal and spiritual.
 - 3) Luke was written mainly to the Greeks, and it shows the human side of Jesus and portrays Him as being a perfect man.
 - 4) John was written to all Christians, and its primary focus is Jesus being Deity, and that He is the Son of God (John 20:30-31).
4. The Bible authoritatively shows truth and exposes error.
- a. There was a time when most people in our country believed the Bible.
 - 1) It was accepted as inspired, inerrant, and the final authority on all the subjects on which it speaks. But that superb attitude has changed in the space of one generation; sectarian preachers and organizations have repudiated what the Bible teaches on highly significant matters [e.g. salvation, worship, morality, the resurrection of Jesus]. Many preachers in the Lord's church have quit preaching the word of God—they have nothing to offer our souls, the most important part of us.
 - 2) This change has led to confusion, uncertainty, skepticism, and unbelief over what is right and wrong, and what is truth and what is error. Many have decided that there is no absolute standard. There are those who live on the level of animal instinct.
 - b. "Many take their religion for granted. Many do not know what they believe, nor why. Religion is too often inherited, or a matter of tradition. It is often a matter of 'will worship'—just the things that the worshiper likes. The salvation of the soul depends on an absolute knowledge of divine truth. Only the truth will save. Error will condemn" (S.C. Kinningham, *That Thou Mightest Know*. p.1).
 - c. Luke mentions many people of his time who had taken upon themselves to write about those things which are "most surely believed among us." Brother Boles offers these comments:
 - 1) "Those who had written these accounts to which Luke here refers were uninspired; hence the necessity of Luke's giving an inspired and accurate account.
 - 2) "The failure of those referred to by Luke and their partial account imposed the necessity on Luke to give a complete record. However, some think that nothing more is meant here by Luke than the simple undertaking of the task before him without any reference to the incomplete work of others. The motive of others was to give to the world the story of Jesus; hence they had drawn 'up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us.' Luke purposes to give to the world a complete history of the facts of the Christian faith; he designs to substitute an inspired account in the place of those accounts written by the 'many' to which he here refers" (p.15).
 - d. Barnes: *To set forth in order*. To compose a narrative. It does not refer to the "order" or arrangement," but means simply to give a narrative. The word rendered here "in order" is different from that in the third verse, which "has" reference "to order," or to a full and fair "arrangement" of the principal facts, etc., in the history of our Lord.
5. Verse 4: "That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."
- a. Pulpit Commentary: Luke, without depreciating the accounts of the life and work of Jesus then current in the Church, here sets out his reasons for undertaking a fresh compilation. His Gospel would differ from the early Gospels:
-

- 1) By going back much further than they did. It is doubtful if these primitive Gospels began earlier than with the ministry of John and the baptism of Jesus. Mark's Gospel—which, perhaps, represents one of the earliest forms of the apostles' preaching and teaching,—does not go further back than those events. Luke gave Theophilus, among other early details, a history of the incarnation and the infancy of the Blessed One.
 - 2) By presenting the whole story in a consecutive form. Important omissions would easily result from this mode of telling the great story" (Godet). Most excellent Theophilus. The term rendered "most excellent" (κράτιστε) denotes that the friend of Luke for whom nominally his Gospel was written was a man of high rank in the Roman world of that day. Nothing is known of his history. He was most likely, from Luke's connection with Antioch, a noble of that great and wealthy city, and may fairly be taken as a representative of that cultured thoughtful class for whom in a measure Luke especially wrote. The title κράτιστε, by which the Theophilus is here addressed, we find several times applied to high Roman officials, such as Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; Acts 24:3; Acts 26:25).
- b. One other implication of vast significance appears in this preface. Whereas the oral instruction received by Theophilus was admitted by Luke to have been absolutely correct, and whereas the "many" writers had written of the things Luke recorded, this Gospel was composed for the purpose of greater "certainty" (Luke 1:4) than could have been held in respect of oral teachings, and with a design of giving an account of "all things" (Luke 1:3) that were pertinent to the holy faith, as contrasted with implied inadequacy of the "many" written accounts, this latter implication of inadequacy, or incompleteness, being the sole fault of the "many" writers before him. There is not the slightest hint that Luke was writing to correct false teachings of the writers cited. [Coffman].
6. The things most surely believed among us.
- a. That package of truth included the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the miracles he performed, his teachings, the great matters of the crucifixion, the atonement of sinners, his resurrection from the tomb, his ascension back to the Father, and the promise of the Second Coming.
 - b. The brethren believed the plan of salvation:
 - 1) John 20:30-31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."
 - 2) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 3) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - 4) Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
 - 5) Romans 10:9-10: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - 6) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 7) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - c. The brethren were taught the necessity of be faithful, living pure lives, and happily rendering sincere service to God through Christ.
 - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 2) James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

- 3) 1 Corinthians 15:58: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
7. Why did they all believe these same things?
- a. Not because of myths, personal feelings or the popularity of the facts! No sensible person would be willing to suffer persecution and face death for these matters if his knowledge was merely a human invention.
 - b. Because all were instructed in the same truths: The apostles of Christ and the inspired New Testament prophets preached no error! “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (Eph. 3:1-5).
 - c. Christianity is addressed to the mind:
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:33 (ASV): “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: **I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”
 - 2) John 6:44-45 (ASV): “No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be **taught of God**. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.”
 - 3) The gospel of Christ could not be spread without instruction and learning.
 - d. Their faith rested on testimony of the highest order: information from reliable, respectable eyewitnesses (Luke 1:2; Heb 2:1-4; Mark 16:15-20).
 - 1) Men who were willing to suffer to spread, live, and defend the message.
 - 2) They had nothing to gain in this world and everything to lose if they were preaching lies!
8. But how could future generations know the truth with certainty?
- a. The testimony of the eyewitnesses was recorded:
 - 1) Luke 1:3-4: “It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”
 - 2) John 20:30: “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.”
 - b. God guided the recording process:
 - 1) 2 Peter 1:19-21 (ASV): “And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:9-13 (ASV)” “But as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words.”
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 14:37 (ASV): “If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord.”
 - c. The accuracy of historical facts, its medical and scientific foreknowledge, the harmony of facts that are presented, and fulfilled prophecies show Bible must be the inspired word of God!
 - d. Those who reported the gospel message were willing to suffer: “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20).
-

- e. Luke 1:3-4 (KJV): “It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” In order (*kathexes*): distinctly, clearly, in an orderly fashion; the same word used in:
- 1) Acts 11:4: “But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it **by order** unto them, saying.”
 - 2) Acts 18:23: “And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia **in order**, strengthening all the disciples.”
9. We can know the certainty of these things.
- a. The Bible is God’s revelation of absolute knowledge:
- 1) Job 19:25 (ASV): “But as for me I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth.”
 - 2) John 8:31-32 (ASV): “Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
 - 3) Acts 2:36 (ASV): “Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.”
 - 4) John 7:17 (ASV): “If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself.”
- b. We can know how we stand with God:
- 1) 1 John 3:19: “And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 1:12: “For the which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.”
 - 3) Hebrews 10:22: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”
- c. We can know because Heaven’s testimony is sure:
- 1) Psalm 19:7: “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:14-17: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
 - 3) John 6:69: “And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- d. Acts 2:36: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. What made this conclusion undeniable?
- 1) The miracles done during this event confirmed the message:
 - a) Acts 2:1-8: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?”
 - b) John 3:2: “The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.:
 - c) Mark 16:20: “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

- 2) The information presented in the context led logically to that conclusion.
- 3) They understood, believed and knew that this conclusion was indisputable: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37).

B. Luke 1:5-12: Zacharias and Elisabeth.

1. Verse 5: “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.”
 - a. King David had divided the many Aaronic priests into twenty-four courses (orders; parts). “Then David with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to the schedule of their service. 4 There were more leaders found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar, and thus they were divided. Among the sons of Eleazar were sixteen heads of their fathers' houses, and eight heads of their fathers' houses among the sons of Ithamar. 5 Thus they were divided by lot, one group as another, for there were officials of the sanctuary and officials of the house of God, from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. 6 And the scribe, Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, one of the Levites, wrote them down before the king, the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the priests and Levites, one father's house taken for Eleazar and one for Ithamar. 7 Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiiah, 8 the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9 the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, 10 the seventh to Hakkoz, the **eighth to Abijah**, 11 the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12 the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, 13 the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, 14 the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, 15 the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez, 16 the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel, 17 the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, 18 the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. 19 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” (NKJV).
 - b. This Herod is known in history as “Herod the Great.” He was an Idumaeon [Edomite] by birth, founder of the Herodian family, king of Judaea from B.C. 40 to A.D. 4. It was during the reign of Herod that the events here presented occurred.
 - c. We are introduced to a certain priest known as Zacharias. His wife, Elisabeth, had descended from the daughters of Aaron, the first of the Mosaic high priests. Their son who was to be born to this couple was of the priestly lineage through each of his parents. “And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Aminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar” (Ex. 6:23). Notice the similarity of the names Elisheba and Elisabeth in our translation.
 - d. We will see later that the son to be given to this fine couple would be born six months before his more illustrious kinsman, Jesus.
2. Verses 6-7: “And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.”
 - a. The spiritual condition of both Zacharias and Elisabeth is highly praised. They were both righteous and walked in God’s commandments and ordinances, without any blame being brought against them. They lived in obedience to all of God’s requirements and kept all his ordinances. Each was a superb example of what a Jewish person was expected to be.
 - b. They were blameless. That did not mean that they had never transgressed any aspect of the Mosaic Law. It means that they followed every precept and command of God to the best of their ability. No mere human could perfectly keep every particle of the Law.
 - c. Romans 3:10-12: “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”
 - 1) Paul next cites several quotations from the Old Testament to establish the guilt of the Jews; and what is said in the scriptures which he quotes, describes the condition of the Gentiles as well. The first scripture cited is from Psalm 14:1-3. There is none righteous. Any one who believed the Bible, would accept this as undeniable truth. God, in looking down upon mankind from heaven, sees that the entire human family has corrupted itself (individually).

- 2) This did not mean that there was not a single individual who was trying to walk in the light of God's will. But even David, who was described as a man after God's own heart, was tainted by sin (Acts 12:22; 2 Sam. 11-12). This was true of the most spiritually-minded men and women of the ages. Even Cornelius, who received some of the grandest plaudits ever given to any man, nevertheless stood in need of redemption (Acts 10:2, 22; 11:13-14). Joseph, the husband of Mary, is described as a "just man" (Matt. 1:19), but he was not without sin.
 - 3) It will be remembered that the Mosaic Law did not have the capability of removing the guilt of sin (Acts 13:38-39; Heb. 10:1-4). Paul is illustrating in this passage the need that all accountable people have for the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16-17). If lost humanity could have been saved by the Law of Moses, or by living a good moral life, or by some religious system invented by man, or by any other means, the death of Christ would not have been necessary. But there was no other way: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21; cf. Rom. 5:1-9; Phil. 2:1-12).
 - 4) No one understood the will of God with absolute perfection [and none was as totally devoted to seeking God's will], as did Jesus. This is still true today, even of those whom we consider to be the "best" Christians. There were many then, even as there are many now, who had as full an understanding as they could be expected to possess; and there were many who sought after God with the fullness of their being. But in the aggregate, this did not characterize our race. Only a few understood a significant portion of God's word; and only a handful sought after God.
 - 5) "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa. 14:3). Notice that they are described as having "gone out" and had "become unprofitable." They were not born into that condition!
 - 6) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
- d. Romans 7:24-25: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."
- 1) In the foregoing verses, Paul describes the individual who is experiencing the battle between the law of his mind and the law of his flesh. The person realizes that the Law of the mind (in this case the Law of Moses) cannot remove the guilt of the many past transgressions. With that in the immediate background, the apostle raises the cry: "O wretched man that I am!" In the pitiable condition described, there is no hope for him. [Without Christ and his Gospel].
 - 2) So he raises the question: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He knows that with the law of sin having the upper hand, and that there was no forgiveness offered by the Law of Moses, he was doomed to face the penalty of his sins. The "body of this death" is a reference to the mortal body in which resides the law of sin, and over which it exerts its control.
 - 3) David Lipscomb:
 - a) "Throughout this paragraph the deliverer has been kept out of view, that his presence, as absolutely indispensable to the life and happiness of the believer, may be realized. The need of being in Christ and under grace, in contrast with being under a purely legal system, has been shown in the development of the argument in these words: 'For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.' (Verses 5,6.)
 - b) Here 'the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death,' which answers to 'captivity' and 'wretched,' called 'the body of this death.' Under grace is a state in which we are 'discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.'
 - c) Think, then, of one as being left with all his imperfections under the law, without grace, yearning to do good, but learning finally that the good is beyond his reach. There would be wrung from him the cry for deliverance from his wretchedness. This is the point to which Paul has been leading the argument. Experience shows that the law leaves man, no matter how earnest to keep it, in a state of miserable slavery and wretchedness" (Romans, pp.139f).

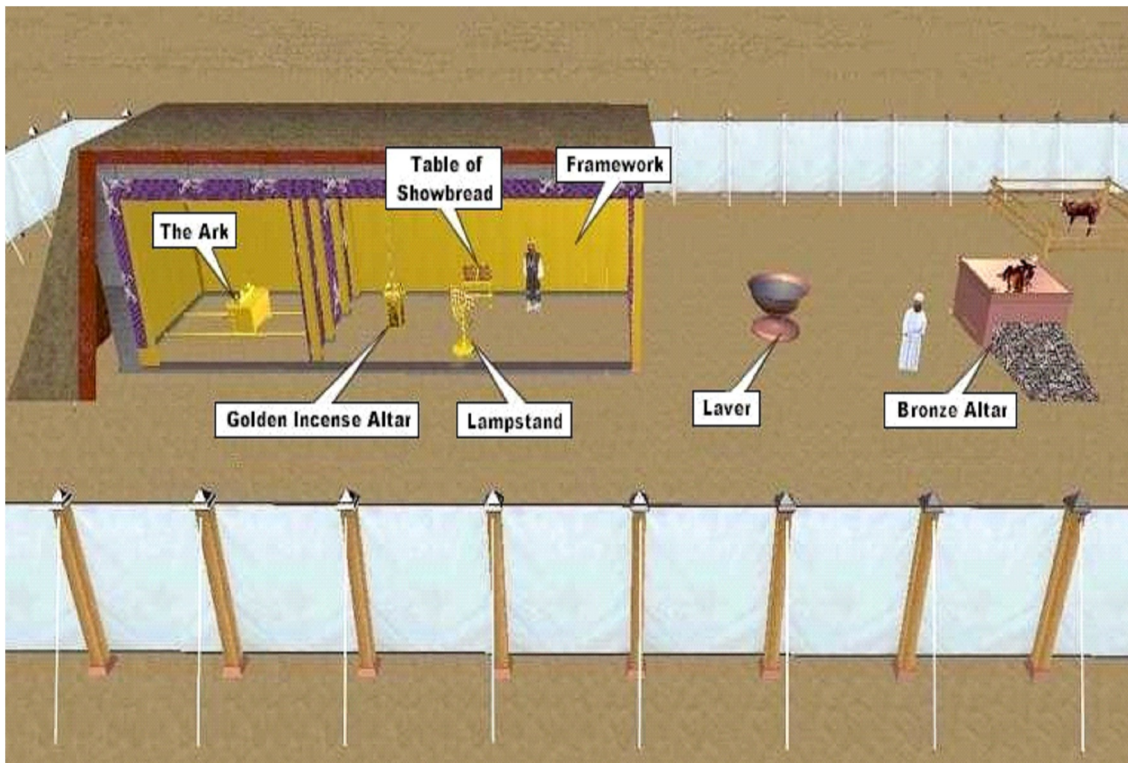
- 4) Before he could cry out as he did, he had to realize first that he was in need of salvation. The process of instructing one in the way of salvation is made immensely easier if one recognizes his need for redemption, desires to be saved, and understands that the gospel is the only means whereby deliverance may be effected.
 - 5) When the appetites of the flesh called one into the practice of sin, he was doomed to remain under the condemnation of sin as long as he had only the Mosaic Law as the remedy. Paul's jubilant statement here, however, gives the answer to the plaintive cry of the preceding verse: "I am delivered from the body of this death by Jesus Christ!"
 - 6) Christ came, fulfilled the law (Matt. 5:17), and replaced it with the law of the gospel (Col. 2:14; Heb. 8:1-13; 9:15-17). "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath 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 sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1-4).
 - 7) Those who lived righteously under the Patriarchal and Mosaic Ages were forgiven based on the sacrificial death of Christ who was later to come to earth: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:24-25).
 - a) Justification is given freely by God's grace; it is expressed by means of the redemption which God supplies; it is given in Christ Jesus. God's grace (the unmerited favor he showed to fallen mankind) was freely given by our Maker. No one forced him to send Christ to the cross; no one coerced Christ to submit to death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).
 - b) God provides redemption through Christ; this redemption (and all other spiritual blessings) are located in Christ (Eph. 1:3,7; 2:12-13; Col. 1:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:10). No one out of Christ has these benefits. The idea of "in Christ" is used at least 169 times in the writings of Paul (according to Coffman, p.122). Men are not saved simply because Christ died on the cross; they are not saved merely because God has decided to be gracious toward men. But individuals must take personal action—by faithfully meeting the conditions unto salvation God has set.
 - c) God has set Christ forth to be a propitiation for our sins. God initiated the action that brought about the result indicated in the verse. To propitiate means to "render favorable, to conciliate." The word is used in 1 John 2:2, 4:10, Luke 18:13, Hebrews 2:17, and in this text. Several profound truths are taught in this great verse.
 - d) By the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together with the work of his personal ministry and the message of the gospel, God can look with favor toward mankind; we can be reconciled to God, and thus be at peace with him; Christ paid the debt; he ransomed us; and made it possible for us to be loosed from the guilt and bondage of sin.
 - 8) Zacharias and Elisabeth likely died before the Savior offered himself on the cross for the salvation of the sins of the world. Compare: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15).
 - a) The benefits of his shed blood flowed backward in time to cleanse the sins of the obedient ones who lived under the Old Testament systems. "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25).
 - b) As the Israelites who followed the Mosaic Law, participating in the atoning sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16), the guilt of their sins was rolled forward to the next year. Such a person who lived out his life under the Law, received forgiveness, not by the Law, but by the
-

death of Christ. The pardon they were granted was “on credit,” based on the future sacrifice of the Savior.

- c) Those who lived under the first covenant could receive the promise of eternal inheritance only through the sacrificial death of the Messiah. This is true of all who were faithful, regardless of the religious age under which they lived on earth [Patriarchal or Mosaic].
 - e. Elisabeth was barren and both she and her husband were well-stricken in years; they were well beyond the time when they could expect to become parents. Unless God took direct action, they would never have a child. But as in the cases of Sarah [Gen. 11:30] and Hannah [1 Sam. 1:1-20], God did indeed intervene. Others also had this ailment: Genesis 25:21 [Rebekah], Genesis 29:31 [Rachel]; Judges 12:2 [Samson’s mother].
3. Verses 8–9: “And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.”
- a. Jamieson: The part assigned to each priest during his week of service was decided by lot. Three were employed at the offering of incense: to remove the ashes of the former service; to bring in and place on the golden altar the pan filled with hot burning coals taken from the altar of burnt offering; and to sprinkle the incense on the hot coals, and, while the smoke of it ascended, to make intercession for the people. This was the most distinguished part of the service (Rev. 8:3), and this was what fell to the lot of Zacharias at this time [*Lightfoot*].
 - b. His lot was to burn incense; more accurately, *he obtained by lot the duty of entering and offering incense*. The office of burning incense gave the priest to whom this important lot fell the right of entering the holy place. It was the most coveted of all the priestly duties. The Talmud says the priest who obtained the right to perform this high duty was not permitted to draw the lot a second time in the same week, and as the whole number of priests at this time was very large—some say even as many as twenty thousand—Farrar conjectures that it would never happen to the same priest twice in his lifetime to enter that sacred spot. [See *Pulpit Commentary*].
 - c. In Acts 3:1, we are told by the inspired historian that Peter and John entered into the temple area, at the hour of prayer, which was the ninth hour of the day. The burning of the incense was done in the holy place in the temple; while the priest performed this act of holy worship, the faithful Jews were on the outside of the temple, praying. Compare:
 - 1) “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne” (Rev. 8:3).
 - 2) “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints” (Rev. 5:8).
 - d. Exodus 30:7-8: “And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.” [Aaron could also do this by assigning certain priests to the task].
 - e. Boles: “Zacharias was faithful in performing the duties which pertained to his course; he ministered with others of the course or family of Abijah. One of the priests burned incense, another changed the showbread on the Sabbath day, and another took charge of the fire on the altar for burnt offerings; in this way their labors were appointed and a more responsible discharge of the various services [was] secured from each individual. Each of the twenty-four courses served in rotation, but those belonging to a course cast lots each day for the service they were respectively to perform.”
 - f. Compare: “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 of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench” (1 Kings 18:36-38).
-

4. Verses 10-12: “And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.”
- While the large gathering of the Jews stood on the outside of the temple, offering their prayers, there was an impressive episode taking place inside the Holy Place, where Zacharias was burning incense. An angel appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.
 - The sudden appearance of the angel filled Zacharias with fear, and he was troubled by the scene. Angels who appeared to certain people were sometimes dressed in bright apparel (cf. Acts 1:9-11).
 - That these were angels, and not mere mortals, is seen by other accounts in which angels took on the form of men in order to converse with men. Luke describes the two beings at the Lord's tomb as men, while John plainly identifies them as angels (Luke 24:4; John 20:11-12).

Sketch of the Tabernacle [and later, the Temple]—From the Internet:



C. Luke 1:13-26: A Happy Message from the Angel for Zacharias.

- Verse 13: “But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.”
 - The heavenly messenger calmed his fright by revealing that his prayer has been heard and that his wife would bear a son. No greater promise could have been given to Zacharias at this time in his life than this pleasant news!
 - The statement of the verse shows that this righteous man had prayed for a son. His heart's desire had been heard and was now to be fulfilled.
 - So certain was the promise that he was told to name his son John. Consider: “And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all” (Luke 1:60-63).
- Verses 14-16: “And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the

Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.”

- a. This passage is profound and reaches far. We might assume that this righteous couple had been sad for many years, sorrowful over not having a child. Now they would have joy and gladness! The Lord had not forsaken them in their latter days.
- b. The son would gladden the hearts of his parents, and also many others would have cause to rejoice at his birth—and later at the great preaching he would do.
- c. John would be great in the sight of Jehovah. He would come in the spirit and power of Elijah. That Old Testament worthy came on the scene of ancient Israel, did his powerful work, and vanished into the great beyond.
- d. Compare: “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light” (John 1:6-8).
 - 1) This John is called "the Baptist" because that was what he did: he baptized people. It is used the same way as Alexander is called "the coppersmith" (2 Tim. 4:14) and Zenas is called "the lawyer" (Tit. 3:13). Thayer defines the words as, "A baptizer; one who administers the rite of baptism" (p.95). Josephus, the Jewish historian, spoke of John (*Ant.* 18,5,2, p.382).
 - 2) John came to be a witness; a witness is one who is qualified to testify about certain facts and truths. A qualified witness is one whose testimony may be trusted. But John was an inspired prophet who spoke God's infallible message. Since God sent this man to perform an important mission, it is certain that he provided him with all the tools to do his work.
 - 3) John 10:41: “And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.” Miracles were not needed for John to complete his work; his messages were revealed from Heaven. The fact that he came in the spirit and power of Elijah was sufficient to prove his standing with God.
 - 4) Luke 20:2-7: “And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.”
 - 5) The testimony John bore was “of the Light.” We are here prepared to perceive that Christ is the Light who has come into the world, illuminating a dark and dismal world, overwhelmed by sin.
 - 6) Malachi, as he closed out the Old Testament Scriptures, foretold the coming of John the Immerser: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (Mal. 4:5-6). A great and terrible day of judgment was in the works, but before this tremendous event occurred, God would send Elijah the prophet to Israel. Some have supposed that Elijah the Tishbite, in person, would be sent; that since he did not actually die, God has held him in readiness through the centuries to be sent back to earth.
 - 7) But, as noted under Malachi 3:1, the New Testament shows that John the Baptizer is the person meant, that John came *in the spirit and power of Elijah*.
- e. The work of John the Baptizer is described by Luke 1:16-17. In the work that great man of God did, men and women and boys and girls were turned in the right direction. "The mission of this Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, was to turn the affections of the people back to God and his divine law. He was to restore a right relation between parents and children and to turn the hearts of the children to the ancestral religion of their fathers. In this condition of heart they would be ready to receive the Messiah, for they would see in him the fulfillment of all God's wondrous promises and the glorious hope of their fathers" (Hailey, p.425: Commentary on Malachi).
- f. Compare: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his

paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey" (Matt. 3:1-4).

- 1) "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mark 3:3).
- 2) John was spoken of by Isaiah in 40:3 (cf. Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6). His work is figuratively described as road-building. John prepared the way for Christ by preparing the people. The Law of Moses was a schoolmaster to prepare people for his coming (Gal. 3:24); John's mission was to be his forerunner, to "go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).
- 3) John was not Elijah, but operated in the spirit and power of Elijah; however, John did not do miracles (John 10:41).
- 4) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of **these** kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...." The context and secular history show that the kings meant were the Roman kings. The first kingdom of Daniel 2 was the Babylonian Empire; the second was the Medo-Persian; the third was the Grecian Empire; and the fourth was the Empire of Rome. God had determined to set up his eternal kingdom during the days when the Roman Empire was in power.
 - a) Luke 3:1-6 gives the names of the current rulers when God's final plans for the establishment the kingdom were set in motion: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Luke names certain prominent worldly rulers and ties these to Daniel 2:44's statement: "And in the days of **these** kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...."
 - b) Beginning at this point, Matthew calls attention to God's promise in Daniel 2:44. In the next verse he reports John the Immerser's message to be, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke gives a parallel account, but provides the names of the various rulers of the Roman system at the time. Why did he name these rulers if there is no connection with his subject and Daniel 2:44?
- 5) John is called "the Baptist." Some say this verse is a reference to the Baptist church, but that church did not come into existence until the late 1600s in England. There is historical evidence that the Baptist denomination originated from certain apostates from the church of Christ in the latter part of 17th century.
- g. This promised son was to be a Nazarite from his birth. Certain conditions were given to the mother of Samson:
 - 1) The angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife, giving her the promise that she would conceive and bear a son. It is very likely that this godly couple had been praying for a son. A word of caution was given to the woman, which included these conditions: She was not to drink wine or strong drink. She was not to eat any unclean thing. The son she would bear was not to have a razor to come on his head.
 - 2) The reason for these restraints was because the son was intended to be a Nazarite from the womb. For details of the Nazarites, see Numbers 6:1-21, Lamentations 4:7, and Amos 2:11-12.
 - a) Lamentations 4:7: "Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire."
 - b) Amos 2:11-12: "And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith the LORD. But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not."

- 3) "The common Nazarite vow was for a limited time, like Paul's (Acts 18:18; 21:23-26). Others, like Samuel (1 Sam 1:11), were Nazarites for life" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database; by BibleSoft].
- h. Verse sixteen reports prophetically that John would turn many of the Israelites to the Lord their God. That implies directly that many Jews were unfaithful when he came to do his work. A large number of these would be brought to repentance by the preaching of John.
- 1) Matthew 3:1-6: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."
 - 2) "John began his ministry A.D. 26, which was a Sabbatical year according to some authorities; the people were not occupied in the cultivation of the soil and in the gathering the grain and gleaning the vineyards; they were in a large measure 'resting' or unemployed, hence had sufficient time to listen to the new prophet" (Boles, p.73). Another reason for the good reception was that it had been 400 years since a real prophet had been in Israel. [We are told in 2:36 that there was a prophetess named Anna].
 - 3) John's chief message was one of repentance. Here we are told that those who repented and were baptized, also confessed their sins. Their repentance and confession were prerequisite to baptism since his baptism was "for [unto] the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4).
 - 4) "The baptism of John has been erroneously by some regarded as a modified application of the Jewish baptism of proselytes; some deny that the proselyte baptism was in use at the time that John began his ministry; however, John's baptism was not an imitation of any other rite or form; his baptism came from heaven" (Boles, p.74).
 - 5) John said that **God** had sent him to baptize with water (John 1:33). Jesus asked the religious leaders, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, From men; we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We know not. He also said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things" (Matt. 21:25-27).
3. Verse 17: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."
- a. If the work of John had not been successfully accomplished, it would have been necessary for God to smite the earth with a curse. It is interesting and no doubt highly significant that the Old Testament closes with the word *curse*. This was the final statement to issue from heaven until the arrival of John; four hundred dreary, trouble-filled years lay ahead of Israel before the coming of the Messiah's forerunner.
 - 1) Malachi 4:5-6: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."
 - 2) Jeremiah 30:11: "For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."
 - b. "All of God's prophets had done their work, but the people had rejected them all. There was no further word that God could send. The hardened and rebellious nation would continue to exist (according to God's holy purpose); but the precious fellowship of other days was gone for ever. A hint of all this may be found in these final six verses" (Coffman, pp.305f: Commentary on Malachi).
 - c. John 1:15-20: "John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me. For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and
-

- Levites to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Christ” (ASV).
- d. Mark 1:1-8: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, Who shall prepare thy way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight; John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the country of Judaea, and all they of Jerusalem; And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you in water; But he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit” (ASV).
 - e. John 1:6-8: “There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.”
4. Verses 18-20: “And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.”
- a. Zacharias shows weakness of faith in the promise the angel had revealed. The very presence of this heavenly messenger, and his appearance, should have been more than enough evidence that his word was true. The doubt of Zacharias incurred a penalty. He would be unable to speak until the child was born. To that time, he would be dumb. The baby was not instantly at that moment conceived, nor was he born until the proper amount time had passed. Only a priest was allowed to enter the holy place, but this angel was there. That fact identified this unexpected person to be an angelic being, not a mere man.
 - b. He could not bring himself to accept the promise of a son, for he was an old man and his wife was beyond the normal child-bearing age. He should have been aware of the historical cases of Samson’s mother and Hannah. This good news was just too good to be true!
 - c. The angel identified himself as Gabriel, and that his usual place in eternity was in the very presence of the Almighty. His standing with God was beyond doubt! Zacharias should have perceived this. Gideon also had doubts about the work he was being given: “And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again: (Judges 6:13-18).
 - d. ISBE: Gabriel: The name of the angel commissioned to explain to Daniel the vision of the ram and the he-goat, and to give the prediction of the 70 weeks (Dan 8:16; 9:21). In the New Testament he is the angel of the annunciation to Zacharias of the birth of John the Baptist, and to Mary of the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:19,26).
 - e. Only two holy angels are named in Scripture, and Daniel names both. Gabriel, mentioned in this verse, seems to be God’s special messenger (see also Dan. 9:21; cf. Luke 1:19, 26). The other is Michael, who is described as “one of the chief princes” (Dan. 10:13), “your prince” (Dan. 10:21), “the great prince” (Dan. 12:1), and “the archangel” (Jude 1:9). He is also a leader of God’s armies (Rev. 12:7) and the guardian of Israel (Dan. 12:1). [AMG's Complete Word Study Bible].
 - 1) Daniel 9:21: “ Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”
-

- 2) Luke 1:19: "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings."
 - 3) Luke 1:26: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth."
 - 4) Daniel 10:13: "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."
 - 5) Daniel 10:21: "But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."
 - 6) Daniel 12:1: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."
 - 7) Jude 1:9: "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."
 - 8) Revelation 12:7: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."
 - f. Boles: The angel condescended to inform Zacharias of his name and angelic dignity. "Gabriel" means "man of God"; he was an archangel sent on a special mission. A Jewish priest should know at once that this name carried with it the authority and presence of God. (Dan. 8:16; 9:21.) He is represented as the chief archangel, ministering to the infant Messiah. The name "Gabriel" is made up of two Hebrew words, signifying "the man of God." He stood "in the presence of God" as a dignitary may stand in the presence of a monarch. Our high priest is said "now to appear before the face of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.)
 5. Verses 21–22: "And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless."
 - a. The people would be his fellow-priests, for those priests who were on duty for the term of service stayed at the appointed place and did not return home at night. The other priests were outside the holy place, waiting for Zacharias to exit. They wondered over why he remained there so long.
 - b. He could not speak to them, but indicated a message by signs. This was enough for these spiritually-minded men to perceive that he had seen a vision.
 6. Verses 23-25: "And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."
 - a. His inability to speak did not hinder his work in the Holy Place. There were actions to do but no words would have been required. This passage shows that the priests on duty for the temple services did not live at home. When his time of service was over, at the time here indicated, he returned to his home. Elisabeth was able to tend to the affairs of the house during his absence.
 - b. During his time at home, Elisabeth found that she had conceived, just at the angel had promised. This was no miraculous conception, for the supernatural action was in her being enabled to conceive. It was in this same way that the other barren women of earlier times were able to bear children.
 - c. "This contrasts dramatically with the conception by the virgin, that Luke is about to relate. Here, there is no suggestion of anything out of the ordinary, except in view of the age of both and the barrenness of Elizabeth. Though the power to conceive a son under such circumstances was, in a very genuine sense, from God, it was nonetheless a far different thing from the case of the conception of Jesus" [Coffman].
 - d. Elisabeth hid herself from public view for five months; we are not told the reason for this. It could have been she wanted her pregnancy to be beyond denial; she would obviously be "showing" by that time. Also, she might not want to put herself on display to others. She may have been a quiet, unobtrusive person, who was happy to stay in the shadows.
 - e. There are some today who do not like being in the lime-light, but who feel more comfortable in the background. Sometimes, due to circumstances or their own talent, they are drawn by others into the
-

forefront. Historians tell us that this is how David Lipscomb was. We are happy that he, and others like him, have been brought to public service.

- f. Elisabeth stated, something that the inspired Luke knew and included in his record: "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." Even in this declaration, she showed deference to God, and gave him the credit for her present happy condition.

D. Luke 1:26-33: The Birth of the Messiah Announced to Mary.

1. Verses 26-27: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."
 - a. The sixth month is connected to the pregnancy of Elisabeth. We have just been told that she hid herself for five months, and in the sixth month Gabriel appeared to Mary.
 - b. Elisabeth was six months into her pregnancy when the angel appeared to Mary; assuming that she quickly [miraculously] conceived, then Jesus was born six months after John's birth.
 - c. Luke's explanation that Nazareth was a city of Galilee indicates that many of his readers were Gentiles. No Jew would have needed to be told the location of Nazareth. No man could ever have imagined that an archangel would be commissioned by the God of all creation to visit a village such as Nazareth, situated in a district, the very name of which announced it as a place of the despised Gentiles. "GALILEE is a contraction of the region's full name, [~geliyl] [~ha-gowyim], which means "district of the pagans." [See Coffman].
2. Verses 28-29: "And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be."
 - a. NKJ: Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.
 - b. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail! highly favoured—a word [*kecharitomeene*] only once used elsewhere (Eph 1:6, "made accepted"). That our translators have given the right sense of it here seems plain not only from the import of verbs of that termination, but from the next clause, The Lord is with thee, and Luke 1:30, "Thou hast found favour with God." The Vulgate's mistaken rendering—"full of grace" [*gratia plena*] — has been taken abundant advantage of by the Romish Church. As the mother of our Lord, she was indeed "the most blessed among women;" but His own reply to the woman who once said this to Himself (see the notes at Luke 11:27-28) is enough to teach us that this blessedness of His virgin-mother is not to be mixed up or confounded with her personal character—high as no doubt that was. [Jamieson, Biblesoft.]
 - c. Luke 11:27-28: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
 - d. Matthew 1:18-25: The Miraculous Conception.
 - 1) Verse 18: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."
 - a) This is how Jesus came to be born. Mary was espoused (betrothed) to Joseph. The time interval between betrothal and the consummation of marriage was sometimes considerable (cf. 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Deut. 20:7). This engagement was more sacred and binding than by custom than it is today.
 - b) Matthew omits the account of the angel's visit to Mary (See Luke 1:26ff). She was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Not that the Holy Spirit found her in that condition, but that through his miraculous work, he caused her to conceive. No physical contact was involved.
 - c) Her condition was discovered before Joseph and Mary came together, i.e., before the consummation of their marriage. She remained a virgin until after the birth of Jesus. Joseph "knew her not **until**..." (Matt. 1:25).

- d) Genesis 3:15 gave the first prophecy of Christ: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Usually "seed" is used in reference to the man, but here it is used with reference to woman. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4). Jesus was as human as his mother Mary, and as divine as his Father God.
- 2) Verse 19: "Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily."
- a) When Joseph learned of her condition, and naturally suspecting the obvious, he was minded (he had decided) to put her away privately, not desiring to make her a public example. The engagement of those ancient days required a "putting away" if it was to be broken. From the moment of her betrothal a woman was treated as if she was already married. The betrothal could only be dissolved by divorce. Becoming unfaithful during the period of betrothal was regarded as adultery and was punishable by death (Deut. 22:23-24).
- b) Joseph is spoken of as her husband, although they were not officially husband and wife. He was a just (righteous) man, which is shown by his unwillingness to bring any unnecessary embarrassment upon Mary or her family. He decided not to humiliate her by exposing what he thought was a case of unfaithfulness. He was both merciful and righteous. He was convinced that she was guilty of fornication, but instead of demanding that the letter of the law be carried out, he sought her best good. He was a very fitting "father" to our Lord.
- 3) Verses 20-21: "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
- a) After learning of Mary's condition, and while he was still considering the situation, God dispatched an angel to convince Joseph that Mary was untainted by sin (her pregnancy was miraculous). God often interfered with human events to prevent certain things from occurring which would have hindered or cast doubt on his overall plan. Before pharaoh could approach Sarah after he took her into his house, God thwarted the king (Gen. 12:14-20). If he had "known" Sarah, the promised son (Isaac) might have been considered the Egyptian's offspring.
- b) The angel conversed with Joseph through the medium of a dream, telling him that he was to have no fear in taking Mary as his wife. Notice that Joseph is called the son (descendant) of David. God's heavenly messenger advised Joseph that the unborn child was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- c) The angel stated further that the child was a son. In view of the identity of this son, there would be no complications in his birth (through disease or accident), although it was necessary for Mary and Joseph to make a journey prior to that blessed event, from Nazareth to Bethlehem. She would bring forth a son!
- d) Further, this son was provided with a God-given name: Jesus. The meaning of the name is "Savior." The reason for the name is stated by the angel: "He shall save his people from their sins." Christ was not coming into the world to be a military conqueror or worldly ruler; he was coming as a Savior of souls!
- 4) Verses 22-23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."
- a) Matthew plainly affirms that all these events took place in order that the words of the prophet might be fulfilled, those words being the ones given in Isaiah 7:14. Modernists of our day deny there is any such thing as fulfilled prophecy, but Matthew does not agree.
- b) Isaiah 9:1: "Nevertheless the dimness *shall* not *be* such as *was* in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations." Matthew 4:13-15: "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by
-

- Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles."
- c) Isaiah 9:2: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Matthew 4:16: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."
 - d) Hosea 11:1: "When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." See: "And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matt. 2:15).
 - e) Jeremiah 31:15: "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not." Matthew 2:12-18: "And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."
 - f) The virgin (Mary) would conceive and bring forth a son known as "Emmanuel." This was not a proper name for Jesus, but a description of his true nature. One could see what God the Father is like by seeing what Jesus is like; truly, God was with man in the person of Jesus. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John 14:7-10).
- 5) Verses 24-25: "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
- a) On awaking, Joseph did as the angel said. He married Mary, and *knew her not* until after Jesus was born. A *firstborn* implies one or more children. We know that Mary did not remain a perpetual virgin.
 - b) Other passages make this truth even clearer:
 - (1) Matthew 12:46-50: "While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."
 - (2) Matthew 13:55-56: "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?"
 - c) She was troubled; more accurately, *she was greatly troubled*. Different to Zacharias, who evidently doubted in the mission of the angel, and who required some sign before he could believe, Mary simply wondered at the strangeness of what was about to happen. Her terror at
-

- the sudden appearance of the angel, who probably appeared to her as a young man clad in garments of a strange dazzling whiteness, is most natural. [See Pulpit Commentary].
3. Verses 30-31: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."
 - a. Joseph had also been told that the name of the child born to his virgin wife would be named Jesus, a word meaning "Savior." It is the same as the Old Testament name *Joshua*. He would save people from their sins (Matt. 1:31). "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day" (Heb. 4:8). "For if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day. There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (ASV).
 - 1) Moses led the Israelites to the Promised Land, but it was Joshua who led them into it. Under his leadership, God aided the people in conquering the idolatrous inhabitants of Canaan, and directed the partitioning of the territory among the Israelite tribes and families. The *Jesus* of verse eight is not Christ, but Joshua. "Jesus" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name "Joshua." Both names mean *Savior*.
 - 2) The inspired author states that if Joshua had given Israel the rest of which David spoke (Ps. 95), there would have been no need for David to have spoken of another rest. But since he spoke of another rest, there remains another rest for the people of God.
 - 3) Canaan was intended to be a land in which Israel could rest from their bondage in Egypt and their years of wandering in the wilderness. On entering the land, they could begin to enjoy the fruits of that very productive place; there God would protect them from any enemy; there they could serve and worship in the ways he ordained; and there they could live out their lives in happiness and peace. But that is not the ultimate rest which the Almighty had in store for his faithful people. God has another rest in store for his own. That rest is in heaven (Rev. 14:13).
 - b. All four of the Gospel writers evidence their belief that Christ was born of a virgin. Matthew spelled it out categorically, presenting it from the viewpoint of Joseph. Mark did not mention it, but in his report of the gossip at Nazareth selected the words "Is not this the carpenter?" rather than the other form of it, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" as it is in Matthew (Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:55). Of course, the gossip existed in both forms; but Matthew, who had recorded the virgin birth, selected one form of it; and Mark, who had not recorded the virgin birth, was careful to choose the other form in order to avoid any implication against the virgin birth. From this we are certain that Mark knew of the doctrine and that he believed it. Extensive New Testament reference to Jesus as "Son of God" cannot be understood otherwise than in the sense of the unique sonship of Jesus Christ, every such reference being equivalent to denial that Jesus was begotten by any mortal father. Therefore, the fact of the virgin birth is affirmed in every reference. "Only begotten," as used by John (John 1:18; 3:18), carries the same message of confirmation from the Gospel of John. [See Coffman].
 4. Verses 32-33: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."
 - a. The angel said the son Mary was to bear would be great, a reference to Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."
 - 1) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
 - 2) Matthew 16:16-19: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
-

- 3) Acts 2:29-36: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
- b. He would be called the Son of the Highest—the Son of God.
- 1) Ephesians 1:19-23: “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
 - 2) Mark 5:7: “And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.”
 - a) The demons used the word adjure in requesting the Lord not to torment them: "to cause to swear, to lay under the obligation of an oath" (*horkos*, Mark 5:7; Acts 19:13). (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.)
 - b) The demon [s] in the man caused [?] him to rush up to Jesus and bow before him and cry out to him. Though the demons had caused the man to afflict himself and represented a real danger to anyone who passed the tombs, they knew they could not harm Christ.
 - c) In Matthew's account, the demon asked the Lord whether he had come to torment him before the time. The demons, speaking through their host's mouth, cried out to Jesus, asking if he had come to torment them prematurely; in Mark's account they also implored him not to torment them at all. The time of their torture was not to begin, according to their thoughts, until the day of Judgment.
 - d) We learn from 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 that sinful angels were cast down to Tartarus, and delivered "into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment." This Tartarus is undoubtedly the same place to which the sinful rich man of Luke 16 was consigned and is being punished in the dreadful fire of that awful place. Thus, if these angels which sinned are identified with these demons, they are likewise even now being tormented, and will continue in that state subsequent to the "judgment of the great day."
 - e) These demons knew the identity of Jesus, and thus called him the Son of God: "Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24).
- c. The throne on which he would rule over his spiritual kingdom would also be known as the throne of his ancestor David. David is called his father because Jesus descended from him (Matt. 1:1).
- 1) God foretold and promised that not a single descendant of Jechoniah [also known as Coniah and Jehoiachin] would ever *have a prosperous reign*: "Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? *is he* a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:28-30). Jesus is a descendant of Jechoniah [*aka* Coniah, Jehoiachin]—Matthew 1:11-16.
 - 2) Since God is always true to his word and cannot lie (Heb. 6:18), it is impossible for any descendant of Jechoniah to ever rule on earth with God's approval and blessing. Therefore, Jesus Christ cannot and will not ever rule on earth! Hence, the earthly kingdom of Israel will never be restored; and

since that kingdom is forever gone from the earth, the temple worship it had at its core will never be restored.

- d. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
- 1) Ostensibly, the seed referred to was none other than Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba. But other Biblical references place the fulfillment of the prophecy on a much higher plane. The passage seems, therefore, to have an immediate and limited fulfillment, with a more direct, primary fulfillment in Christ.
 - 2) A similar case is found in Hosea 11:1: "When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." The nation of Israel was called from Egypt, brought through the wilderness, and finally established in Canaan. A later passage gives the sojourn of Jesus in Egypt and his later return to Canaan as the primary meaning of Hosea's prophecy. "And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matt. 2:15).
 - 3) The present prophecy seems to have reference (1) to Solomon's construction of the temple, and (2) to Christ's establishment of his church, which is the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15). Anticipating the passage to be considered later, the prophecy has a two-fold application: first to Solomon and his temple, and second to Christ and his church.
 - 4) The word *seed* can have reference to a son, or to several children, to a long line of descendants, or to some special son in the distant future. This last usage is true of the word seed in Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - a) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - b) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - c) Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
 - d) The Seed of Genesis 3:15 is Christ.
 - 5) Christ is manifestly a descendant of David. That is, he entered into the human family in the lineage of David (Matt. 1:1-17). Christ, the second member of the Godhead, is eternal; he did not begin life when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and borne by Mary; his activities have been going on from eternity (Micah 5:2; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; 2:9). The physical lineage of Jesus goes back to David.
 - a) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."
 - b) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - c) Colossians 1:15-17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - d) Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
 - 6) Christ was destined to sit on David's throne: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:29-30). The apostles affirmed here that God had sworn with an oath that he would raise up Christ, who came through the fruit of David's loins, to sit on his throne (which implies the presence of a kingdom). Our text predicted that God the Father would be directly involved in the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. The apostles' statement concurs.

- 7) The seed of David would build a house for God's name, and God vowed to establish the throne of his kingdom forever. In Solomon's case, he indeed did build a house for God (the temple); and further, the dynasty of Solomon continued down to the time when Babylon carried the Southern Kingdom into captivity.
- 8) Whereas the fleshly, regal lineage of David through Solomon ended [in the Babylonian Captivity], the spiritual lineage began when Christ ascended the throne of his spiritual kingdom. David's dynasty, therefore, continues today, in the reign of Christ. Christ built a house—his church.
 - a) Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - b) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

E. Luke 1:34-39: Mary Goes to Visit Her Cousin Elisabeth.

1. Verse 34: "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" NKJ: Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"
 - a. This was beyond Mary's comprehension. She was still a virgin and was not living with a man. No such woman had ever conceived! It had never happened before and would never happen again. Mary was a young woman, and imbibed a childlike spirit; she was not suggesting unbelief, but wondered how the matter promised by the angel could be.
 - b. Could even Solomon have explained it? Not without supernatural revelation, and this was not something that was to then be revealed. Compare:
 - 1) Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:10-12: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."
2. Verse 35: "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."
 - a. NKJ: 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 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. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." 34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" 35 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. 36 Now indeed, Elisabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing will be impossible." 38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.
 - b. The Holy Spirit would overshadow Mary. Compare: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2).
 - 1) *Darkness* was on the face of the deep. Light had not yet been created; the mass of matter that was to become the earth as we know it was evidently covered by water. The *Spirit* moved (or brooded) upon the face of the waters. "Was brooding, as a hen broods her eggs, is a better translation for it

- denotes continuing action over the entire six days of creation in which the Spirit of God was tenderly caring for and assisting in 'hatching' or in bringing the universe to its full development and life" (Gatewood, p.164). This part of the verse shows that everything was under complete control. God did not lose control of his creation.
- 2) The power of the Holy Spirit would miraculously bring about the conception of our Lord's physical body; no man was in any way involved. Notice that the neuter gender is used in reference to the unborn baby. Until modern technology came on the scene, the mother could not know the gender of her baby, which was generally referred to as neuter in gender. It is keeping with this common phraseology that the unborn child is here called the "holy thing."
 - 3) Boles: "The holy thing," the neuter gender is here used in accordance with general usage, which withholds the idea of sex from an infant, until it is indicated by name or otherwise. It simply means in the original Greek "thy holy offspring." Christ is the Son of God only in his relation to the redemption of man; he is his "Son" only in that he was born of a woman.
- c. This promise given by the angel did not indicate a long delay in being fulfilled. It is most likely that it came to pass immediately. There would have been no need for any delay. The Holy Spirit is not some physical being; there was no need for a literal encounter.
 - d. Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - 1) The Lord forms the spirit of man within him. The formation of the heavens and the laying of the earth's foundation were one-time acts, but the forming of the spirits of men is an on-going work.
 - 2) There is more to a man than the physical body (Gen. 35:16-19; 2 Cor. 4:16; Rom. 7:22; Job 32:8; 1 Thess. 5:23).
 - 3) God is the father of our spirits. "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9; cf. Num. 16:22).
 - 4) When does God form the spirit within us? The only logical time is the moment of conception; it is then that the body begins to form and life begins. When the spirit leaves the physical body, death results (Jas. 2:26); consequently, it is when the spirit joins the human body that life begins.
 - e. Using his natural laws, God can begin building the physical body of a human within the body of a woman; the spark of life begins at the instant of conception; at that same instant, the spiritual part of the infant is instilled. That spirit, from that instant onward, shall never go out of existence.
 - f. God's supernatural power was required for Mary to conceive a child without any man being involved. The Holy Spirit, being part of the Godhead, was able to bring about this unique operation. The power of the Highest would take direct miraculous action! Compare: "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20-21).
 - g. The Being to be conceived in Mary would be called the Son of God. Christ, the Second Person in the Godhead, has always existed; his life and being did not start when the Holy Spirit begot his physical body within the womb of Mary. He is definitively declared to be "God" at the beginning of John one, and since a Divine Being can have neither beginning nor end, this great Personage entered into a human body in order to complete the earthly mission which had been developed before the creation. There has never been an occasion when Christ did not exist; there will never be an occasion when Christ will not exist. His goings forth have been from of old, even from eternity (Cf. Micah 5:2).
 - h. His physical body developed within Mary just as do all other babies being carried by their mothers. When the time of development was completed, baby Jesus was born. He had to be cared for just as all infants are; he endured all the pains [such as teething) and struggles (learning to crawl, climb and walk) as other babies. As he grew to adulthood, he would have appeared to be just another young man; outwardly he would have looked like any normal Jew of his physical age.
 - 1) Mary and Joseph were just as concerned about his physical well-being as other parents are; they were worried about him when he disappeared from the company when they started back to Nazareth after being in Jerusalem for Jewish religious activities (Luke 2). They returned to the great
-

city and searched for twelve-year-old Jesus, who then returned home with them. “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

- 2) “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. 2:5-11, ASV).
- i. In what sense is Jesus the Son of God?
 - 1) In the sense that God brought him into the world:
 - a) John 17:18: “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.”
 - b) 1 John 4:9: “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”
 - 2) In the sense that he raised him from the tomb: “God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee” (Acts 13:33).
 - 3) In the sense that he has greater authority than Christ: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him” (John 13:16). Our Lord also stated that he who is sent, is not greater than he who sends. God the Father is greater than his Son, for it was the Father who sent the Son on his earthly mission. A little later in the New Testament, Christ will promise to send the Comforter [the Holy Spirit], thus clearly implying that he is greater than the Spirit. This depicts a kind of divine chain of command—an illustration of Divine Authority. Compare:
 - a) God sent Christ.
 - b) Christ sent the Holy Spirit.
 - c) Christ also sent the apostles.
 3. Verses 36-39: “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. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.”
 - a. ASV: “And behold, Elisabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren. For no word from God shall be void of power. And Mary said, Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in these days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah.”
 - b. Mary did not ask for some supernatural sign from the angel that she would become the mother of a son without knowing a man. The heavenly messenger had already shown her that this child would be more than special, he would be called “the Son of the Highest.” How much did she perceive about this Son at the point? Enough perhaps to know that it was the Messiah who would thus be born!
 - c. The fact that her cousin was an old woman and was married to an aged man, and was now in her sixth month of pregnancy, would of itself constitute a sign. No child could have been conceived without God’s intervention.
 - d. Where the King James says, “with God nothing shall be impossible,” the ASV has, “no word from God shall be void of power.” God can and will do whatever he has promised! His word can be trusted! The angel was merely delivering to Mary what God has told him to report. This conception was impossible from the human perspective, but was well within the scope of God’s power; since he had made this promise, he would most certainly do what he said.
 - e. Boles: **For no word from God shall be void**—This is the great and crowning reason why Mary was to be assured of the accomplishment of all the things which had been spoken by the angel; although it was apparently so contrary to the natural course of events, yet Mary was to believe that nothing was impossible with God. This should strengthen her faith and prepare her for the great event; with God

nothing shall ever be, nothing can ever be impossible. It is the glory of God that, when he wills, he does things impossible to human agencies. Mary's soul bowed in sweet confidence and submission to this divinely revealed purpose; she said "be it unto me according to thy word."

- f. We cannot utter audible words without the use of our breath. The lungs deliver the breath, the vocal chords produce the sound, the mouth, tongue and lips shape the words. We inhale and exhale air. God is spiritual and has no physical body, nor does he need one. Throughout God's dealings with mankind, human expressions are applied to the Almighty: He is said to have hands, a voice, the ability to walk, and do things. These are anthropomorphisms—attributing to the Divine beings those features which pertain to man.
 - 1) The holy scriptures are said to be "God-breathed." "All scripture is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). Vine on *inspiration*: theopneustos qeo/pneustos [NT:2315](#)), "inspired by God" (Theos, "God," **pneo**, "to breathe"), is used in [2 Tim 3:16](#), of the Scriptures as distinct from non-inspired writings. Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale and the Great Bible have the rendering "inspired of God."
 - 2) Consider the following:
 - a) Genesis 1:3: "And God **said**, Let there be light: and there was light."
 - b) Psalm 33:6-9: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he **spake**, and it was done; he **commanded**, and it stood fast."
 - c) Matthew 19:4-6 "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And **said**, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."
- g. The angel, having completed his mission, departed from Mary. In the next passage, this new mother to be, wasted no time in taking the journey to see Elizabeth. Mary would not know from internal sensations that she was pregnant; there is a space of time before women can know that they have conceived.

F. Luke 1:40-45: Mary and Elisabeth.

1. Verses 40-41: "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."
 - a. We are not told exactly where Zacharias and Elisabeth lived, only that it was in a city in Judea, in the hill country. The priests were given certain cities in which to dwell:
 - 1) Joshua 15:55: "Maon, Carmel, and Ziph, and Juttah."
 - 2) Joshua 11:16: "So Joshua took all that land, the hills, and all the south country, and all the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same."
 - 3) This has led some to think that Juttah was possibly the place where Mary visited her kinswoman. This was said to be a tradition among our early brethren.
 - b. We are told that Mary made haste in going to visit her cousin. Did she make this decision on her own or did the angel perhaps indicate a quick trip?
 - c. Boles: "It seems that it was the sixth month after Elisabeth's conception that the annunciation took place, and as Mary stayed with Elisabeth about three months (verse 56), after which time, as is evident from verse 57, John was born, Mary must have left Nazareth almost immediately after the visit of the angel, and no space is therefore found for the three or four weeks, which some think intervened before she left Nazareth for the hill country. That she left very soon after the annunciation is evident also from the haste with which she prosecuted her journey."
 - d. At the salutation she received from Mary, Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak. What she said was an inspired message. Compare David's statement: "The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:2).
 - e. At the same instant, the unborn baby leaped in Elisabeth's womb. Luke is reporting the events by the inspiration with which he recorded his account of the gospel. The plain implication of the statement

shows that the baby's sudden movement was caused by the Holy Spirit. It was by the guidance of the Spirit that Elisabeth spoke what follows.

2. Verses 42-43: "And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"
 - a. When Mary saluted Elisabeth, this lady began to speak. She did not speak in some language unknown to her, but in the tongue spoken by these two relatives in their ordinary conversation. We are told that she spoke in a loud voice. Why? Evidently she wanted anyone present to hear! The message was not some great secret, but one which was worthy of being made known.
 - b. A resplendent pronouncement is made to Mary on account of her being selected by Heaven to bring the long promised Messiah into the world! She did not become the mother of God, as some fallaciously allege. A Divine Being can have neither beginning nor end; Deity is eternal in being.
 - c. Mary's great honor was to bring the physical body of Jesus into this world; it was done without the involvement of any man; it was through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. The second member of the Godhead has always been; he was by the process of the Virgin Birth to become a member of the human race. There were doubtless countless women in the Old Testament era who wished that they would be so-chosen. For them to be barren, was a powerful affliction.
 - d. But the real emphasis of this virgin birth was on the One who was thus conceived! Mary was merely the instrument through whom he was conceived and born.
 - e. NKV: 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?"
 - f. Elisabeth's statement first acknowledged that Mary was indeed blessed to be chosen to fill a great role in the salvation plan. But she was also guided to proclaim the exalted greatness of the one would was to be born through Mary. Elisabeth saw that she was blessed by having the mother of her Lord to honor her with this visit.
 - g. Boles: *And whence is this to me*—Here Elisabeth uses the language of humility; she expressed her wonder that she had been considered worthy of such a visit from Mary; she inquired : "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" This seems to be the first one to speak of Jesus as "my Lord"; later it became a common title among the disciples of Jesus. Such utterances made of an unborn child can be attributed only to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and were the words spoken by Elisabeth who was filled with the Spirit. Elisabeth reveals to Mary that, "when the voice of thy salutation came into mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy." This explains why Elisabeth knew that Mary was to be the mother of the long-expected Messiah. While this knowledge of Elisabeth was the result of divine revelation she, under the influence of the Spirit, refers to it as the effect that Mary's salutation had upon her unborn child.
3. Verses 44-45: "For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."
 - a. Luke had a little earlier wrote of the baby having moved suddenly within Elisabeth; he knew this by his inspiration; by this same inspiration he here reports the statement made by her.
 - b. When Mary gave his greeting to this lady, instantly the baby leaped. An instant later, Elisabeth began her inspired reply.
 - c. Coffman: Thus, Elisabeth interpreted that leaping of the unborn child as proof that the Saviour was already conceived in the virgin's womb; and this was spoken by Elisabeth as proving the implications of what she had just said in the previous verse. At the age of six months, there would already have been a number of "quickenings" by the unborn son; but there was something extraordinary about what happened when Mary appeared and greeted Elisabeth.
 - d. But here the Spirit in a moment revealed to the happy wife of the priest Zacharias that the Babe to be born of her young kinswoman was not only the promised Messiah, but was the awful [cf. awesome] Son of the Highest! Think, reader, what these simple words we are considering signify! Why am I so favored "that the mother of my Lord should come to me"? "The contrast leaves no room for doubt," well argues Plumptre, "that she used the word 'Lord' in its highest sense. 'Great' as her own son was to be (verse 15) in the sight of the Lord, here was the mother of One yet greater, even of the Lord himself." [See Pulpit Commentary].

- e. Boles: *And blessed is she that believed*—Elisabeth, by inspiration, recognized that Mary had from the first believed, and was unlike Zacharias, who at that time was still smitten with dumbness. Her language passes from the second to the third person, and must be looked upon in the light of a prayer or invocation of blessings upon Mary. Still speaking by the Holy Spirit, Elisabeth declares that "there shall be a fulfillment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord." There is no evidence that Mary had as yet revealed to Elisabeth anything, and Elisabeth was still under the influence of the Holy Spirit when she uttered these unusual words; the expression, although in form indefinite, is designed to apply directly to Mary. Elisabeth recognizes that what the angel had spoken to Mary was "from the Lord."

G. Luke 1:46-55: The Inspired Proclamation of Mary.

1. Verses 46-47: "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."
 - a. To magnify is to enlarge, thus the inspired message given through Mary begins by expressing her heart's desire that the Lord might be magnified. She speaks here of the enlargement of the Lord and his way. May it be expanded to its full extent. May the earth be filled with a knowledge of his word, and may the hearts of the whole race exult in his salvation. Compare these verses where the English word *magnify* is used:
 - 1) Psalm 34:3: "O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together."
 - 2) Acts 10:46: "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God...."
 - b. Mary's spirit was full of rejoicing in God, the Savior. First, he had selected her to be the mother of the redeemer, bringing him into the world. Notice that she is guided to speak of God as her Savior. Clearly, this implies that her soul was in need of salvation. She rejoiced in the one who served her as Savior.
 - c. God the Father is the source of our salvation. He chose Christ to be the sacrifice for sin, as he suffered and died on the cross. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are involved in saving sinners. God designed the plan, Christ executed the plan, and the Holy Spirit revealed the plan. The divine three comprise the Godhead. All the attributes of the Godhead pertain to each of these magnificent ones.
2. Verses 48-49: "For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name."
 - a. Mary spoke of her low status—she was from Nazareth, a city that was ill-esteemed by some in Israel: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). She was engaged to Joseph, one who was not a rich man.
 - b. She was able to appreciate the great honor God had given her, in selecting her to bring the Messiah into the world. The Almighty knew the humility of this good lady's heart; she was inspired to express the true feelings of her inner self.
 - c. Mary could not know from her own knowledge that generations to come would acknowledge the fact that she had been blessed; of all the women through the previous ages, she was chosen to become the mother of Jesus. This was a highly significant honor! Her story would be carried through generations.
 - d. But this choice did not mean that she was the greatest of all women. She needed the salvation which God [through Christ] would provide her; she was not sinlessly perfect. Indeed, all accountable humans commit sin [Rom. 3:23] and are in need of salvation. Remember that she spoke of her **Savior!**
 - e. Mary did not remain a virgin. The Bible does not teach that she remained a perpetual virgin; in fact, it clearly teaches the opposite. "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not **till** she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS" (Matt. 1:24-25).
 - 1) Joseph did as the angel said. He married Mary, and *knew her not* until after Jesus was born. A *firstborn* implies one or more children after the first. She did not remain a perpetual virgin. Other passages make this truth even clearer:
 - 2) Matthew 12:46-50: "While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

- 3) Matthew 13:55-56: "Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?"
- f. NKJ: "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" (Luke 1:48-49). Mary could perceive that she had been wonderfully blessed! She was yet to learn other things that would happen, experiences that she could not have foreseen. Later, she would be near the cross on which her firstborn son suffered a cruel and unjust death! Compare also: "(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35).
3. Verses 50-52: "And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."
- a. NKJ: "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."
- b. The Jewish people had been taught through many years of their special standing with Jehovah. Time and again, the nation had rebelled against God, as in the time of the Judges. Utter apostasy had consumed the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom, following the division after Solomon's death. The two tribes of the Southern Kingdom also finally rejected their Master, and were carried into captivity.
- c. When a remnant of Abraham's descendants returned to their land, they were faithful and united for a time. By the time of John the Immerser and Jesus, the people were in a state of apostasy, although they were not aware of their spiritual condition, despite the preaching of the forerunner and the Messiah. The haughty religious and civil leaders of the time would lose their exalted positions when the Romans came in 70 A.D. There were a good many Jews who were faithful to Jehovah, and others were turned back to him by the preaching done of John and Jesus.
- d. Those who humbly obeyed the gospel of Christ would enjoy the favor of God. They were mightily aided as they spread the Gospel and were delivered from the destruction which befell Jerusalem. The followers of Christ were now God's chosen people.
4. Verses 53-55: "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy. As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."
- a. NKJ: "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."
- b. Pulpit: "From adoration, Mary's hymn proceeds to celebrate the mighty results effected by the Divine pity. As so often in thee prophetic strains, the speaker or writer speaks or writes as though the future had become the past; so Mary here describes the Messianic reversal of man's conception of what is great and little, as though the unborn Babe had already lived and done his strange mighty work in the world. The 'glorious arm' which, in old days, had wrought such mighty things for Israel, she recognized as belonging to the coming Deliverer (Luke 1:51). His chosen instruments would be those of whom the world thought little, like herself. The proud and mighty would be put down; the men of low degree, and poor and humble, would be exalted. The hungry would be filled; and they who were rich only in this world's goods would have no share in the new kingdom—they would be sent empty away. How strangely had the virgin of Nazareth caught the thought, almost the very words, of the famous sermon her Divine Son, some thirty years later, preached on the mountain-side near Gennesaret!"
- c. Boles: *He hath given help to Israel his servant*—In this song of praise Mary is enabled by the Holy Spirit to look back and see all the good things that Jehovah had done for Israel; she was permitted to view the future and the blessings which should come to the world through this Messiah. The language of praise and grateful remembrance of the divine help in behalf of the poor and humble now assumes a more comprehensive and general form. Jehovah had extended mercy as he had spoken unto "our fathers" and "toward Abraham and his seed for ever." God's covenant of mercy was not only made with the patriarchs, but declared to them in words of the strongest import, and confirmed with an oath. All

the promises that God had made to Israel were now focusing on the babe that she would bring into the world.

- d. Ephesians 3:1-11: “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

H. Luke 1:56-66: The Birth of John the Immerser.

1. Verses 56-57: “ And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.”
 - a. NKJ: And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house. 57 Now Elisabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. 58 When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.
 - b. It may be that Mary stayed with Elisabeth until John was born. The neighbors and her relatives, including Mary, rejoiced that a son was born into the family of Zacharias.
 - c. God had shown this fine and faithful couple great mercy, especially for the mother, who had been unable to bear children.
 - d. Boles: “Mary left Elisabeth, it seems, just before the birth of John; she may have done so, wishing to avoid the excitement of the occasion, and the observation of such an assemblage. The birth of John the Baptist was soon after Mary's departure, probably in the spring. According to the promise of Gabriel, at the proper time, a son was born to Zacharias and Elisabeth; as the prediction of the angel was fulfilled in this particular, so we may expect every prophecy concerning John to be fulfilled.”
 - e. Coffman: “This verse seems to say that many, even of the relatives, did not know of the approaching event of this birth, but they heard the glad news after it happened. The devout community celebrated it by acknowledging the hand of the Lord in such an occurrence and by general rejoicing.”
2. Verses 58-59: “And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.”
 - a. Boles: “If the eighth day came on the Sabbath, the rite was not postponed. (John 7:22, 23.) According to the Jewish traditional law, ten persons were required to be present as witnesses to the circumcision; hence the presence of relatives and friends. Circumcision was enjoined upon Abraham as a token or covenant sign, and was to be performed upon all his male descendants and upon every male that was admitted within the folds of the Jewish nation. (Gen. 17:9-14.) It was an essential condition of Jewish nationality; Paul speaks of it also as ‘the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision: that he might be the father of all them that believe.’ (Rom. 4:11.) Circumcision was the attestation of Abraham's justification by faith; it became a type of the cleansing of the heart, as Paul says ‘circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter.’ (Rom. 2:29.) ‘For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.’ (Phil. 3:3).”
 - b. John 7:22-23: “Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?”
3. Verses 60-61: “And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.”

- a. The group which was present had given the baby a name, but Elisabeth rejected that name. She said the boy would be called John. They replied that none of the father's line had been called by this name.
 - b. The angel had told Zacharias to call the baby John. He would have told his wife about this name. She insisted on this name for her son.
4. Verses 62-64: "And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all."
- a. In some way, these people made a sign to the father about the name of the baby. If Zacharias could hear, why did they have to make a sign? Zacharias called for something to write on, and wrote: "His name is John." That name had already been settled.
 - b. Zacharias had been mute for some nine months, thus needed to inscribe the name to communicate. We can also see from this that he could not hear. "The tablets in use generally at the time were usually made of wood, covered with a thin coating of wax; on the soft layer of wax the words were written with an iron stylus" (Pulpit Commentary).
5. Verses 62-64: "And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God."
- a. Coffman: "True to the word borne through Gabriel, Zacharias' handicap lasted only until the son had come, as promised, and the fact of his name had been determined. The prophet Zacharias used his first words to bless the name of God and to extol his praise."
 - b. The father wrote that the baby's name had been already given: "His name is John." The angel revealed that name, which means, "one whom God has graciously given."
 - c. As we learned earlier, the doubt of Zacharias which demanded a sign that his family would be blessed with a son, was that he would be unable to speak for some period of time. After he had written the name of the child, instantly he was able to speak. The first words from his mouth were a verbal praise to God. He had been both mute and deaf during this period.
6. Verses 65-66: "And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him."
- a. His relatives and neighbors knew of Zacharias' inability to speak and hear, thus when his words came pouring forth, they were all amazed! A miracle brought his mute and deaf condition; no less a miracle was used to restore his former condition.
 - b. People of the entire region must have learned of these events. Since the child was the focal point of the entire process, naturally they wondered what kind of person would the baby become. Miracles were always wrought for special purposes; they were not common occurrences.
 - c. The parents were directly blessed to be able to have a child; and supernatural operations were involved. What would be the work of this son? Would the parents have connected the birth of their baby with the prophecies of an Elijah who was to come? That would become clear as time continued.
 - d. Boles: "*And all that heard them laid them up in their heart* —By this we are to understand that there were certain manifestations of divine favor toward the child; events which would be noticed by observers ... but which Luke did not see fit to record. Many absurd legends were propagated in the early ages of the church concerning the period which intervenes between the births of John and Jesus and their public ministry, but we may be safe in rejecting them; if the inspired writers had seen fit, they could have given them to us. They observed that the hand of the Lord was with him; the guidance, protection, and blessings of God, including the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, were with John. Luke here gives a glimpse of John's early history, intimating both the continued fulfillment of the angel's words and also the realization of the expectations awakened among the people at his birth."
 - e. John grew to manhood, spending much time in the wilderness, thus being conditioned physically and spiritually for his very important work.
- I. Luke 1:67-80: The Inspired Statement From Zacharias.
1. Verses 67-69: "And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."
-

- a. At this time, Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and began a prophecy. Again, the first statement was a tribute of praise for Jehovah. Our Lord taught us to begin prayers with such an expression of the greatness and goodness of the Almighty, to whom our prayers are to be addressed. The next thought spoken was the fact that God had visited and redeemed his people.
 - b. Pulpit: "The tenses of the verbs used in these expressions show that in Zacharias's mind, when he uttered the words of his hymn, the Incarnation, and the glorious deliverance commenced in that stupendous act of mercy, belonged to the past. *He hath visited*; that is, after some four hundred years of silence and absence, the Holy One of Israel had again come to his people. About four centuries had passed since the voice of Malachi, the last of the prophets, had been heard."
2. Verses 70-75: "As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."
- a. Coffman: Here Zacharias was speaking, not of his own son John, but of Jesus the Christ. The use of the past tense, at a time when Jesus had not yet been born, is prophetic, a tense peculiar to the Holy Scriptures, in which future events are announced in the past tense, implying the certainty of fulfillment. What God promises is as certain as if it had already happened. *Horn of salvation* ... This metaphor was one which, to the Israelites, suggested the very greatest strength. Such men as Abraham and Moses were said to be "horns" of Israel.[35] *In the house of his servant David* ... This, like the words of the angel (Luke 1:32), shows that Mary was a descendent of David.
 - b. As such animals as a rhinoceros has great power in his horn, so the power of God displayed in his various operations are depicted as a horn. The power of God would ransom his people from those who hate them. He would deliver them from the bondage in which the enemies hold them. It is by the power of the Gospel that God's people are saved from the enemy. The greatest enemy is Satan; through his agents the devil is able to afflict the people of God. Guilt of sin is the yoke under which all sinners are held. The ransom price paid for our sins is the blood of Christ.
 - 1) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - 2) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:19-25: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - c. God did not forget or ignore the promise of the new covenant which he affirmed to Abraham.
 - 1) Genesis 12:1: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."
 - 2) Genesis 22:1: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 3) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - 4) Jeremiah 31:31-33: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put

my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

- 5) Hebrews 8:8-13: “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”
- d. When Israel in the Old Testament was faithful, God protected and preserved them from the power of their enemies. The invading hordes during the time of the Judges were overcome and Israel was saved from their afflictions, when they repented. During the time of the monarchy, God aided and preserved the Southern Kingdom. When they, in their rebellion, were subjected to Babylonian captivity, at the proper time and in the best way God brought them back to the land of promise.
 - 1) During the four hundred years between the time of Malachi and the coming of John the Immerser, Israel had again gone into apostasy. There were certain individuals who remained faithful, including the parents of John. The number of the faithful were in the minority, but they were loyal.
 - 2) John brought many back into a state of righteousness. The work of our Lord and his apostles and other assistants added to the number of the righteous greatly.
- e. Beginning on the Pentecost of Acts Two, very large numbers were baptized into Christ and were cleansed from their past sins by the power of the gospel.
 - 1) Acts 2:41: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
 - 2) Acts 2:47: “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
 - 3) Acts 4:4: “Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.”
 - 4) Acts 6:7: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”
 - 5) Acts 11:19-21: “Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.”
- f. God preserved the church of the Lord from their deadly Jewish enemies and later from their Gentile and Roman persecutions. The saints were able to serve God in holiness and true righteousness. “For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God” (1 Thess. 4:3-5).
 - 1) It is God’s will that his offspring be holy in life. To be sanctified is to be set apart, devoted to God’s holy purposes. The Greek word is *hagiosmos*. Vine defines it as “separation to God” (Vol. 2, p.317). The word is used ten times in the Greek New Testament, being translated *sanctification* five times and *holiness* five times. In 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7, it is used twice, being translated as *sanctification* once (verse 3) and *holiness* once (verse 7). The two English words, used interchangeably, are identical in meaning.
 - 2) The Bible itself gives the meaning of *sanctification*.
 - a) Exodus 13:1,12: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast:

- it is mine....That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S."
- b) Exodus 13:2: "Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."
 - c) Exodus 29:37: "Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy."
 - d) Leviticus 27:16: "And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver."
- 3) These things, animals, and people were set apart (sanctified) to God's holy purposes and uses. The meaning of sanctification then is plain:
- a) "To set apart to God to be used by him and for him." Once the item or individual was separated, it was not to be used again for common purposes. When the pagans offered a hog on the altar at the temple, the altar was polluted. When a person obeys the gospel and is sanctified, he is to live a holy life, a life that is consecrated and dedicated to God's service; the individual cannot return to his old way of life and retain fellowship with God.
 - b) 2 Corinthians 6:14: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"
- g. True righteousness refers to the complete state of godly conduct which is made possible by the soul-cleansing power of the Gospel of Christ. The Law of Moses was unable to cleanse the Israelites from sin (Acts 13:38-39), but the gospel can purge our souls of all the guilt of all of our past sins: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12).
- 1) Under the old law, remembrance was made of sin year-after-year, on the day of atonement. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:1-4).
 - 2) Romans 1:17: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The word therein is a reference to the gospel. The gospel reveals the righteousness of God. It is in the gospel that we find the righteousness of God. This is not speaking of God's personal righteousness. That he is righteous and perfectly holy is taught throughout God's book, but that is not the point here. The apostle is affirming that the plan by which God makes man to become righteous is given in the gospel.
 - 3) The commandments of God are righteousness (Ps. 119:172); there is nothing about his word that is unrighteous or which encourages unrighteousness. It promotes and produces righteousness in those who will sincerely follow its dictates. When we obey the gospel, we "work righteousness" (Acts 10:34-35). "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 John 3:7; cf. Romans 6:16). Paul decried the fact that the Jews had not "submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:1-3). What they had done was to refuse to obey the gospel (Rom. 10:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:22-25).
 - a) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." [ASV].
 - b) Romans 10:13-18: "For, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things! But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith,
-

Lord, who hath believed our report? So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily, Their sound went out into all the earth, And their words unto the ends of the world.” [ASV].

- 4) The righteousness of God revealed in the gospel is from faith unto faith. The word *eis* (to, unto) shows the result of the first faith. The gospel is a system of faith and it produces faith. The first instance of faith is a reference to the gospel itself (being a system of faith as opposed to a system of works); the second instance of faith is a reference to personal faith on the part of the one who will believe the gospel. Faith comes through hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17; Acts 15:7). The gospel contains all the information and confirmation to create faith in the hearts of those who will sincerely consider its message.
 - 5) The gospel (which is a system of faith: God speaks; man considers; and faith is produced in the individual's heart) is thus able to purify our hearts (Acts 15:9) by producing faith in us which leads us to obey the gospel (1 Pet. 1:22-23). It is therefore from faith unto faith (Phil. 3:9).
 - a) Acts 15:9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."
 - b) Philippians 3:9: "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"
 - c) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 6) "The just shall live by faith" is a quotation from Habakkuk 2:4. To be righteous, we must be free from the guilt of sin. To be just is to be righteous. This Old Testament statement is found three times in the New Testament. In this case, the emphasis is on just: one who is just is one who lives by faith. The other two occurrences are Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38.
 - a) Galatians 3:11: "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith."
 - b) Hebrews 10:38: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."
3. Verses 76-80: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."
- a. Zacharias is still speaking a prophetic message about his baby boy, John. Brother Boles offers this: *Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet*—At this point the song of Zacharias begins its second part. After giving vent to his gratitude for the coming and blessing of the Messiah, Zacharias now first mentions his son, whom he addressed in language of great beauty, yet he speaks of him only as the prophet and forerunner of him whose glorious mission and salvation he was now celebrating. John was called here "the prophet of the Most High"; he was the messenger of God spoken of by Malachi. John was a prophet not only as a preacher of truth, but also as the foreteller of Christ's coming and of the vengeance that should befall the Jewish nation for its impenitence and unbelief.
 - b. John was here called the "prophet of the Highest." This is a reference to Jesus, the coming Son of God. The son of Zacharias would go before the Savior, preparing the way for his greater work. "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mark 1:2-4).
 - 1) Compare: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:6-8). This John is called "the Baptist" because that was what he did: he baptized people. It is used the same way as Alexander is called "the coppersmith" (2 Tim. 4:14) and Zenas is called "the lawyer" (Tit. 3:13). Thayer defines the words as, "A baptizer; one who administers the rite of baptism" (p.95). Josephus, the Jewish historian, spoke of John (*Ant.* 18,5,2, p.382).

- 2) John came to be a witness; a witness is one who is qualified to testify about certain facts and truths. A qualified witness is one whose testimony may be trusted. But John was an inspired prophet who spoke God's infallible message. Since God sent this man to perform an important mission, it is certain that he provided him with all the tools to do his work. The testimony John bore was "of the Light." We are here prepared to perceive that Christ is the Light who has come into the world, illuminating a dark and dismal world, overwhelmed by sin.
 - 3) Malachi, as he closed out the Old Testament Scriptures, foretold the coming of John the Immerser: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6). A great and terrible day of judgment was in the works, but before this tremendous event occurred, God would send Elijah the prophet to Israel. Some have supposed that Elijah the Tishbite, in person, would be sent; that since he did not actually die, God has held him in readiness through the centuries to be sent back to earth.
 - 4) But, as noted under our comments on Malachi 3:1, the New Testament shows that John the Baptizer is the person meant, that John came *in the spirit and power of Elijah*. The work of John the Baptizer is described here. In the work that great man of God did, men and women and boys and girls were turned in the right direction. "The mission of this Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, was to turn the affections of the people back to God and his divine law. He was to restore a right relation between parents and children and to turn the hearts of the children to the ancestral religion of their fathers. In this condition of heart they would be ready to receive the Messiah, for they would see in him the fulfillment of all God's wondrous promises and the glorious hope of their fathers" (Hailey, p.425: Commentary on Malachi).
 - 5) If the work of John had not been successfully accomplished, it would have been necessary for God to smite the earth with a curse. It is interesting and no doubt highly significant that the Old Testament closes with the word *curse*. This was the final statement to issue from heaven until the arrival of John; four hundred dreary, trouble-filled years lay ahead of Israel before the coming of the Messiah's forerunner.
 - 6) "All of God's prophets had done their work, but the people had rejected them all. There was no further word that God could send. The hardened and rebellious nation would continue to exist (according to God's holy purpose); but the precious fellowship of other days was gone for ever. A hint of all this may be found in these final six verses In the meanwhile, let the true followers of God keep the sacred Law and await the unfolding of the purpose of the Almighty" (Coffman, pp.305f: Commentary on Malachi).
 - 7) Consider: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey" (Matt. 3:1-4).
 - a) John was spoken of by Isaiah in 40:3 (cf. Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6). His work is figuratively described as road-building. John prepared the way for Christ by preparing the people. The Law of Moses was a schoolmaster to prepare people for his coming (Gal. 3:24); John's work was to be his forerunner, to "go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).
 - b) John was not Elijah, but operated in the spirit and power of Elijah; however, John did not do miracles (John 10:41).
 - c) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of **these** kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...." The context and secular history show that the kings meant were the Roman kings. The first kingdom of Daniel 2 was the Babylonian Empire; the second was the Medo-Persian; the third was the Grecian Empire; and the fourth was the Empire of Rome. God had determined to set up his eternal kingdom during the days when the Roman Empire was in power. Luke 3:1-3 gives the names of the current rulers when God's final plans for the establishment the kingdom were set in motion: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate
-

being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

- d) Beginning at this point, Matthew calls attention to God's promise in Daniel 2:44. In the next verse he reports John the Immerser's message to be, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke gives a parallel account, but provides the names of the various rulers of the Roman system at the time. Why did he name these rulers if there is no connection with his subject and Daniel 2:44?
 - e) Luke 3:1-6: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Luke names certain prominent worldly rulers and ties these to Daniel 2:44's statement: "And in the days of **these** kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...."
- 8) John is called "the Baptist." Some say this verse is a reference to the Baptist church, but that church did not come into existence until the 1600s. There is historical evidence that the Baptist denomination originated from certain apostates from the church of Christ in the latter part of 17th century, in England.
- c. John's work would provide knowledge of salvation to his vast audiences. This salvation is remission of sins—the erasing the guilt of sin from the records of each who would obey the gospel:
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - 2) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
 - 3) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) Acts 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."
 - d. This salvation would be provided by the tender mercy of our God. We are saved by God's grace through our faith (Eph. 2:1-6; cf. Titus 2:11-14). God saves us by his grace when our faith leads us to obey the gospel.
 - e. We are next told that the "dayspring from on high hath visited us." Dayspring: East, Sunrise, Morning, Dawn, a New Day. Compare: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. 4:1-2).
 - 1) In graphic language, Malachi depicts the destruction that is intended for the wicked. The point of the verse is evident—evil men will be punished. But what is not as clear is: *to whom is the warning directed?* Certainly, the description fits the eternal judgment to be meted out against all the ungodly, but the reference may have the rebellious Israelites of Malachi's generation particularly in mind.
 - 2) The day of this judgment would be as an oven, in which all the proud and all that do wickedly will be as stubble; and using the figure of a tree that is consumed, the burning will be so complete that neither root nor branch will remain. NKJ: "But to you who fear My name The Sun of Right-

- eousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.”
- 3) Most modern commentators seem united in denying the messianic content of this verse, saying that *righteousness* itself is the *sun* that was to rise. However, the translators of the KJV understood the passage to refer to Christ. As the sun of our solar system gives life and light to our planet, so Christ gives life and light to those who believe in him. New Testament passages describe the Lord as the giver of life and light:
 - a) Ephesians 5:14: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."
 - b) Matthew 4:16: "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."
 - c) Luke 2:32: "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."
 - d) John 1:4,9: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men.... That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John denied that he was the Light, but that he came to bear witness to the Light; that Light was Christ. Cf. John 5:35-36.
 - e) 2 Corinthians 4:4: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
 - f) 2 Corinthians 4:6: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."
 - g) 2 Peter 1:19: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."
 - 4) If the commentators are correct, *righteousness* is personified, and is depicted as giving light to those who fear God. But the statement itself seems to clearly indicate a person, one who would have healing in his wings as he goes forth on his great mission of mercy. The reference to those who fear God going forth to "grow up as calves of the stall" is "an agricultural metaphor from the care and feeding of livestock. Such carefully protected and cared-for animals exhibit a quality of playful happiness that appears most desirable" (Coffman, p.298). Instead of "grow up as calves of the stall" (KJV), the ASV has "gambol as calves of the stall." The figure portrays God's people as living happily in the Light.
 - f. This illumination that God gave his people enabled them to operate in light and no longer be in darkness. As we learn the truth, we are able to believe its precepts and obey its commands. In this process we learn our former condition of condemnation and our present status of salvation. Compare: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7, ASV).
 - g. Not only that, but the same gospel reveals what lies ahead in eternity. We know of our coming death, but we also are appraised of our peaceful state in Paradise, where we are happy and joyful. There we shall await the resurrection at the last day, to receive a new spiritual body that cannot grow old or perish. If we are still alive on the earth when our Lord returns, we shall instantly be changed into the new immortal body.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:50-57: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (ASV).
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and

rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (ASV).

- h. Luke next tells us that the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth grew and became strong in spirit; he lived in the desert areas [generally uninhibited] and he grew into manhood. There he remained until the time when he was to take up his magnificent work, making the way for the Messiah!
-

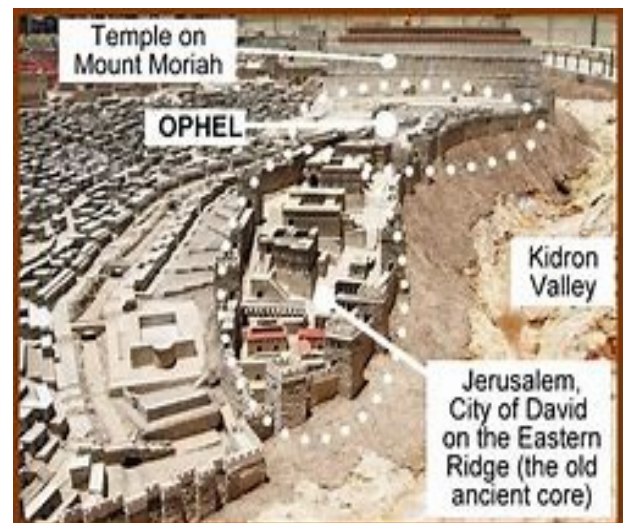
Luke Chapter 2

A. Luke 2:1-7: The Birth of Jesus.

1. Verse 1: “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: “Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled.”
 - 2) NKJ: “And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. 3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.
 - 3) The ultimate purpose of this census was for taxes which were to be levied.
 - b. ISBE on Caesar Augustus:
 - 1) This original name was Caius Octavius Caepias and he was born in 63 B.C., the year of Cicero's consulship. He was the grand-nephew of Julius Caesar, his mother Atia having been the daughter of Julia, Caesar's younger sister. He was only 19 years of age when Caesar was murdered in the Senate house (44 B.C.), but with a true instinct of statesmanship he steered his course through the intrigues and dangers of the closing years of the republic, and after the battle of Actium was left without a rival. Some difficulty was experienced in finding a name that would exactly define the position of the new ruler of the state. He himself declined the names of rex and dictator, and in 27 B.C. he was by the decree of the Senate styled Augustus.
 - 2) It is chiefly through the connection of Judaea and Palestine with the Roman Empire that Augustus comes in contact with early Christianity, or rather with the political and religious life of the Jewish people at the time of the birth of Christ: "Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled" (Luke 2:1).
 - 3) During the reign of Herod the Great the government of Palestine was conducted practically without interference from Rome except, of course, as regarded the exaction of the tribute; but on the death of that astute and capable ruler (4 B.C.) none of his three sons among whom his kingdom was divided showed the capacity of their father.
 - 4) In the year 6 A.D. the intervention of Augustus was invited by the Jews themselves to provide a remedy for the incapacity of their ruler, Archelaus, who was deposed by the emperor from the rule of Judaea; at the same time, while Caesarea was still the center of the Roman administration, a small Roman garrison was stationed permanently in Jerusalem. The city, however, was left to the control of the Jewish Sanhedrin with complete judicial and executive authority except that the death sentence required confirmation by the Roman procurator.
 - 5) There is no reason to believe that Augustus entertained any specially favorable appreciation of Judaism, but from policy he showed himself favorable to the Jews in Palestine and did everything to keep them from feeling the pressure of the Roman yoke. [J. Hutchinson, Biblesoft].
 - c. Luke tells us that it was during this time that Augustus decreed that the whole Roman world was to be taxed. Some have alleged that no such order was issued, but Coffman quotes Barclay: “Such censuses were taken every fourteen years; and from 20 A.D. to 270 A.D., we possess actual documents from every census taken ... Here is an instance where further knowledge has shown the accuracy of the New Testament.”
 - d. “Strangely enough, none of the early opponents of Christianity, such as Celsus or Porphyry, impugn the accuracy of our evangelist here. Surely, if there had been so marked an error on the threshold of his Gospel, these distinguished adversaries of our faith, living comparatively soon after the events in question, would have been the first to hit so conspicuous a blot in the story they hated so well” (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft).
2. Verses 2-3: “(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.”
 - a. Robertson: A definite allusion by Luke to a series of censuses instituted by Augustus, the second of which is mentioned by him in Acts 5:37. This second one is described by Josephus and it was supposed by some that Luke confused the two. But Ramsay has shown that a periodical fourteen-year census in

Egypt is given in dated papyri back to A.D. 20. The one in Acts 5:37 would then be A.D. 6. This is in the time of Augustus. The first would then be B.C. 8 in Egypt. If it was delayed a couple of years in Palestine by Herod the Great for obvious reasons, that would make the birth of Christ about B.C. 6 which agrees with the other known data. [Biblesoft].

- b. Coffman: Luke is now shown to be wholly correct in his statement that Quirinius was twice governor, and that the first census took place during the first period. A series of inscriptions in Asia Minor show that Quirinius was governor of Syria in 10-7 B.C., and again in 6 A.D.[4] Regarding some of the inscriptions mentioned by Robertson, these included those which were found in the autobiography of Augustus Caesar inscribed on the inner walls of the ruined temple of Augustus at Ankara. These were published in the New York Times in 1929; and these refer to the two censuses, even giving the numbers of those enrolled and naming Quirinius in both as governor of Syria. Luke is therefore quite accurate in his record.
- c. “The Temple of Augustus and Rome was built between 25 and 20 B.C. following the Roman conquest of central Anatolia and the designation of Ancyra, modern-day Ankara, as the new capital of Galatia. Following the death of Augustus in A.D. 14, the Deeds of the Divine Augustus were inscribed in Latin along the interior walls of the inner portico and in Greek on the columns of an exterior wall on the temple’s inner chamber. While various inscriptions of this work have been found scattered throughout the former Roman Empire, the text at Ankara is the most complete version” [Via Internet].
- d. Those Jews each went to his own city, the location where the individual was born. Joseph was of the lineage of David, and Bethlehem was that king’s city. Boles: “Joseph was of the family of David, and Bethlehem was David’s ancestral home. Luke’s reason for mentioning this census appears to have been to show how it was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem; Caesar, prompted by God’s purpose, directed the census. Each had to go ‘to his own city’; this was a practice that the Jews had followed for some time. Joseph ‘went up’; this is the usual expression in speaking of going from Galilee to the more elevated region of Jerusalem and Judea...”
- e. There was another location called *the city of David*: “So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward. And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts *was* with him” (2 Sam. 5:9-10). “David may have been induced to select the citadel of Zion as his palace, and by so doing to make Jerusalem the capital of the whole kingdom, partly by the situation of Jerusalem, viz. on the border of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, and tolerably near to the centre of the land” (Keil, p.317). It was within the city of Jerusalem.



Verses 4-5: "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child."

- f. Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The prophet clearly predicts here the birth and birthplace of the Messiah. His entry into the world would be at Bethlehem. Joseph Smith, in his infamous production (*The Book of Mormon*), claimed that Jesus was born in Jerusalem (Alma 7:10). He was wrong about that, as he was wrong about his entire farcical "revelation."
- g. How was God going to arrange things so that Jesus would be born at the right time and place? All we need to do is to see how he used the decrees of human rulers; everything seemed on the surface to be entirely natural. God's providence was behind all these moves made by individuals who could not know that they were part of the great eternal program!
- h. The ancient Jews understood from this passage that the Messiah, when he came, would be born in Bethlehem. Consequently, when the wise men came from the east seeking the new-born King, inquiry was made as to where he should be born. The reply was:
 - 1) "In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Matt. 2:5-6). They understood this to be the place because of Micah's prediction, which was made more than seven hundred years earlier.
 - 2) Bethlehem was a little place, virtually unnoticed by the masses of Judah. *Bethlehem* means "house of bread" and *Ephrathah* means "fruitfulness." It was the ancestral home of David, located about six miles from Jerusalem. God consistently chose the things, places, and people least likely to have been chosen by the wisdom of man (Isa. 55:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:27; Isa. 53:1-3).
 - 3) The birth place of Christ was of no great importance to the Jews. The place where he grew up [Nazareth] was despised (John 1:46). There was nothing about Christ's physical appearance or dress to attract the masses to him. He was uneducated by formal schooling standards (John 7:15). Yet, by means of who he was, what he was capable of doing, how he lived, what he taught, and by genuinely being concerned about people, he was able to bring changes to this world that no one else could have accomplished.
- i. At Bethlehem was one to be born who was destined to be ruler in Israel. There is nothing in the statement that indicates he was to rule in an earthly sense, as had David and Solomon. Indeed, Christ was the Father's agent in the creation. His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36).
 - 1) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 2) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - 3) Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
 - 4) Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - 5) Zechariah 6:12-13: "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
- j. Mary, Joseph's espoused wife, was with him. Luke tells us that she was then "great with child." Their marriage had not yet been consummated; she was still his bride to be. How far was it from Nazareth to Bethlehem? "The Google map says it is 156 kilometers or 96 miles. But the route they show is entirely in modern-day Israel. In Jesus' day it is more likelier that one of two, possibly shorter routes was taken. (1) through Samaria along the ridge-tops of the modern-day West Bank. (2) Down the

Jordan River Valley.” The route they traveled may have been a good bit shorter. Several days of travel would have been required, especially since Mary was in late pregnancy. There is no indication that they met with any serious problem while they were on the way.

- k. Jamieson:
- 1) “Cesar Augustus had his own ends to serve in causing steps to be taken for a general census of his kingdom. But God had ends in it too, and infinitely higher. Augustus must bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, and bring them just before the time for the Virgin’s delivery, that the mark of His Son’s birth-place, which He had set up seven centuries before, might not be missed.
 - 2) “Even so must Pharaoh dream, that Joseph might be summoned from prison to read it; and dream such a dream as required Joseph’s elevation to be governor of all Egypt, in order to the fulfilment of divine predictions (Gen. 40, &c.); and king Ahasuerus must pass a sleepless night, and beguile the weary hours with the chronicles of the kingdom, and read there of his obligations to Mordecai for the preservation of his life, in order that at the moment when he was to be sacrificed he might be lifted into a position to save his whole people (Esth. 6); and Belshazzar [?] must dream, and his dream must pass from him, and the wise men of Babylon must be required both to tell and to interpret it on pain of death, and all of them fail, in order that Daniel, by doing both, might be promoted along with his companions, for the present good and ultimate deliverance of his people, (Dan. 2, &c.) 2. In the Roman edict, which brought the Jews of Palestine to their several tribal towns, we see one of the badges of their lost independence.
 - 3) The splendour of the theocracy was now going fast down: but this was doubtless divinely ordered, that the new glory of Messiah’s kingdom, which it dimly shadowed forth, might the more strikingly appear. 3. Our Evangelist simply records the fact, that the new-born Babe of Bethlehem was laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn; leaving his readers from age to age to their own reflections on so stupendous a dispensation. ‘Thou camest,’ exclaims *Bp. Hall*, ‘to Thine own, and Thine own received thee not: how can it trouble us to be rejected of the world. which is not ours?’
3. Verses 6-7: “And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”
- a. No unnecessary words are used in this passage; each thought flows into the other, giving a complete report. Except for the miraculous conception, the pregnancy and birth of Jesus followed the natural order. Her pregnancy reached its full term when they got to Bethlehem; she brought forth her firstborn son without any complications.
 - b. She wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes.
 - 1) “When a child among the Hebrews was born, it was washed in water, rubbed in salt, and then wrapped in swaddling clothes; that is, not garments regularly made, as with us, but bands or blankets that confined the limbs closely, Ezek 16:4. There was nothing special in the manner in which the infant Jesus was treated” (Barnes). Compare: “And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to cleanse thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all” (Ezek. 16:4, ASV).
 - 2) In the depiction of their birth, God states that they were not properly cared for upon delivery. The navel cord was not severed; they were not rubbed with salt; and no one swaddled them with proper cloths. If the umbilical cord is not cut and tied after birth, the child will die. Afterwards, the baby is washed. In the ancient east, the baby was rubbed with salt (see Keil, Vol. I, p.197). The new-born was wound up in swaddling clothes. But none of these things was done for this infant, who personified Israel.
 - c. She placed her baby in a **manger**: “This word is “used by Luke only, here and Luke 13:15. Wycliffe has ‘a cracche,’ spelt also ‘cratch.’ Compare French creche, a ‘manger.’ Quite possibly a rock-cave. Dr. Thomson says: ‘I have seen many such, consisting of one or more rooms, in front of and including a cavern where the cattle were kept’ (*Land and Book*). (from Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database). A Manger on American farms was a trough used for feeding cattle and horses.
-

- d. It was necessary for Mary to be in some kind of a stable, or cave, since no room was available in the inn. Pulpit Commentary: "The inn of Bethlehem, what in modern Eastern travel is known as a *khan* or *caravanserai*, as distinct from a hostelry (the 'inn' of Luk_10:34). Such an inn or khan offered to the traveler simply the shelter of its walls and roofs. This khan of Bethlehem had a memorable history of its own, being named in Jer. 41:17 as the 'inn of Chimham,' the place of rendezvous from which travelers started on their journey to Egypt. It was so called after the son of Barzillai, whom David seems to have treated as an adopted son (2Sa. 19:1-43 : 37, 38), and was probably built by him in his patron's city as a testimony of his gratitude" (Dean Plumptre). The stable was not unfrequently a limestone cave, and there is a very ancient tradition that there was a cave of this description attached to the "inn," or caravanserai, of Bethlehem. This "inn" would, no doubt, be a large one, owing to its being in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and would often be crowded with the poorer class of pilgrims who went up to the temple at the seasons of the greater feasts. Bethlehem is only six miles from Jerusalem.
- e. Coffman: Fabricus gives a catalogue of no less than 136 opinions concerning the YEAR of Christ's birth; and, as to his BIRTHDAY, it has been placed by Christian sects and learned men in every month of the year!; ... but the Latin Church, supreme in power and infallible in judgment, placed it on the 25th of December, the very day on which the ancient Romans celebrated the feast of their goddess Bruma! Regardless of human curiosity and preoccupation of scholars with this question, "we should take our cue from the obvious lack of divine interest in the question."

B. Luke 2:8-20: Angels and Shepherds.

1. Verses 8-9: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."
 - a. In the vicinity of Bethlehem, there were some shepherds watching over their flocks by night, in the field. The weather in Palestine is cold in the winter, thus this passage indicates the birth of our Lord was not during the winter month of December. Even at the Passover season [spring], a fire was needed by those who waited for the trial of the Lord to be finished: "And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; **for it was cold**: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself" (John 18:18).
 - b. The sheepfold was a place of protection for the sheep at night and perhaps in times of danger. "At night the sheep are driven into a sheepfold if they are in a district where there is danger from robbers or wild beasts. These folds are simple walled enclosures (Num 32:16; Judg 5:16; 2 Chron 32:28; Ps 78:70; Zeph 2:6; John 10:1). On the top of the wall is heaped thorny brushwood as a further safeguard. Sometimes there is a covered hut in the corner for the shepherd. Where there is no danger the sheep huddle together in the open until daylight, while the shepherd watches over them (Gen 31:39; Luke 2:8). In the winter time caves are sought after (1 Sam 24:3; Zeph 2:6). The antiquity of the use of some of the caves for this purpose is indicated by the thick deposit of potassium nitrate formed from the decomposition of the sheep dung" [ISBE, Biblesoft].
 - c. During this particular night, the shepherds were put into fright by the appearance of an angel. We can easily understand their terror when we learn that the glory of the Lord brightened the night! A sudden bright light is turned on in our bedroom, our sleep will be quickly disturbed. The glorious light came upon the shepherds during the night. Their flocks would also have been startled.
 2. Verses 10-12: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."
 - a. Seeing their terror, the angel calmed them by announcing that he had come to bring exceedingly good news, which would produce great joy—to them and to many others who would learn this happy news. The fear of these men would quickly be changed into gladness.
 - b. The good news was that the Savior had been born that day in the city of David, Bethlehem. These shepherds had doubtless heard of angelic appearances to people of the Old Testament age. This was an entirely novel thing for them to see! The Savior is directly identified as Christ, the Lord—the Messiah who had long been promised.
-

- c. The angel's marvelous presence and message would be a sign that they would truly find the infant, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
 3. Verses 13-14: "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, good will toward men."
 - a. If another sign was necessary, suddenly a multitude of heavenly beings were with the angel, glorifying God, using these words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
 - b. Glorifying the Father is at the heart of our joyful duty and honor: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). The first of three principles by which to guide our actions is given in this verse: namely, whatever we do, do it to bring glory to God. If this is the basic motivation for our lives, we will not be as apt to hurt anyone else, not even ourselves.
 - 1) Christ gave up his status in heaven so that glory might accrue to God. His earthly mission has brought about the conversion of many people who glorify God.
 - 2) I Peter 4: 11,16: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen....Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 4:15: "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."
 4. Verses 15-16: "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."
 - a. We are here told that the heavenly host were also angels, and that they all returned to Heaven. This task had been done.
 - b. It was still during this same night that the shepherds hastily went into Bethlehem to see what the angel had announced. They found Mary, Joseph and the baby just as the angels had said.
 5. Verses 17-18: "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."
 - a. These men had such good news that this report was too good not to spread! This event meant that the long-promised Messiah had now come into the world! This was the greatest event of their lives to this point. If they later obeyed the gospel and were made citizens of the kingdom of God, that would have become the single finest benefit they ever could receive on earth, which would blossom into the final and foremost of all blessings—Heaven!
 - b. Consider the story in 2 Kings 7:3-16: "And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to
-

us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD.”

- c. The message the shepherds spread to others caused these auditors to ponder in their minds what this report meant. Would this Messiah become a great military leader and king? Would he drive the Romans from their land of promise? That was the common notion held by many Jews. Their concept of the Redeemer pertained the things of this world; his real intention was to establish a spiritual kingdom which would also be known as his church (Matt. 16:13-19).
6. Verses 19-20: “But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”
 - a. In the meantime, Mary was also mulling over in her mind these things that had happened to her. The conversation she had had with the angel; the birth of Jesus; the coming of the shepherds. The promises that had been made to her about Jesus. He came to save souls, not to bring political freedom.
 - b. Luke 1:31-33: “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”
 - c. Luke 2:34-35: “And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”
- C. Luke 2:21-24: The Circumcision of Jesus.
1. Verse 21: “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.”
 - a. Why the eighth day?
 - 1) Genesis 17:12: "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed."
 - 2) "In 1935 Professor H. Dam proposed the name 'Vitamin K' for the factor in foods which helped prevent hemorrhaging in baby chicks. We now know that Vitamin K is responsible for the production of prothrombin by the liver. If Vitamin K is deficient, there will be a prothrombin deficiency and hemorrhaging may occur, since both Vitamin K and prothrombin are necessary for proper blood-clotting. Oddly enough, it is only on the 5th through the 7th days of the newborn male's life that Vitamin K begins to be produced (the vitamin is usually produced by bacteria in the intestinal tract). And, it is *only on the eighth day* that the percentage of prothrombin climbs *above 100%*! The only day in the entire life of the newborn that the blood-clotting element prothrombin is about 100% is day eight! The best day for circumcision is, therefore, the eighth day" (Jackson, *Reason & Revelation*, Vol. I, No. 9).
 - 3) No one could reasonably attribute this medical knowledge on Moses' part to mere coincidence or a lucky guess. He must have had some inside information given to him by the Supreme Medical Authority!
 - b. “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb

- of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her ... And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean" (Lev. 12:1-8).
2. Verses 22-23: "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord)."
- a. Information from my book on Matthew chapter two:
- 1) Matthew reports that wise men came from the East to Jerusalem, seeking the new King of the Jews. The Greek word he used (*magoi*) "designates an order of priests and philosophers called magi, which had existed in the countries east of the Euphrates from a remote period....The men called magicians in the book of Daniel belonged to this order. (Dan. 1:20; 4:9)" (McGarvey, p.26).
 - 2) There is no way to determine how many of these men came: they brought three gifts but that is useless in learning how many were in their company. There have been some "scholars" who not only have said there were three, but have even given their names! The number and the names, *Caspar, Melchoir and Batthazar*, are the products of human imagination, not of the Scriptures.
 - 3) Some have asserted that these men were kings, but there is nothing in the text to indicate that conclusion. It has been assumed that the Magi visited Christ in the stable, but other verses show that it was at least 40 days after his birth before they came. Leviticus 12 required that the newborn male child be circumcised on the 8th day after his birth, that the mother be separated from others for the first 7 days following delivery, and that 33 days later the child was to be carried to the tabernacle or temple where a burnt offering was to be made; **a sin offering was also to be made for the mother**. Luke 2:21-24 relates that this procedure was followed in the present case.
 - 4) Luke 1:46-47: "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." She referred to God as her Savior. Does this not suggest that May was not a sinless person?
 - 5) Matthew indicates that the family fled to Egypt immediately after the Magi had visited them (2:11-14). Also, when the wise men arrived, the family was living in a house, not a stable (verse 11). Since they fled to Egypt immediately after the Magi left, it follows that the 40 days had passed, and Jesus' presentation at the temple had occurred prior to the arrival of the Magi. Verse 14 shows that Joseph left Bethlehem at night, hence would not have been stopping in Jerusalem to attend to the rites required in Leviticus 12.
- b. Boles: From the day when the first born of Egypt had been smitten by the destroying angel, the first born of Israel among the male were consecrated to the Lord. (Num. 3:13.) However, God ordained and accepted, as a substitute for the first born, the tribe of Levi, which was set apart for his special service. (Num. 3:12.) But as the number of the first born exceeded that of the tribe, a redemption price of five shekels was to be paid to the priests (Num. 3:46, 47), which was ordained to be paid for all the first born (Num. 18:15, 16). This is why the first born was called "holy."
3. Verse 24: "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons."
- a. Jamison: The proper sacrifice was a lamb for a burnt offering, and a turtle-dove or young pigeon for a sin offering. But if a lamb could not be afforded, the mother was to bring two turtle-doves or two young pigeons; and if even this was beyond the family means, then a portion of fine flour, but without the usual fragrant accompaniments of oil and frankincense, because it represented a sin offering (Lev. 12:6-8; 5:7-11). From this we gather that our Lord's parents were in poor circumstances (2 Cor. 8:9), and yet not in abject poverty; as they neither brought the lamb, nor availed themselves of the provision for the poorest, but presented the intermediate offering of "a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons."
- b. Boles: The fact that Mary offered "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" shows that she was poor, for she would not have made the offering of the poor, if she had not been poor. This fact also denies the legend that she was a rich heiress. God had made provision for the poor; his service has always been reasonable.
-

D. Luke 2:25-35: Simeon the Prophet.

1. Verses 25-26: "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."
 - 2) NKJ: "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."
 - b. Simeon is not directly called a prophet, but what is said about him shows he was an inspired man, and that he made a prediction in the statement he made about Jesus and Mary. Notice that Anna is styled a "prophetess" verse thirty-six.
 - c. Simeon was a **righteous** man.
 - 1) Psalm 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 3) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
 - d. Simeon was a **devout** man.
 - 1) Vine on devout: Signifies in the NT, "careful as to the realization of the presence and claims of God, reverencing God, pious, devout", in Luke 2:25 it is said of Simeon, in Acts 2:5, of certain Jews; in 8:2, of those who bore Stephen's body to burial; of Ananias, 22:12 (see No. 2). "In that mingled fear and love which, combined, constitute the piety of man toward God, the Old Testament placed its emphasis on the fear, the New places it on the love (though there was love in the fear of God's saints then, as there must be fear in their love now)."
 - 2) English word devout: 1 having or showing deep religious feeling or commitment. 2 earnest; sincere: *my devout hope*.
 - e. Simeon waited for the **consolation of Israel**. The word denotes solace, comfort, exhortation. The Greek word appear 39 times in 38 verses, including these:
 - 1) Romans 15:4-5: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and **comfort** of the scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and **consolation** grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 1:3: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all **comfort**."
 - 3) This speaks of the hope Israel had, promises and prophecies relating to their future expectations. The Messiah was the focal point of their hopes. Compare: "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (John 4:25-26). Even this Samaritan woman knew about the Messiah who was to come.
 - f. Simeon was an inspired man, a prophet.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 23:2: "The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."
 - 2) Acts 2:29-32: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

- 3) 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
 - g. The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen Christ, the Messiah. Notice that Christ is here said to belong to the Lord [God]. It was the Almighty who sent his anointed one to the earth.
2. Verse 27: "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law."
- a. The Holy Spirit led Simeon to the temple to meet Joseph and Mary as they brought Jesus to take care of the requirements of the Mosaic Law.
 - b. We remember that the Spirit directed Philip to the chariot in which the man from Ethiopia was riding: "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him" (Acts 8:26-31).
 - c. We also recall that when Paul and Silas were traveling west through Asia Minor, they were not told where to go specifically. They had covered the area to the east, they were not to go to the north or to the south, so they continued westbound until coming to Troas. "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas" (Acts 16:6-8).
 - 1) Departing from Lystra, with Timothy coming with them, Paul and his company covered the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. Phrygia included the city of Colosse. The Holy Spirit forbade their preaching in the province of Asia (where Ephesus was located), so they went to Mysia. From there, they endeavored to go into Bithynia, but again the Spirit did not permit them to do so. Consulting a map, we see that they left Lystra in a westerly direction; they were told not to turn to the left (for Asia) or right (for Bithynia). The only route left open to them, unless they headed back home, was to continue northwest, which they did. They passed Mysia and came down to Troas, a city located at the north-west corner of Asia Minor, on the shore of the Aegean Sea.
 - 2) This information gives us a glimpse into the mechanics of how inspired men were guided in where they went. It appears that a measure of latitude was granted them to make common-sense decisions, but in the present case, Paul's option was overridden by the Holy Spirit. Having only the territory ahead of them still open, they continued in the direction they were headed.
 - 3) "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to Neapolis" (Acts 16:9-11).
 - a) While at Troas, and obviously at somewhat of a loss as to where they ought to go, Paul received a vision during the night. In the miraculous scene he beheld, a man from Macedonia requested that they "Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Paul may have recognized the dress or speech of the man in the vision to know him to be a Macedonian.
 - b) Immediately after the vision, the company made ready to go on to Macedonia, which was situated in Europe. Notice that the pronouns identifying the company have changed from *they* in verse 8, to *us* in this verse. Luke joined their band at Troas.
 - c) Paul correctly perceived that the Spirit was directing them to go to Macedonia, thus they endeavored to make that journey. In those days, sea transportation could not be expected to be

found quickly. They had gone as far as they could on foot; it was essential for them to find a ship if they wanted to reach Macedonia.

3. Verses 28-32: "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."
 - a. The prophet picked up the infant Jesus and held him in his arms. Doubtless Simeon was deeply moved by holding the Messiah! How wonderful it would have been for us to have thus held the Savior!
 - b. Vine on "blessed": 1. eulogeo, NT:2127), lit., "to speak well of" (eu, "well," logos, "a word"), signifies, (a) "to praise, to celebrate with praises," of that which is addressed to God, acknowledging His goodness, with desire for His glory, Luke 1:64; 2:28; 24:51,53; James 3:9; (b) "to invoke blessings upon a person," e. g., Luke 6:28; Rom 12:14. The present participle passive, "blessed, praised," is especially used of Christ in Matt 21:9; 23:39, and the parallel passages; also in John 12:13; © "to consecrate a thing with solemn prayers, to ask God's blessing on a thing," e. g., Luke 9:16; 1 Cor 10:16; (d) "to cause to prosper, to make happy, to bestow blessings on," said of God, e. g., in Acts 3:26; Gal 3:9; Eph 1:3.
 - c. Notice Matthew 26:26: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and **blessed it**, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." Compare: "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and **gave thanks**, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:18-20). In these two passages, the two expressions are used interchangeably.
 - d. As part of his prayer of thanksgiving for Jesus, the prophet stated his readiness to depart from this world in peace at God's convenience, for the experience he had long been anticipating had come upon him. With his own eyes, he had seen the One through whom salvation was to come. The faithful ones from the Patriarchal Age, the faithful ones of the Mosaic Age, and all those on our side of the cross, who obey the gospel and remain faithful, would also be saved.
 - 1) Romans 3:25-26: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the **remission of sins that are past**, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, **for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament**, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - 3) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 4) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
 - e. This salvation had been prepared for all people, to the Gentiles and to Israel, as the above verses show. The Jews of the then present generation had rebelled against Jehovah; only a remnant of them chose to believe in Christ and his New Covenant. The gospel would bring light to the Gentiles, who had been ensnared by idolatry, with all the pagan religious practices connected with that system. All of the followers of the Lord could then live in the light of eternal truth. Consider the following from Alexander Campbell regarding Christ as the light of the world:
 - 1) To the *sacrifice* of Christ, we always look for the basis of our pardon; to his blood that cleanses from all sin for justification and personal acceptance; and to his Word we look for counsel and instruction in Christian piety and righteousness.

- 2) We are as dependent on his *Word* for light as we are upon his *blood* for pardon. "I am, said he, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the *light of life*." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "That was the true light," said John "which, coming into the world enlighteneth every man." "As long as I am in the world," says Jesus, "I am the light of the world."
 - 3) Thus Isaiah spake of him: "I will also give thee as a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth." "I will give thee for a covenant of the people, or light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison; and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house."
 - 4) "His going forth is prepared as the morning?" "The Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing under his *wings*?" "I witness," said Paul, "both to small and great that the Messiah should show light to the people and to the Gentiles."
 - 5) The word of Christ is the light of Christ; and therefore the Christian Scriptures are the light of the world; and he that followeth them shall have the light of life. "If you continue in my doctrines," says the Messiah, "you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If the Son makes you free you shall be free indeed." [Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System*, pp.34f).
- f. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."
- 1) Faithful Christians live in the light of God's glorious word. Those who are operating in broad daylight are not easily surprised; they can see where they are going, and can perceive and avoid dangers. Those who operate in darkness do not have these advantages. Those who operate in the bright light of the glorious gospel will not be taken unawares by the coming of Christ; all their Christian life they had lived and prepared for this great occasion; they not only expect it, they long for it.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 4:3-6: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."
 - b) 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - 2) Truth and error, and righteousness and unrighteousness, are contrasted in the Bible under the figure of light and darkness, and day and night. There are some who have developed and maintained a hard and indifferent heart, which is impervious to the gospel; there are others who have sought to maintain a soft and pliable heart, which is receptive to the gospel. The individual is fully responsible for the condition of his own heart; no blame can be directed toward the gospel, that it is not strong enough to penetrate hard hearts.
 - a) Proverbs 4:23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life."
 - b) Matthew 12:34-35: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the
-

- heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."
- c) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
 - d) Romans 2:4-6 "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds."
 - e) John 3:19-21: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
4. Verses 33-35: "And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."
- a. Notice that Luke speaks of his mother and Joseph; he did not say that Joseph was his father. Legally, Joseph was the head of the family after he and Mary married. They both marvelled [were filled with wonder, amazement and admiration] over what Simeon had said and done.
 - b. The prophet prayed in their behalf, for their future experiences would be demanding. Twelve years later, they would be separated from Jesus; he stayed behind in Jerusalem while they and those with them made their journey back to Nazareth—this caused them no little distress. His mother would be near the cross as her son suffered and died.
 - c. Simeon stated that Jesus would be set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. There were many of the Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and were involved in getting him crucified; but there were many of these and others, who later obeyed the gospel.
 - 1) Mark 15:11-13: "But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him."
 - 2) Acts 2:36-41: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."
 - 3) Acts 4:4: "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."
 - 4) Acts 6:7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
 - 5) Pulpit Commentary: For nearly three centuries, of course with varying intensity, the name of Jesus of Nazareth and his followers was a name of shame, hateful and despised. Not only among the Roman idolaters was "the Name" spoken against with intense bitterness (see the expressions used by men like Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny), but also among his own nation, the Jews, was Jesus known as "the Deceiver," "that Man," "the Hung." These were common expressions used in the great rabbinical schools which flourished in the early days of Christianity.
 - d. Boles: He was also to be "a sign which is spoken against." This expression does not voice a prophecy, but describes an inherent characteristic of the sign, a sign of which is the character to experience contradiction from the world. In the beginning as a babe Jesus was endangered at the hands of Herod,
-

and all through his earthly ministry and even on the cross, he suffered many things and was spoken against by all who refused to believe him.

- e. A sword would especially pierce the soul of his mother. She watched him suffer on the cross. Joseph would have loved Jesus just as he doubtless loved his other sons and daughters, even though he was not the father of Jesus. The inspired description of the pain Mary would endure, very graphically shows how harsh was her sorrow over the afflictions dealt to the Savior.

E. Luke 2:36-38: Anna the Prophetess.

1. Verse 36: "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity."
 - a. We are next introduced to Anna, a prophetess who was of great age. Being the daughter of Phanuel, and from the tribe of Aser [Asher] her lineage could have been traced from the copious records kept by the Jews. [Those records were destroyed when the Romans destroyed the temple in A.D. 70]. No Jew today can identify his tribal identity. Since she was from the tribe of Asher, it is clear that remnants of that tribe returned to Canaan, likely when the southern tribes were released from captivity in Babylon. The territory the tribe of Asher was assigned was in the northern part of the land.
 - b. The particularity with which her parentage and lineage is given shows that she was a person whose family as well as personal history was well known to the public. She had married in her young maidenhood, and had lived with her husband seven years; after her husband's death she lived eighty-four years, making in all ninety-one years since her marriage; on the supposition that she was twenty years old when she married, she was at this time one hundred eleven years old. She was regular in her worship, for she "departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day." [Boles]. No mention is made of any children she may have had.
 - c. There are other prophetesses named in the Bible, including: Miriam; Hannah; Deborah; Huldah. We are told in Acts 21:8-9 that Philip had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy.
2. Verse 37: "And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day."
 - a. Jamison: "If this means that she had been 84 years in a state of widowhood, then, since her married life extended to seven years, she could not now have been less than 103 years old, even though she had married at the age of twelve, the earliest marriageable age of Jewish females. But probably the meaning is that her whole present age was 84, of which there had been but seven years of a married life."
 - b. Luke 2:37: "And she had been a widow even unto fourscore and four years), who departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day." The ASV thus indicates that she had been a widow for 84 years.
 - c. This great lady was a spiritual giant, being regularly at the temple during the daily services, and fasted and prayed often. Luke's inspired depiction of her does not even hint that she was an extremist. Indeed, she was a devoted child of God, who served him as fully as possible. Aged Christians who retain some measure of good health are able to serve the Lord very well.
 - d. There are many things which Christian women are able to do which would be impossible for men. Women in general naturally have a soft and kind disposition, which enables them to comfort precious souls which are downtrodden. Those women in modern society who have demanded to do hard work usually done by strong men, do not do themselves a great service. They can lose the natural tenderness of their gender, take up vulgar and profane language unbecoming of anyone, and to some degree, lose their femininity.
 - e. This writer knew an exceptional saint, a faithful lady who was past four-score years, who was a great asset to the church, and was the best soul-winner in the congregation. She could not drive, but she used the telephone and spoke especially to young people at the services, thus encouraging many to obey the gospel. I knew Jennie Gibson for less than a year, but she made a life-time impact on this preacher.
3. Verse 38: "And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."
 - a. The timing of her arrival at the temple was perfect, likely providential. This lady also gave thanks unto the Lord for the infant Messiah. She spoke of him to those Jews who looked for "redemption in Jerusalem."

- b. Being an inspired prophet, she could know certain truths about Jesus and gladly spoke of him, all that was given her to declare. A prophet's work could address the events and people of the past, discuss matters and people of the present, and even predict future events.
- c. Matthew Henry: "Lastly, Here is a short account of the infancy and childhood of our Lord Jesus. 1. Where he spent it, v. 39. When the ceremony of presenting the child, and purifying the mother, was all over, they returned into Galilee. Luke relates no more concerning them, till they were returned into Galilee; but it appears by St. Matthew's gospel (ch. ii.) that from Jerusalem they returned to Bethlehem, where the wise men of the east found them, and there they continued till they were directed to flee into Egypt, to escape the malice and rage of Herod; and, returning thence when Herod was dead, they were directed to go to their old quarters in Nazareth, whence they had been perhaps some years absent. It is here called their own city, because there they had lived a great while, and their relations were there. He was ordered further from Jerusalem, because his kingdom and priesthood were to have no affinity with the present government of the Jewish church or state. He is sent into a place of obscurity and reproach; for in this, as in other things, he must humble himself and make himself of no reputation" [Biblesoft].

F. Luke 2:39-52: Jesus in Nazareth and the Family's Trip to Jerusalem.

1. Verses 39-40: "And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."
 - a. "To complete the story of our Lord's early life, we must insert from St. Matthew, before this return to Nazareth, the visit of the Magi, and the flight to and return from Egypt" (Pulpit Commentary). "And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matt. 2:13-15).
 - 1) Joseph arose, took his family, and departed at night for Egypt. The picture of these events is clear: Joseph received the miraculous dream while asleep; he arose from his bed, took his family, and fled that very night. There was no time for the events at the temple (Luke 2) between the visit of the Magi and the flight to Egypt. Jesus was at least 40 days old when the Magi came to worship him.
 - 2) "Neither the arrival of the magi, nor their departure, nor the flight of Joseph and Mary, was known to the people of Bethlehem. To Joseph and Mary that was a night of conflicting emotions. Equally surprised and delighted by the congratulations and presents of the Gentile strangers, they had gone to sleep only to be terrified by the announcement that Herod would seek to kill the child whom the magi had worshiped....They find, as they had found from the beginning, that the high honor of being the earthly parents of the Lord of glory, like every other God-given honor, must be attended by sorrow and self-sacrifice" (McGarvey, Matthew, pp.28f).
 - 3) The quotation cited here is from Hosea 11:1: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." God is marvelous in his workings; he made the Exodus from Egypt by Israel to be typical of the same trip on the part of his Son!
 - b. Joseph and Mary fulfilled all of the Mosaic Law's requirements regarding an infant, after which they returned to Nazareth, the place of their residence. It will be remembered that Joseph was a carpenter by trade.
2. Verses 41-43: "Now 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 after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it."
 - a. Luke reports that Joseph and Mary went every year to Jerusalem for the Passover services, showing their faithfulness to the requirements of the Mosaic Law.
 - b. Notice that Luke speaks of their going "up" to Jerusalem. Nazareth was north of Jerusalem; when we speak of going toward the south, we say "going down" south. Jerusalem was at a higher elevation than Nazareth. The Bible is always right even in small matters such as this.

- c. We are told that Jesus was twelve years of age at this time. When the Passover season was over, the parents and those who traveled with them started back home. Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem.
3. Verses 44-45: "But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him."
 - a. Young people tend to congregate with others of their age; this would be also true in this case. His parents supposed that Jesus was with his relatives or others in the group. He was not to be found.
 - b. At the end of the first day's journey, they looked for him. The family would be together for the night, for the evening meal and sleeping arrangements. Perhaps they camped out for the night, or maybe there was an inn or some other place to stay.
4. Verse 46: "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers."
 - a. We can well imagine the concern of parents whose twelve-year-old son was missing! Trips like this were not an everyday event. A trip of this sort would require advanced planning and expenses. This was a very special occasion.
 - b. They missed him at the end of the first day's journey; an other day would be required to return to the city, and three more days were necessary to find Jesus in Jerusalem. About five days! What did he eat and where did he sleep?
 - c. They found Jesus in the temple in the midst of the specialists in the Mosaic Law, listening to them and asking them questions. These learned men were astonished at his understanding and answers!
 - d. These men did not know it, but this boy was the second Person of the Godhead! He had been God's agent in the creation of the earth and the universe.
 - 1) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 2) Colossians 1:13-17 : "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
5. Verse 47: "And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."
 - a. Joseph and Mary were amazed when they beheld Jesus in this setting. A young boy conversing with the great men among the Jews! Our curiosity would like to know what he said to these "doctors of the law."
 - b. The love of good mothers has ever been the same. What Mary said to Jesus would be virtually the same from any other mother of any time! She and her husband were full of sorrow and anxiety over the absence of Jesus. They might be worried over the many possible evils that could have befallen him. They should not have worried! Compare: "And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Luke 4:9-12).
 - c. Coffman: The word "Son" here is actually "Child" (Greek, English Revised Version (1885), margin), showing that Mary still regarded Jesus as a child, hence the reference to Joseph as "thy father," a reference never repeated again. This event took place at that age of Jesus when he was first fully conscious of just "who" he was. Had his mother, but recently, filled him in with a narrative of the events attending his conception and birth? Yes, in all probability. Despite this, Mary had not until this hour realized the full import of all that she knew of Jesus. She had been too busy being his mother, and bringing other children into the world.

6. Verses 49-50: "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJ: 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.
 - 2) ASV: "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them."
 - b. Boles: *And he said unto them*—With mental anguish which amounted to distress of body, hour after hour Joseph and Mary had searched without success for the missing child; hence the rebuke that Mary gave to Jesus. However, Jesus replied: "How is that ye sought me?" This is the first recorded saying that we have of Jesus; they are spoken to his mother. He means why have you been searching for me; the words of Jesus do not imply a rebuke, as some have affirmed, but are words of anxious solicitude for his mother's anxiety. His reply has reference to the state of mental distress with which they sought him as is shown from his next words. He said: "Knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?"
 - c. Coffman: The fourfold development of Christ: mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually is here affirmed, exactly the type of growth and development that is inherent in the very fact of the incarnation. He who "emptied himself" and became a man found it needful to pass through the helplessness of infancy, the ignorance of babyhood, and the incompetence of adolescence just like all men. The true humanity of our Lord is thus brilliantly presented by Luke, no less than his true deity. That this is the greatest mystery of all ages is a fact; but that has not prevented the full acceptance of it by the faithful of all ages.
7. Verses 51:52: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."
- a. The family continued to their home in Nazareth. The situation would not be exactly the same as before. The parents would now see Jesus in a different light. Some eighteen years later he would enter into his great mission, and the world could not be the same again.
 - b. Jesus was subject to Joseph and Mary as he grew toward adulthood. Luke tells us that his mother kept all these matters in her heart.
 - c. As children grow up, their size increases and they develop more wisdom. In the case of our Lord, he also grew in favor with God and with others around him. His neighbors and friends could not but note his moral excellence.
 - d. Never did he commit sin: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).
 - e. God was always pleased with Christ.
 - 1) Matthew 3: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - 2) Matthew 17: 5: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
 - 3) John 12:28: "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."
-

Luke Chapter 3

A. Luke 3:1-6: Prominent Rulers in Authority When John the Immerser Began his Work.

1. Verse 1: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene."
 - a. Tiberius was the emperor of the Roman Empire. Easton's Bible Dictionary:
 - 1) Tiberius Caesar— i.e., as known in Roman history, Tiberius Claudius Nero, only mentioned in Luke 3:1. He was the stepson of Augustus, whom he succeeded on the throne, A.D. 14 A.D.
 - 2) He was noted for his vicious and infamous life. In the fifteenth year of his reign John the Baptist entered on his public ministry, and under him also our Lord taught and suffered. He died A.D. 37 A.D.. He is frequently referred to simply as "Caesar" (Matt 22:17,21; Mark 12:14,16,17; Luke 20:22,24,25; 23:2; John 19:12,15).
 - b. Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea (*ibid.*).
 - 1) Pilate— probably connected with the Roman family of the Pontii, and called "Pilate" from the Latin pileatus, i.e., "wearing the pileus", which was the "cap or badge of a manumitted slave," as indicating that he was a "freedman," or the descendant of one. He was the sixth in the order of the Roman procurators of Judea (A.D. 26 A.D. - 36 A.D.).
 - 2) His headquarters were at Caesarea, but he frequently went up to Jerusalem. His reign extended over the period of the ministry of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ, in connection with whose trial his name comes into prominent notice. Pilate was a "typical Roman, not of the antique, simple stamp, but of the imperial period, a man not without some remains of the ancient Roman justice in his soul, yet pleasure-loving, imperious, and corrupt.
 - 3) He hated the Jews whom he ruled, and in times of irritation freely shed their blood. They returned his hatred with cordiality, and accused him of every crime, mal-administration, cruelty, and robbery. He visited Jerusalem as seldom as possible; for, indeed, to one accustomed to the pleasures of Rome, with its theatres, baths, games, and gay society, Jerusalem, with its religiousness and ever- smouldering revolt, was a dreary residence. When he did visit it he stayed in the palace of Herod the Great, it being common for the officers sent by Rome into conquered countries to occupy the palaces of the displaced sovereigns.
 - c. Herod was the tetrarch of Galilee. From Boles:
 - 1) This was Herod Antipas, son of the monster, Herod the Great; he had been left by his father as ruler of the province of Galilee.
 - 2) "Tetrarch" originally meant the fourth part, but came to be used to signify the part of a kingdom over which the man ruled. John the Baptist was slain by this Herod and our Savior was mocked by him.
 - d. Philip was the tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis. "Ituraea was a district in the northeast of Palestine and east of the Jordan; it received its name from Jetru, one of the sons of Ishmael" (*ibid.*).
 - e. Lysanias was the tetrarch of Abilene. From Sword of the Lord:
 - 1) Λυσανίας, a common Greek name) is mentioned by Luke, in Luke 3:1, as tetrarch of Abilene, on the eastern slope of the anti-Lebanon, near Damascus, at the time when John the Baptist began his ministry, A.D. 25.
 - 2) It happens, however, that Josephus speaks of a prince named Lysanias who ruled over a territory in the neighborhood of Lebanon in the time of Antony and Cleopatra, and that he also mentions Abilene as associated with the name of a tetrarch Lysanias, while recounting events of the reigns of Caligula and Claudius. These circumstances have given to Strauss and others an opportunity for accusing the evangelist of confusion and error, but we shall see that this accusation rests on a groundless assumption.
 - f. Coffman on these rulers and their times:
 - 1) The fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius ... On Sept. 17,14 A.D., this ruler ascended the throne of the Roman Empire. Luke 3:23 of this chapter states that Jesus, very near this time, was "about thirty years of age." This was the consideration that led to the mistake in our present calendar of

- dating Jesus' birth at the beginning of our era in the year 1. It is now known, however, that Tiberius was reigning at the beginning of the year 11 A.D.
- 2) The Encyclopedia Britannica has this: From the beginning of 11, when he celebrated a magnificent triumph, to the time of the emperor's death in 14, Tiberius remained almost entirely in Italy, and held rather the position of joint-emperor than that of expectant heir.
 - 3) All of the provincial affairs of the empire were in the hands of Tiberius from the date 11 A.D.; and, as Robertson noted, "Luke would naturally use the provincial point of view. This dates the emergence of John the Baptist and the beginning of the ministry of Christ, the latter being in 26 A.D., and John's ministry having been prior to that, with the two overlapping somewhat, as detailed in John's Gospel. This harmonizes with a date of April 6, 30 A.D. for Jesus' crucifixion, as recently determined scientifically through computer studies. It is further corroborated by Matthew's Gospel, which definitely placed the birth of Christ prior to the death of Herod the Great (4 B.C.)."
 - 4) The calculation based on John 2:20, where Jesus' enemies affirmed that the temple had been under construction for forty-six years, also confirms this. The temple was begun the year the emperor came to Syria; and this was in 20 or 19 B.C. Adding the forty-six years brings us to the year 26 A.D. in which the first passover of our Lord's ministry occurred. Any more exact determination of the date would appear to be impossible at this time, as the many contradictory opinions of great scholars indicate.
 - 5) It will be noted that Luke cited no less than six notable persons in high office with the Roman empire and also with the Jews, nailing down the historical context of this record with the most dogmatic certainty.
2. Verse 2: "Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."
- a. Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests.
 - 1) Although Annas was the official high priest, he had incurred the anger of the Romans, who replaced him with Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. This man held the office as High Priest during this momentous time.
 - 2) Boles:
 - a) According to the Jewish law there could be but one high priest at a time. Luke, as a historian, is not stating what should have been, but only what constituted the facts in the matter. He is taking up important names as he found them in order to fix the date of his history. He found these two men serving as high priest at that time.
 - b) Caiaphas was son-in-law to Annas, who was actually serving as high priest. Annas was a man of very great influence. He had been deposed as high priest, but was serving on the Sanhedrin. As Annas had been unjustly deposed by the Roman authorities, it may be that, in the opinion of the Jews, he was still termed the high priest, and a degree of power put into his hands that made him equal in authority to Caiaphas.
 - c) Luke fixes the date of the beginning of the ministry of John by an emperor on one side, by a petty governor on the other, by two high priests who were serving at the time. At this date so clearly and fully defined the historian, Luke, now proceeds to narrate facts It is to be remembered always that he is guided by the Holy Spirit in writing his history.
 - b. It was during this time that the work of John, the Messiah's forerunner, began. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea" (Matt. 3:1). "In those days" is a strange way to begin this chapter which discusses events which occurred almost 30 years after the events of the preceding verse. However, the strangeness has a logical explanation.
 - 1) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of **these** kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...." The context and secular history show that the kings meant were the Roman kings. The first kingdom of Daniel 2 was the Babylonian Empire; the second was the Medo-Persian; the third was the Grecian Empire; and the fourth was the Empire of Rome. God had determined to set up his eternal kingdom during the days when the Roman Empire was in power.
 - 2) Luke 3:1-3 gives the names of the current rulers when God's final plans for the establishment the kingdom were set in motion: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of **Tiberius Caesar**, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch
-

- of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
- 3) Beginning at this point, Matthew calls attention to God's promise in Daniel 2:44. In the next verse he reports John the Immerser's message to be, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke gives a parallel account, but provides the names of the various rulers of the Roman system at the time. Why did he name these rulers if there is no connection with his subject and Daniel 2:44?
 - c. John is called "the Baptist." Some say this verse is a reference to the Baptist church, but that church did not come into existence until the late 1600s. There is historical evidence that the Baptist denomination originated in England from certain apostates from the church of Christ in the latter part of 17th century.
 - 1) John is called "the Baptist" because that was what he did: he baptized people. It is used the same way as Alexander is called "the coppersmith" (2 Tim. 4:14) and Zenas is called "the lawyer" (Tit. 3:13). Thayer defines the words as, "A baptizer; one who administers the rite of baptism" (p.95). Josephus, the Jewish historian, spoke of John (*Ant.* 18,5,2, p.382).
 - 2) He preached in the wilderness of Judea, near the Jordan River (cf. John 3:23). McGarvey reported that in the Jordan valley the heat and insects make life miserable, but the people still flocked to hear John (*Sermons*, p.310).
 3. Verse 3: "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
 - a. John's message included repentance as a condition to baptism. Their baptism was for the remission of sins—was predicated on the later death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Those who received baptism by the teaching of John were not required to be baptized again after the church was established in Acts Two. We know this because of what happened with the men Paul met in Ephesus:
 - 1) Acts 19:1-7: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, **John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.** And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And they were in all about twelve men" (ASV).
 - 2) Because of their answer to his opening question, Paul saw something was wrong. He asked them about their baptism. They had been baptized according to John's baptism. The apostle accepted as a basic premise that they had been baptized, because they had believed. Nothing had been said about baptism till now, but the reference to their belief included baptism. However, the baptism they received was not the baptism of the Great Commission.
 - 3) Paul properly appraised John's baptism—it was valid for a time. But when it was being practiced with God's approval, it pointed forward in time to the coming of Christ. New Testament baptism (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38) points back in time to the fact that Christ had come and had completed his mission.
 - 4) But since it was the case that these disciples had been baptized, being told to believe on Jesus who was to come, their immersion was flawed. The immersion of believers for the wrong purpose today nullifies the benefits of their immersion. For baptism to be correct and beneficial, it must be done by the right people (people who believe and repent—Heb. 11:6; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38), it must be done in the right manner (immersion in water), and it must be done for the right purposes (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Pet. 3:21; Mark 16:16). Anything short of this makes it in-effectual. One cannot be taught wrong and be baptized right!
 - 5) John's baptism was for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4); the remission offered was prospective, in that it looked forward to the death of Christ:
-

- a) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - b) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
 - d) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
 - e) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 - f) Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
- 6) It looked to the coming of Christ and the completion of his mission:
- a) Matthew 3:11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."
 - b) Mark 1:7: "And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."
 - c) John 1:15: "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me."
- b. Repentance is produced by godly sorrow and results in a changed life (2 Cor. 7:10; Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). The process includes sorrow over sin, a renunciation of sin, and a determination never to get involved with sin again. For repentance to be complete, the change must be accomplished. Repentance is the decision to make a change; that change of necessity is one which the individual must make.
- 1) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - 2) Matthew 3:8: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."
 - 3) Acts 26:20: "But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 7:9-10: "I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, *a repentance* which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (ASV).
4. Verses 4-6: "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."
- a. John was spoken of by Isaiah in 40:3 (cf. Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6). His work is figuratively described as road-building. John prepared the way for Christ by preparing the people. The Law of Moses was a school-master to prepare the Jewish people for his coming (Gal. 3:24); John's work was to be his forerunner, to "go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17).
 - b. John was not Elijah, but operated in the spirit and power of Elijah; however, John did not do miracles (John 10:41). However, his messages were all inspired.
-

- c. Matthew 21:25-27: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."
- 1) "It was absurd and impertinent to ask him for his authority when his miracles had given an unmistakable answer; consequently his reply was not an attempt to enlighten them, but to expose their folly. They had often tried to place him in a dilemma, and had never succeeded; he sometimes tried the same with them, and never failed. He does so on this occasion by asking them the source of authority for John's baptism....They were forced either to tell a lie, which they did, or to acknowledge the fact that John's baptism was from heaven" (McGarvey, p.183).
 - 2) If they had admitted the divine source of John's baptism, they would have had to take John as a true prophet; and since he was a true prophet and had announced publicly that Jesus is the Messiah, to accept John would necessarily have required acceptance of Jesus also. By rejecting John's baptism, they rejected the counsel of God (Luke 7:29-30), the messages given through John, and ultimately they rejected the Messiah as well.
 - 3) That the Lord's question cut to the heart of their problem is seen by the terrible quandary into which they were placed. They were quick to see their predicament and were able to know they could not give an answer. "If we say it was from heaven, he will demand to know why we rejected him; but if we say from men, the people are liable to stone us for they consider John as a true prophet."
 - 4) They answered by saying that they did not know. This is a foolish position, for these were learned men; the common people who had little or no education could see that John was a prophet, but these of the educated elite did not know! Actually, they pleaded ignorance as the only "out" they could see; but their answer showed either they were dense or ignorant, or else they were hypocrites. They were neither stupid nor ignorant! They could not tell because they would not tell.

B. Luke 3:7-18: The Message of John.

1. Verses 7-8: "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."
 - a. Compare: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. 3:7-8).
 - b. The term *Pharisee* is derived from a Hebrew word meaning *separated*. They used extreme measures to stay separated from all people and things which they considered unclean; they were strict legalists but often "strain out the gnat but swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:24, ASV). They followed the opinions of earlier Jewish uninspired writers, taking them as orally transmitted information dating back to ancient times, deeming this material as God's word. The Sadducees were the liberals of the first century. Unlike the Pharisees, they rejected the resurrection, angels, and spirits (Acts 23:8). These were the two principal religious parties of Judaism at the time. Both originated in the second century before Christ.
- c. Matthew 23:24-25: "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Calling them blind guides again, he stated that they "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." This may have been a proverb then, as now. As stated in the KJV, the Lord is saying they have great difficulty in swallowing a gnat, but can swallow a camel with no difficulty. The ASV speaks of their removing a tiny gnat, but could swallow a camel!
- 1) The Arabs are said to have had a similar proverb: "He swallowed an elephant, but was strangled by a flea." The Greek word translated "strain," is said however to refer to the action of pouring the liquid through a cloth or sieve in order to remove unwanted objects, such as straining wine to eliminate any gnats that may have gotten into it. Thus, the reading in the ASV is, "Strain out the gnat..."
 - 2) In either case, the application is the same. They would pay the tithes in the minutest of items, but would pervert justice, show no mercy, and ignore what God said. They would connive to bring

- about the crucifixion of Christ, but would not enter into Pilate's house lest they should be defiled (John 18:28). They were well ready to stone Stephen for telling them an unpopular truth, but would not step on a grave.
- d. Why did members of these sects come to John? Perhaps merely out of curiosity. Luke 7:30 and Matthew 21:25-27 show that the Pharisees and other prominent religious leaders rejected John's baptism, thus it appears they did not come to be baptized. They apparently were trusting their fleshly relationship with Abraham to save them (3:8). John rebuked them on this account, thus it appears that they did not think it was necessary to believe John.
 - e. John called them a generation (or offspring) of vipers. They were deceitful and malicious. He asked, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" This prophet knew of the forthcoming perilous times (the destruction of Judaism and the final Judgment). Why had these leaders come to John? Not to learn the will of God more perfectly!
 - f. John preached repentance to these errorists and called on them to bring forth a changed life that would demonstrate repentance.
2. Verses 9-10: "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?"
- a. Compare: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 3:9-10)
 - 1) The Jews relied on their relationship with Abraham as a ticket into the kingdom. Nicodemus had this same notion, of which the Lord disabused him (John 3:1-5). They thought the kingdom would be as earthly as David's was.
 - 2) John 8:39: "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."
 - 3) Romans 9:7: "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called."
 - 4) God could easily create fleshly descendants of Abraham. "The point in this remark is to show that it is the mere creative power of God that makes men children of Abraham, and that, therefore, there is no spiritual virtue in the connection" (McGarvey, p.36).
 - b. God's spiritual axe was poised before the trees. The trees which were not bringing forth good fruit would be hewn down and cast into the fire. "Thus he insists on the personal responsibility of every man, without regard to ancestry" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.36). Those who did not repent and make the proper change true repentance requires would be rejected by God, regardless of their connection with Abraham. A new day was dawning! Those Jews who did not become part of the coming spiritual kingdom would be rejected along with the whole unbelieving nation.
 - c. The nation itself would be cast off. Those living in A.D. 70 would suffer much grief because of their unbelief (Matt. 24:1-35; Rom. 11:11-15). The final penalty for them is eternal loss in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:11-15).
 - d. The people in John's audience asked him what they ought to do, in view of what he had just said—regarding the disastrous future of the Jewish nation. His answer is in the next verse.
3. Verse 11: "He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise."
- a. Selfishness and greed are common traits among the human family; the Jews were not exceptions to this general fault. Compare: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).
 - b. The nature of the Gospel system is directly counter to greed and selfishness! John is giving them a foretaste of the New Covenant: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).
 - c. If they knew of another who was without a coat, and they had two, give one of them to the needy person. If there was someone without food, he was to share his food with that needy one.
-

- d. Matthew 5:43-48: "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (ASV).
4. Verses 12-13: "Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you."
- a. Tax collectors came to be baptized by John, and asked what ought they to do. He told them to do their job, but make sure they did not demand of the taxpayer more than what he owed.
 - b. They were required to be honest in their dealings.
 - c. We are to be honest with God:
 - 1) Malachi 3:8: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:2: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
5. Verse 14: "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."
- a. Soldiers came to be baptized by John, and asked what they should do. They were told to do no violence to anyone. These must have been Jewish troops; it would be highly unlikely that pagan men of war would have any interest in Jewish religious operations.
 - b. "Commentators generally discuss here who these soldiers were. The question is of little moment whether they were legionaries of Rome, or mercenaries in the pay of one of the tetrarchs or neighboring princes. The lesson is clear. As above to the publicans, so here to the soldiers, John says, Remain in that profession of arms; you may, if you will, serve God in it, for it is never the work which ennobles, but the way in which the work is done" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - c. They could misuse their position, and by violence extort or steal money. By false accusations, they might obtain bribes or get even.
 - d. These men were told to be content with wages; they were often paid in food or salt. The Latin word for salt gives us our word salary.
 - e. We are to be harmless: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt 10:16).
6. Verse 15: "And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not."
- a. "There was general expectation at that time among the Jews that Messiah's coming was at hand. This strange feeling that something momentous was about to happen to mankind was not confined to the Jews of Palestine, it strongly influenced the Jews who were dispersed in foreign countries—Egypt, Greece, Italy, etc., and through them it had even reached many of the Gentiles who were brought into contact with the chosen people. This idea among the Jews, that John was probably the looked-for deliverer, is only mentioned by Luke..." (Pulpit Commentary).
 - b. John 1:19-28: "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing."
 - c. Boles: The language used by John implies that this "Mighty One" was already in the midst of them. Jesus was mightier than John in his nature, office, wisdom, power, and aims "The latchet" of the
-

shoe was a strap which fastened the sandal to the feet. The "shoes" as used here means sandals which covered only the bottom of the feet. They were taken off and laid aside on entering a house; the tying and untying the sandals was the work of the most menial servant. Yet Christ was so mighty a personage that even this work John felt himself unworthy to perform. Since John had aroused the whole Jewish nation, how great then must be the Messiah! Christ would arouse the world, his power would be felt by everyone.

- 1) Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - 2) John 5:27: "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."
 - 3) John 10:30: "I and my Father are one."
 - 4) John 10:41: "And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true."
 - 5) Matthew 11:9-11: "But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."
7. Verses 16-17: "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable."
- a. Compare: "And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Mark 1:7-8).
 - 1) John rightly perceived his relative smallness in contrast to the Messiah. He did not consider himself as being worthy to help his Lord put on his sandals.
 - a) Matthew 3:11-12: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."
 - b) John baptized the people in water, but one was coming after him who was greater than John, who would baptize certain ones with the Holy Ghost and fire. The apostles were baptized (overwhelmed) in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2; all the wicked will be baptized in the fire of hell. Three baptisms are mentioned in the verse: (1) baptism in water, (2) baptism in the Holy Spirit, and (3) baptism in the lake of fire.
 - 2) Many think that this verse teaches that baptism of the Holy Spirit and baptism in fire is for all righteous people. To best understand who would be baptized in the Spirit, the fulfillment must be weighed. In John 14-16, Christ gave the promise of Holy Spirit baptism to the apostles only. Acts 1:26—2:47 shows that only the apostles received it. John's statement must be understood as being limited. [The pronouns of Acts 2:1-4 connect to the noun *apostles* of Acts 1:26].
 - b. Baptism with fire is a reference to the final punishment of the wicked. A limited fulfillment of the statement could be to the overthrow of Judaism in A.D. 70. The next verse shows conclusively that no rational person should desire the baptism of fire. The baptism of fire has nothing to do with the "cloven tongues like as of fire" that sat upon the apostles when they received Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 2:3). What sat on the apostles was not fire at all.
8. Verse 18: "And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison."
- a. "And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. These words tell us that the above was merely a 'specimen' of John the Baptist's preaching, trenchant, fearless, practical, piercing the hearts of all classes and orders of the people who thronged to hear the earnest, fiery appeals of the great desert preacher. In this and in the next two verses Luke once more gives us a little picture of the

- events which were spread over a considerable area or time. It is here introduced out of its proper place to explain the abrupt termination of the popular career of John the Baptist” (Pulpit Commentary).
- b. “The Herod of this lesson was known as Herod Antipas. He was the son of Herod the great and Malthace, a Samaritan, which means that he was not a Jew by blood. Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee (Lk. 3:1) and Peraea. The name of this Herod is mentioned in the New Testament more often than any other. Antipas was the Herod which Jesus referred to as “that fox” (Luke 13:32), because of his skulking treachery. This Herod was incestuously married to his niece, the former wife of his half-brother Herod Philip. Her father was Aristobulus, son of Herod the Great, thus making her the granddaughter of that wicked king. Heriodas deserted Philip for Antipas, and the latter, in turn, divorced his wife to marry Herodias. This evil, permeating influence of Herod Antipas was characterized by Jesus as ‘the leaven of Herod’ (Mark 8:15.) He was deposed as tetrarch by the emperor Caligula in A.D. 39” (ALC, 1959, pp.146f).
 - c. The word *tetrarch* is a Greek word meaning “ruler of a fourth.” Herod the Great left a will by which his kingdom was divided into four unequal parts over which four of his sons were given rule.
 - 1) Judaea was given to Archelaus, but he was deposed and a Roman governor was appointed over this province (cf. Matt. 2:22). This explains why Pontius Pilate is shown to be the ruler over Judaea in Luke 3:1-3.
 - 2) “The Philip mentioned (Luke 3:1-2) is not the former husband of Herodias, but another brother” (ALC, p.148). The Philip who was the legal husband of Herodias was living at Rome at the time. Josephus says that Antipas stayed with Philip and Herodias while on a trip to Rome, and brought her back with him when he returned to Palestine (*Antiquities*, 18,5, p.382).
 - d. Verses 3-5: “For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.”
 - e. Matthew fills in the details of John’s imprisonment and persecution by Herod Antipas. We are not told how much time had elapsed between John’s murder and the time of the present events of Matthew 14.
 - 1) “Herod had put John in prison where he remained probably a year. John was imprisoned soon after Jesus began his public ministry; John’s ministry and Jesus’ ministry overlapped about six months” (Boles, p.310).
 - 2) Josephus says the imprisonment was in the castle Macherus, located a few miles east of the Dead Sea. Matthew had previously alluded to John’s imprisonment: “Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee” (4:12).
 - f. John was impartial and fearless in exposing sin: he rebuked the common people, the religious leaders, and even the king. No man is worthy of being called a gospel preacher who will condemn sin only in safe settings or before those who can do him no harm, and wink at sin on the part of those in high places. Herod claimed to be a believer in the law of Moses; the law forbade the marital situation he was in; but he would not repent of his evil. When John plainly said, “It is not lawful for you to have her,” the king bound him and threw him into prison, ‘for Herodias’ sake.”
9. Verses 20-21: “Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened.”
- a. Antipas was minded to kill John; the fear of a popular uprising prevented it. The purpose was already in his heart, even though he respected John highly.
 - 1) Mark 6:19-20: "Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly."
 - 2) “He was restrained not only by his own respect for John, but by fear of a violent insurrection of the people—a result which would have occurred but for the refusal of Jesus to head the move-ment” (McGarvey, Matthew, p.129).
 - 3) The people are said to have been outraged over the conduct of Herod in his marital affairs. Public opinion is powerful; the Jewish leaders were anxious to get it turned against Jesus (cf. Matt. 27:20).
 - b. Both Herod and Herodias knew John told them the truth, but when truth condemns the soul, it often arouses resentment, anger and hatred for him who speaks the truth. Paul encountered this on many occasions, even from some who were Christians (Gal. 4:16). When men are unwilling to accept the

truth as pertaining to the way they live or in the tenets they believe and practice, the gospel proclaimer is in for trouble!

- c. Matthew 14:6-8: "But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger."
- 1) Mark 6:19-20 adds some significant information. Josephus says that Herodias was a woman full of ambition and envy, having a mighty influence on Herod, and able to persuade him to do things he was not at all inclined to do (*Antiquities*, 18,7,1, p.388). She bided her time in the case of John until the occasion of the present narrative.
 - 2) Birthdays were highly esteemed and celebrated by many in the ancient world. On Herod's birthday, a feast was given in his honor in which his lords, high captains, and chief men of Galilee participated (Mark 6:21). The world's great men celebrate their birthdays, but our King has demanded that we celebrate his death!
 - 3) At this feast, the daughter of Herodias danced before the revelers; Herod was greatly pleased. It is likely that her dance was highly suggestive or even vulgar, in keeping with common practices of the time. Secular records give her name as Salome.
 - 4) "Salome lived in the 1st century AD and was the daughter of Herodias and of Herod, a son of Herod the Great. Herodias herself was a granddaughter of Herod the Great and sister of Herod Agrippa I. Salome's dancing at the birthday banquet of her stepfather, Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, so pleased the tetrarch that it induced him to offer her whatever she wished, up to half his domain. At the behest of Herodias, who desired the death of John the Baptist because he had denounced her marriage to her first husband's half brother, Salome demanded John's head. It was brought to her. Salome was later married to her father's half-brother, Herod Philip the Tetrarch, ruler of areas in what is now Syria, and then to Aristobulus, ruler of Lesser Armenia. The story of Salome (whose name does not appear in the New Testament) and of the death of John the Baptist is related in both Matthew 14:6-11 and Mark 6:21-28. Salome is also mentioned in the *Jewish Antiquities* of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus" (Encarta).
 - 5) So impressed was Herod over her dancing, he rashly (he was probably under the influence of strong drink at the time) promised her anything, unto half his kingdom. Mark tells us that she consulted with her mother and then made request for John's head on a charger. A charger is a platter, a deep plate or basin; the Greek word signifies a "flat board" used for any purpose, such as a writing table; it may mean a large dish in which meat or some other food is served (Boles, p.312). This foolish young girl could have had many valuable things but listened to her hate-filled mother. Secular records indicate that Salome herself was later beheaded.
- d. Boles: John not only reprov'd Herod for this one crime, but "for all the evil things which Herod had done." He condemned his revelings, his debaucheries, and his murders. According to Jewish testimony, Herod Antipas was very wicked and slew many of the wise men of Israel. In addition to all these evils, he "added this also to them all, that he shut up John in prison." It is generally understood that John was imprisoned in the fortress of Machaerus, on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. John was imprisoned about a year after the baptism of Jesus. He remained in prison until he was beheaded; we do not know the exact time.
- e. Even though Herodias had left her husband and married Antipas, she was still his brother's wife: "For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly" (Mark 6:17-20).

C. Luke 3:21-38: The Baptism of Jesus and His Lineage.

1. Verses 21-22: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."
 - a. Large multitudes came out to John's operating area, and were baptized by him; they were immersed in water for the remission of sins; the power of redemption had not yet been finalized for the Messiah

- had not yet suffered, died, and been raised from the dead. As renowned gospel preacher Gus Nichols used to say, their sins were remitted on “credit”—based on the fact that the Redeemer would surely be sacrificed and resurrected. This is also the means by which all the other faithful people of the ancient days were forgiven.
- b. Our Lord presented himself to John, requesting baptism. “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:13-17).
 - c. Misguided men have come to fallacious conclusions about why the Lord was baptized. A good many have said that he was baptized to purify the water (See Pulpit Commentary at this passage). The right answer is in the text itself: “To fulfill all righteousness.” He came to John to be baptized, which was in keeping with God’s will.
 - 1) Hebrews 10:7: “Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.”
 - 2) Luke 7:29-30: “And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.”
 - 3) Psalm 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
 - 4) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
 - 5) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - d. Our sinless Savior was not baptized in order to be cleansed from any guilt; he never transgressed any commandments of the Father! “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15).
 - 1) He was tempted in all points like as we are. There are some specific problems he never had to face; he had no children to rear; he did not endure the struggles of running a business. However, all the basic elements of temptation he met: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.
 - 2) 1 John 2:16: “For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”
 - 3) He faced each of these features of temptation when Satan tried to get him to do things that were forbidden (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).
 - e. He did not suffer a single lapse! He never committed a single act of sin; he did not leave a single obligation unfulfilled. “No inclination to evil ever defiled his pure spirit. The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, had no place in his affections. And hence, though tempted by the Devil through all the avenues and natural desires of the human heart, he was still ‘without sin’” (Milligan, Hebrews, p.148).
 - 1) John 8:46: “Which of you convicteth me of sin? If I say truth, why do ye not believe me?” (ASV)”
 - 2) John 14:30: “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.”
 - 3) Hebrews 7:26: “For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”
 - 4) 1 Peter 2:22: “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”
 - f. The Lord insisted on being baptized because it “becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.”
 - 1) Righteousness is required of all who would serve the Father:
 - a) Psalms 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.”

- b) Matthew 21:25: "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?"
 - c) Luke 1:5-6: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."
 - d) John 1:33: "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."
 - e) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - f) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - g) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
- 2) *Now* indicates some force to John's position, but baptism has two sides: remission of sins and obedience to God. For Christ—obedience to the Father; for us—obedience and pardon.
- g. Jesus was immersed in the waters of the Jordan River. There was nothing “holy” about these waters; neither was there anything sacred about the waters of Jordan in which Naaman dipped himself seven times (2 Kings 5). For this famous military leader to be cleansed from his leprosy, he was obligated to follow God’s directions. For Jesus to retain his righteous condition, he was to be baptized. In doing so, he fulfilled God’s righteous command. If he had refused this requirement, that omission would have been a violation of the will of the Father.
 - h. When our Lord came out of the water, some miraculous things occurred:
 - 1) “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16-17).
 - 2) God's audible voice acknowledged his good pleasure in his Son.
 - a) John 12:28: "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again."
 - b) Matthew 12:18: "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles."
 - c) John 1:29-33: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). John 3:34: "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."
 - a) Other translations of John 3:34:
 - (1) American Standard Version: "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for he giveth not the Spirit by measure."
 - (2) New King James Version: "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure."

- b) God sent his Son; his Son spoke the words of God accurately and fully; God did not limit the power he gave Christ.
 - c) Woods:
 - (1) The Father sent the Son into the world; the Son speaks the words of the Father; therefore, to believe the Son is to believe the Father. The reason the Son is able to speak fully, accurately and authoritatively of the Father is that God did not give the Spirit by measure to him.
 - (2) The power which he exercised, by the Spirit, to speak of heavenly things is limitless and unmeasured. Anything given by measure is limited to the measure by which it is determined. Christ's powers by the Spirit were unmeasured, hence without limitation.
 - (3) The context requires that the "he" of the clause, "for he giveth not the Spirit by measure," to be understood of God, the Father; and he to whom the Spirit was not given by measure of Christ." [John, p.74].
 - i. The Spirit descended upon Jesus at his baptism.
 - 1) Matthew 3:15-17: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - 2) John 1:33: "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."
 - 2. Verse 23: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli."
 - a. At about the age of thirty years, Jesus came to John for baptism. Jesus was the same age as David was when that Old Testament worthy took the throne of Israel: "David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah" (2 Sam. 5:4-5).
 - b. The Jews who knew Jesus, and Mary and Joseph, had long supposed that he was the natural son of these two exceptional people. That he was conceived by a supernatural action on the part of the Holy Spirit, has been established firmly in early parts of this study.
 - 3. Verses 24-38: "Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri, Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor, Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech, Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God."
-

4. See author's comments under Matthew one for information about the genealogy of our Lord.
 - a. Matthew's object was to show through the genealogical table he presented that Jesus is the descendant of both Abraham and David (vs. 1). God had promised with an oath that he would raise up of David's offspring the Messiah, who would sit on David's throne (Ps. 89:3-4; 132:11; 2 Sam. 7:12; Acts 2:29-30).
 - b. The Jews understood well that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David (Matt. 22:42). Matthew shows that the background of Jesus fully fits that of the Messiah. "...What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David*" (Matt. 22:42).
 - c. What he has given so far has not proved him to be in direct blood-line with David since he is not said to be the son of Joseph, but of Mary. But he was born to Mary after her marriage to Joseph, and thus was Joseph's rightful heir, and inherited the throne through him.
 - d. So far Matthew has not proved that Jesus is the Christ, but only that he is of the right lineage. It establishes one of the facts necessary to proving that he is the Christ (McGarvey, Matthew).
- D. Regarding the Genealogical Material from Matthew and Luke, The Following Information is from Coffman.
 1. We shall not undertake any exhaustive "harmonization" of the two separate genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and here. It is now and has been this student's conviction for many years that Luke's genealogy cannot possibly be for Joseph's line at all, since Luke spelled out in the most emphatic manner the fact that Joseph had no physical connection whatever with Jesus; and in this fact disappears any reason why Luke might have written a genealogy of Joseph. It is incumbent upon us, however, to demonstrate that the interpretation preferred in this commentary is valid.
 2. Many of the most illustrious and competent scholars who ever lived have accepted "this as Mary's line, not Joseph's." This fact is offered, not for the sake of proving this position by human testimony, because many other great scholars deny it; but it is presented to show that the greatest weight of scholarly evidence tends to the view accepted here. "Among the many modern scholars who accept it are Professor Godet and Dean Plumptre." [13] Robertson affirmed that the theory of this being Mary's line "seems the most plausible," citing the following as concurring in that view: Luther, Bengel, Olshausen, Lightfoot, Wieseler, Robinson, Alexander, Godet, Weiss, Andrews, Broadus, and many recent writers. [14]
 3. The solid evidence that supports this is in the Greek text itself, where the article "the" is omitted before the name of Joseph, and yet is found before all the names in the long list without exception, save for this solitary omission. What does it mean? Godet said: "The omission of the article puts the name (Joseph) outside of the genealogical series." [15] Robertson said, "This would indicate that 'Joseph' belongs in the parenthesis ... (it should) read thus, 'being son (as supposed of Joseph) of Heli, etc.'" [16] Jesus was thus the grandson of Heli, "grandson" being an absolutely legitimate meaning of "son" as used in Jewish genealogies. As a matter of fact, the word "son" in such tables also had the meaning of "son by creation" (as in Luke 3:38), and sometimes even "son-in-law." It is the context that must determine the meaning. In no case would the name of Mary have appeared in the direct line of such genealogies, being contrary to Jewish custom. This necessitated the listing of Jesus as the "son (grandson) of Heli." It certainly cannot be proved that this interpretation is incorrect
 4. There are other ways of reconciling the two accounts of the genealogy of Jesus, but this is the most plausible and convincing. This is an extensive question, debated for centuries, and it must be confessed that human knowledge is by no means complete with regard to it. Perhaps the most persuasive fact related to the genealogies is that when the enemies of Christianity, such as Celsus and Porphyry, sought to discredit the faith, none of them ever alleged any contradiction in the genealogies. If people who lived when the genealogical tables were still preserved did not dare to allege any contradiction, those who dare to do so nineteen centuries later stand on the most tenuous and uncertain ground.
 5. But what is the point of the genealogy? Surely some attention should be given to that! Once, when this writer was a minister of a great congregation in New York City, a group of students from one of the universities visited him, asking, "But don't you really believe that the whole Jesus story is a myth?" It happened, when this occurred, that this writer had only recently memorized all seventy-seven names in this list, and he quoted it rapidly, and in full, to the astonished group of students; and then he said: "Now, will any of you brilliant young people give the genealogy of Santa Claus, or of Paul Bunyan, or of Beowulf?" The point was dramatically made. Jesus Christ was no myth! His genealogy is the only one ever constructed that reaches all the way back to God himself. Since then, this preacher has quoted the

genealogy before assemblies of college students and congregations throughout America, because the central message is devastating to any alleged mythological explanation of Jesus of Nazareth.

6. Some have asserted that Luke ignored Abraham; but that is not true. Abraham is in the genealogy; the story of Abraham's bosom is found only in Luke (Luke 16:19ff); and one of the strongest statements with reference to that patriarch in the entire New Testament is Luke 13:28. By taking the genealogy back to Adam, Luke stressed the fact of Jesus' being the Saviour of all men, not merely of Jews. Matthew's genealogy through Joseph was given for the purpose of showing that Christ, through his legal father Joseph, was the legitimate heir to the throne of David. In the very nature of the God-Man, it was inherent that two genealogies should be provided, one showing his legal status in the eyes of men, and the other giving his true physical descent. The Messianic title, "Son of David," as applied to Jesus required a dual proof: (1) that he was entitled to the throne, as proved by Matthew's genealogy, and (2) that he was literally descended from David, as proved by Luke's genealogy. The fundamental "rightness" of this approach to the problem will commend itself to any careful student of the Scriptures. Also, Matthew wrote from Joseph's standpoint, Luke from Mary's.
-

LINEAGE IN MATTHEW	LINEAGE IN LUKE
Jesus	Jesus
Joseph & Mary	Joseph
Jacob	Heli
Matthan	Matthat
Eleazer	Levi
Elihud	Melchi
Achim	Janna
Achim	Joseph
Sadoc	Mattias
Azor	Amos
Eliakim	Naum
Ahihud	Eсли
	Nagge
	Naath
	Mattathias
	Semei
	Joseph
	Juda
	Joanna
	Rhesa
Zorobabel	Zorababel
Salathiel	Salathiel
Jechonias	Neri
Josias	Melchi
Amon	Addi
Manassas	Cosam
Ezekias	Elmodam
Achaz	Er

Joatham	Jose
Ozias	Eliezer
Joram	Jorim
Josaphat	Matthat
Asa	Levi
Abia	Simeon
Robam	Judah
	Joseph
	Jonan
	Eliakim
	Melea
	Menan
	Mattatha
Solomon	Nathan
David	David
Jesse	Jesse
Obed	Obed
Booz	Booz
Salmon	Salmon
Naason	Naason
Aminadab	Aminadab
Aram	Aram
Esrom	Esrom
Phares	Phares
Judas	Juda
Jacob	Jacob
Isaac	Isaac
Abraham	Abraham
[Beginning point]	[List Continues back to Adam]

Luke 4

A. Luke 4:1-13: The Temptations of Jesus.

1. Verse 1: “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”
 - a. The power of the Holy Spirit came upon him at his baptism. He was directed by the Spirit to leave the area of the Jordan River and enter into the wilderness, an area that was uninhabited. In that place, he would not find food for the nourishment of his physical body, but in empty place; his soul could be in full communication with the Father.
 - b. Mark 1:12-13: “And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.” The Lord was “led” into the wilderness in order to be tempted by Satan. This leading was deliberate and was from someone other than himself; the Holy Spirit guided him to proceed into the wilderness. Mark uses a stronger term to describe this action: “And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness” (Mark 1:12). It was the will of the Father that the Son endure the forth-coming temptations—thus it was a God-given requirement. Mark presents it as a divine demand.
2. Verse 2: “Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.”
 - a. Moses (Ex. 34:28) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8) also fasted forty days and nights. During this period, our Lord ate nothing (Luke 4:2). Moses represented the Law, Elijah the prophets, and Christ was representative of the New Covenant. To endure such a long period without food requires complete commitment to a great cause.
 - b. He afterward hungered. The record given by Mark and Luke might seem to indicate that he was tempted during the forty days; Matthew says the temptations were given after the forty days of fasting. Matthew is emphasizing the specific enticements which are related in the following verses; Mark and Luke include the temptation relating to the fasting itself.
3. Verses 3-4: “And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”
 - a. Temptations which entice us to transgress God’s word are threefold: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).
 - 1) The apostle declares that the things of the world which he enumerates here did not derive from the Father of light, but with the sinful world around us in this life. Satan promotes these things, and uses them to the hurt of the offspring of God.
 - 2) The things of the world John identifies are divided into three categories: lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.
 - 3) These were the three avenues with which Satan tempted Eve: “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen. 3:6).
 - 4) These were the three avenues through which Satan tempted Christ; the enticements we face also come through the same three methods.
 - b. The first temptation our Lord faced was through the avenue of *the lust of the flesh*. There is nothing wrong with eating bread when one is hungry, but in the peculiar case of our Lord in this instance, to produce bread miraculously to satisfy his hunger would have been sinful.

- c. But the devil prefaced his remarks with a doubt: If you are God's Son. He fully knew that Jesus was the Son of God. If the Lord had turned the stones into bread, he would have been perverting the central purpose of his miracles: proving his divine Sonship (John 20:30-31; 3:2). This would have been a violation of God's will. If he had followed the devil's instruction, he would have been obeying Satan instead of God, hence would have committed sin.
 - d. Christ replied to this temptation by citing Deuteronomy 8:3. "Israel had been led by God into the wilderness, where there was no bread; had been subjected to intensive hunger there, and had then been fed by bread from heaven. Moses explains that this was to teach them that 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God' Jesus finds in this a precedent for himself The duty of Israel is now his duty....They sinned by murmuring against Moses, and by proposing to seek bread in their own way—that is, by returning into Egypt (Ex. 16:1-9). He will commit a similar sin if, distrustful of God, he seeks to turn stones into bread. They were taught to rely upon the God who had brought them into trouble to deliver them from it. This, now, is his duty, and he accepts the precedent as his guide" (McGarvey, Matthew, pp.41f).
 - e. There is in this temptation a veiled attack on the goodness of God: "You claim to be God's Son; but look at you now! What has God done to you? He has not fed you; he has brought you into this desolate place, caused you to suffer terrible hunger, and has left you here to die." This is what Satan convinced many of the Israelites to believe.
 - f. We must accept, believe and follow every requirement God has revealed. We do not have the right to pick the truths we will believe and reject other truths which we might not like.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
 - 2) Proverbs 30:5-6: "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."
 - 3) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 5) Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."
 4. Verses 5-7: "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."
 - a. Luke lists this temptation as the second, while Matthew's account gives it last. The order of these tests is not the important matter, but the temptations themselves.
 - b. There is nothing in the context to demand that this be understood as an allegorical expression. But neither do we have any indication which mountain is meant. Some scholars think he merely conjured the sight up in the Lord's mind by a vivid verbal description of these kingdoms. How these kingdoms were presented to the Lord's vision is immaterial; what is important is the temptation which was joined to the presentation. "All the kingdoms of the world" could not be seen from the top of a mountain. Luke adds the phrase, "In a moment of time" (4:5).
-

- c. Did the devil possess the power to bring this about miraculously? He offered all these kingdoms to Jesus if he would only fall down and worship him. If Satan did not have the ability to give these kingdoms to Jesus [in some way], there would have been no temptation. If the Lord only thought he could receive these kingdoms when in fact he could not obtain them from Satan, he is not the Son of God. A genuine temptation did occur. This temptation was of *the pride of life* variety.
- 1) John 14:30: "I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of the world cometh: and he hath nothing in me."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:2: "Wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (ASV).
 - a) The *prince of the power of the air* is a reference to the devil, a real being whose sole aim is to defeat the purposes of Almighty God. He is unconcerned about the fact that countless precious souls of men are consigned to *Gehenna* as a consequence of his activities (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).
 - b) Satan is also called the "god of this world." "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4).
 - c) Satan is described as "the prince of this world." "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30).
 - d) Satan's strength is spoken of as the "power of darkness."
 - (1) Luke 22:53: "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."
 - (2) Colossians 1:13: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son."
 - (3) Ephesians 6:12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*."
5. Verses 8-12: "And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."
- a. Luke places this temptation third. How did Satan take Jesus to the high place on the temple? The record does not say. The devil could have been in appearance as an ordinary man, and they could have walked into Jerusalem and entered the temple in the common way. The "holy city" is Jerusalem.
 - b. "Jesus did not belong to the Levitical priesthood, and never entered the temple proper; he only entered the court and porches of the temple. There were the long porticoes which were covered and some of these were built up above the wall to a great height; the outer battlement of such a roof, rising above the outer wall, is probably what is here called 'the pinnacle of the temple.' 'The pinnacle' was some very high point of the temple building. The word translated pinnacle means literally a 'little wing.' The high point was such that a fall from it would be fatal, and especially if one 'cast' himself from it" (Boles, Matthew, p.100).
 - c. The word used "does not enable us to determine what part of the temple is meant. But ...the south-east corner of the wall around the temple best coincides. From this point to the valley of the Kedron below is said by Josephus to have been about 600 feet The foundations of the wall are nearly ninety feet below the present surface of the ground" (McGarvey, p.42).
 - d. "Cast thyself down." Satan then cited Psalm 91:11, quoting it verbatim from the LXX (Boles), but perverted its meaning. No scripture ever gives us the right to put God to such a test. If the Lord had submitted to this demand, he would have been testing God wrongfully. It would have been a perverted use of miraculous power.
-

- e. "Every consideration seemed to be in favor of making the leap except the fear of personal injury, and this consideration must be rejected as indicating a distrust in God" (McGarvey, p.42). A successful leap would prove conclusively to Jesus that God was his Father; it would demonstrate to the Father the extent of Jesus' trust; it could be used to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But did any of the Jews see the Devil and Jesus on the pinnacle?
 - f. This was a temptation classed under *the lust of the eyes* in that it would presumptuously demand that God use this means to prove his Divine Sonship in a spectacular display. The temptation was to demand proof of Sonship by an ostentatious means. But again Christ countered by appealing to the Scriptures. He showed by the passage he cited (Duet. 6:16) that Satan had misused the verse he used in offering the temptation. There is a general providential watch over the people of God, but not to the extent that he will intervene miraculously to spare one from danger, especially in a case where one has foolishly endangered himself.
6. Verse 13: "And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season."
- a. "The quotation that Jesus gave did not contradict the quotation that the devil gave; all scriptures harmonize" (Boles, p.101). The devil used a figurative statement and applied it in a literal sense. The passage the Lord used sheds additional light on, and helps explain, the passage the devil quoted.
 - b. Countless religious people fail in understanding the scriptures by making a figurative statement to be literal. One very prominent case in Revelation 20:1-5: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." If the thousand years is made literal, then the other items in the passage are also literal, which would be impossible. The Devil, a spiritual being, cannot be bound with a literal chain.
 - c. Notice that Luke writes that the devil departed from *Jesus for a season*. This implies that he returned for other temptations.
 - d. Compare: "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:11). The angels came and ministered to Christ, supplying him with his physical needs. Satan had put Adam and Eve through a similar test in Eden (Gen. 3); they miserably failed the test and sin entered the world, with all its evil consequences.
 - e. In the events of this present case, the destiny of the world was hanging in the balance. If Christ had succumbed to any of these powerful allurements, there would be no hope left for the world. Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Jesus was tempted in the first instance when Satan claimed there was no reason to trust God (an under-trust of God); in another by a wrongful over-trust of God; in the other by an abandonment of God.

B. Luke 4:14-21: Jesus Returned to Nazareth.

- 1. Verses 14-15: "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all."
 - a. Again the Lord was directed to return to the province of Galilee. Matthew's account omits some events the other writers record: the Lord's trip to Galilee (John 1:43), the marriage in Cana (John 2); the events of John 4:1-42.
 - b. These events lay in the background in Luke's account and furnish the reason for the fame the Lord had obtained and showed why the people glorified him.

- c. Matthew reports that Jesus went to Galilee when he heard John was imprisoned, but as noted above, there were other events that occurred in between his temptation and that journey. John 1-3, if inserted chronologically into Matthew's record, would properly fit between the eleventh and twelfth verses of Matthew four.
 - d. Matthew 4:13 indicates that Jesus was in Nazareth after returning to Galilee, for he left this little town and went on to Capernaum. This latter city was situated on the borders of the territories that belonged to Zebulun and Naphtali, on the northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum is called the Lord's own city in Matthew 9:1, where he paid his taxes (Matt. 17:24). It was one of the chief cities of Galilee, and the home of Peter and Andrew, James and John, and perhaps even Matthew (Mt. 9:1-9; Mk. 1:21; Lk. 5:27; 7:1,8; John 6:59).
2. Verse 16: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read."
- a. Luke tells us that the Lord was now in Nazareth, the place where he grew to adulthood. Many people here would have known Jesus, his siblings, and Joseph and Mary. Jesus may have aided Joseph in certain carpentry jobs for some of these citizens.
 - b. We are also told that it was the custom of Jesus to read the scriptures during the Synagogue worship. After being gone for a time, he had returned and took up usual practice of reading.
3. Verses 17-19: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. 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 hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."
- a. Isaiah 61:1-2: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn."
 - b. Someone handed him the scroll on which the Book of Isaiah was written. It was fortuitous or even providential that this book was given to him. Jesus opened the book to the part he read. "He unrolled the scroll; this was no accident or mere chance that he "found the place" where he wanted to read; he unrolled the volume until he found this Messianic prophecy, yet with no seeming effort or searching for it" (Boles).
- c. Pulpit Commentary:
- 1) "The bright, comforting words of the great prophet the Lord chose as giving a general summary of what he designed to carry out in his ministry. It could be no undesigned coincidence that the opening words of the passage contain a singularly clear mention of the three Persons of the blessed Trinity—the Spirit, the Father, and the Anointed (Messiah). Because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, etc.
 - 2) "The common interpretation referred this passage to the state of the people on the return from the Captivity. Nothing, however, that the people had yet experienced in any way satisfied the brilliant picture painted in the great prophecy. A remnant certainly had returned several centuries back from their distant exile, but the large majority of the chosen people were scattered abroad; their own land was crushed under what seemed a hopeless servitude; poverty, ignorance, universal discontent, reigned alike in Jerusalem, garrisoned with Roman legion-aries, and in the most distant of the poor upland villages of Galilee.
 - 3) "Only could deliverance come and a golden age of prosperity return with the promised Messiah. This was the interpretation which the choicest spirits in Israel applied to the great Isaiah prophecy read that sabbath day in the little synagogue of Nazareth. This was the meaning which Jesus at once gave to it, only he startled his hearers by telling them that in him they saw the promised long-looked-for Deliverer."
-

- d. The deliverance Christ came to provide was that of sin-laden souls! The Mosaic Law did not include any power to actually forgive sins, but rather delayed punishment for them from on Day of Atonement to the next.
- 1) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
 - 2) Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:18-23: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
- e. The miracles which he had already done identified him as the Messiah and confirmed his messages as coming from God. His supernatural powers are indicated in the passage, including giving sight to the blind and healing those who were in some way bruised [crushed, wounded].
4. Verses 20-21: “And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”
- a. ASV: “And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.”
 - b. He returned the book to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the room were fastened on him, wondering what he might next say. He declared that this Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled to their minds. The Lord thus declared that what Isaiah had predicted found its fulfillment in the work of this one who had grown up in their midst.
 - c. Boles: “Now, at this very time, in their ears they heard the glad tidings which Jesus had announced that he was the Messiah. Since the Jews generally understood this scripture to refer to the Messiah, Jesus declares that he is a fulfillment of it; there can be no doubt but that they understood him; however, they did not believe him.”
- C. Luke 4:22-30: Christ Presented Powerful Truths to the People of Nazareth.
1. Verse 22: “And all bare him witness, and wondered at the **gracious words** which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?”
 - a. ASV: “And all bare him witness, and wondered at the **words of grace** which proceeded out of his mouth: and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?” [“Gracious words” equals “words of grace”].
 - b. They remembered that this was “Joseph’s” son, surely this person we have known all his life could not be the Messiah!
 2. Verses 23-25: “And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.”
-

- a. He told them what they doubtless were thinking, that he needed to perform miraculous works in Nazareth as he had done in Capernaum. In other words, before we will heed a physician, he first had to tend to his own ailments; then we will trust his ability to help us.
 - b. Compare: “And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief” (Matt. 13:57-58). The thought of verse 57 is general in nature. His power to work miracles was not limited by their unbelief but their unbelief made it fruitless for him to do so. They had already rejected the truth the miracles were designed to prove.
 - c. He did not do **many** miracles there due to their unbelief. Mark 6:5 shows that he healed a few sick people. It would have been fruitless to perform many miracles there because of their extreme prejudice.
 - d. Coffman:
 - 1) No prophet is acceptable in his own country ... Plutarch said, "You will find that few of the most prudent and wisest of mankind have been appreciated in their own country." [18] Familiarity breeds contempt for that which is commonplace or well known, the same being a most unfortunate characteristic of men.
 - 2) This writer lived awhile in Washington, D.C.; and during the cherry blossom festival made a trip through Arkansas, the peach orchards in that state being in full flower at the time. He stopped at a lone filling station surrounded on both sides of the road a mile in both directions by one of the largest orchards in Arkansas, then blazing with one of the most fantastic color displays to be seen anywhere on earth; but the station operator had just been reading an account of the cherry blossom spectacle in Washington; and he said, after a glance at the license plates, "Oh, I would give anything to see the cherry blossoms in Washington." What a pity it is that a man living in the very midst of 10,000 acres of magnificent bloom probably spent the rest of the morning dreaming about the far-off cherry blossoms in the tidal basin of the Capitol City.
 - 3) What a far greater shame it was for the citizens of Nazareth to despise the Christ of the ages because they were familiar with the surroundings where he grew up.
3. Verses 25-27: “But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.”
- a. Elijah was not sent to a widow in Israel, but to a Gentile lady. Perhaps there was no Israelite widow possessing such faith as this widow of Sarepta had.
 - b. “This was another incident from the Old Testament (2 Kings 5:1-14), this time from the ministry of Elisha; and it has exactly the same point as the one drawn a moment before from the ministry of Elijah. Naaman showed his faith in God by obeying the command of the prophet, being subsequently healed of leprosy; Naaman, of course, being another despised Gentile. There is also the inference from Jesus' mention of the many lepers in Israel that it was their unbelief which prevented their being healed. Both incidents cited here, especially as Jesus applied them, aroused anger and hatred in the hearts of his hearers” (Coffman).
 - c. His audience perceived his point: They were full of unbelief just as many Israelites were during the times of Elijah and Elisha.
4. Verse 28: “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath.”
- a. That Sabbath Jesus showed those assembled in the synagogue their danger, and instead of being warned, they were enraged. He could do no miracle because of their unbelief; he would go to other places as their prophets had done. The indignation of the people of Nazareth was general, and they were all filled with wrath, and "they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city." In their wild excitement, without any reverence for the place, the day, or the occasion, they rushed upon Jesus like mad men, as they did against Stephen” (Boles).
-

- b. Compare: “And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him” (Mark 6:1-3).
- 1) “There is no real reason for identifying this visit to Nazareth with that recorded in Luke 4:16-31 at the beginning of the Galilean Ministry. He was rejected both times, but it is not incongruous that Jesus should give Nazareth a second chance. It was only natural for Jesus to visit his mother, brothers, and sisters again. Neither Mark nor Matthew mention Nazareth here by name, but it is plain that by *patrida* the region of Nazareth is meant. He had not lived in Bethlehem since his birth” (Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament, Electronic Database).
 - 2) McGarvey shows that the Lord went from “...from Capernaum, where the ruler's daughter had been healed. (See note on v. 21.) That he went ‘into his own country’ from Capernaum, shows that this visit to Nazareth is different from the one mentioned by Luke; for the latter occurred immediately after his departure from Judea into Galilee, and before he took up his abode in Capernaum. (See Luke iv. 14-16, 31.)
5. Verses 29-30: “And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.”
- a. Coffman: This attempted murder of the Son of God was what the Jews called "a rebel's beating." "Somewhat akin to lynch law, it was administered without trial, and on the spot, when anyone was accused of violating their law or tradition." Other New Testament examples of this volatile, illegal, and unscrupulous characteristic of the times and people are: John 8:59; 10:21; Acts 7:67-70; and Acts 21:31,32.
 - 1) John 8:59: “Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”
 - 2) Acts 7:57-60: “Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”
 - b. “The place now shown as the scene of the act of violence of the fanatics of Nazareth, known as the Mount of Precipitation, is some two miles from the town. It must be remembered that this happened on a sabbath day; this would therefore be beyond the limits of a sabbath day's journey. There is, however, close to Nazareth a cliff about forty feet high” (Pulpit Commentary).
 - c. In some way, not explained by Luke, Jesus was able to pass through them and get away from their evil intents. “But he passing through the midst of them went his way. Not necessarily a miracle. There is nothing hinted here that our Lord rendered himself invisible, or that he smote his enemies with a temporary blindness. He probably quietly overawed these angry men with his calm self-possession, so that they forbore their cruel purpose, and thus he passed through their midst, and left Nazareth—as far as we know—forever” (Pulpit Commentary).
-



D. Luke 4:31-37: Jesus Went to Capernaum.

1. Verses 31-32: “And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.”
 - a. Jesus descended from the hill country of Galilee to the city of Capernaum, an important place in the Lord’s work. Here and other towns in the area, he performed many miracles which many ignored.
 - b. Matthew 11:20-24: “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”
 - c. On multiple sabbath days, he taught the citizens, having a profound effect on some of them. Compare: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matt. 7:28-29).
 - d. He spoke with one having authority and with power. He was both definite and clear in what he said. There was nothing uncertain about his messages.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 14:7-8: “And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?”
 - 2) 1 Peter 4:11: “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 1:17-20: “When I therefore was thus minded, did I show fickleness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be the yea and the nay

- nay? But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea. For how many soever be the promises of God, in him is the yea: wherefore also through him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us” (ASV).
2. Verses 33-34: “And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.”
 - a. Compare: “And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.” (Mark 1:22-25).
 - 1) “And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ‘saying, [Let us alone;] what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is his humble position in human society. (Comp, note on Matt vii. 28, 29) [McGarvey, *ibid.*].
 - 2) These demons recognized the Lord as the Holy One of God. They all knew Jesus; they believed in him, but that knowledge and faith could do them no eternal good. “Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well: the demons also believe, and shudder” (Jas. 2:19. ASV). Christ died on the cross for the salvation of sinful humans who would believe and obey the gospel. He did not die to redeem fallen angels or demons such as these.
 - b. Demons who indwelt certain humans knew their eventual fate—to be cast into the place of torment. They knew they were to be “destroyed.” The eternal spirits of sinful men are to be destroyed, but that does not mean that these souls will go out of existence. “Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thess. 1:9).
 - c. The demon is identified as an unclean spirit. Being associated with Satan and his evil nature, these demons are all tainted with sin and rebellion. That is the reason for their being called demons. When the unclean spirit cried out in addressing certain remarks to Jesus, we have no reason to think that the words were not heard and understood by the Jewish audience in the synagogue. This must have had a strong impact on those who heard what was stated.
 3. Verse 35: “And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.”
 - a. Boles: Jesus commanded the demon to cease bearing testimony; Jesus did not need, neither would he accept, the testimony of demons. The faith that people had in him must come from the testimony which God furnished and not from demons. Jesus commanded two things: "Hold thy peace" and "come out of him." The demon is commanded to be silent and to obey Jesus. Two distinct person-alities are here recognized; the demon is treated as a person as much as the man.
 - b. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and would not allow him further to speak, but commanded him to come out of his host. The demon had no choice! Those who face the Lord in the last day will have no choice but to obey the voice of the Master:
 - 1) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
 - 2) Matthew 25:34: “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”
 - 3) Matthew 25:41: “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

- c. But before departing from the one he possessed, he tore him, shouted something out with a loud voice, and came out of the man. We are not told what he said or in what way he tore the man. "Had convulsed him The demon, on leaving the man, gave expression to his impotent rage and malignity, by throwing his victim into a convulsion, and by uttering a loud outcry through the unfortunate man's lips" (McGarvey, p.269).
4. Verses 36-37: "And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about."
 - a. Notice Matthew's account: "And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan" (Matt. 4:24-25).
 - 1) Naturally his fame for such miracles would spread. Soon, almost the whole populace was coming to hear him. Their motives were not always pure. Galilee was more connected to Damascus by trade than to Jerusalem, thus his reputation went far and wide, even into Syria.
 - 2) Great multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond Jordan followed him. The number is indeterminable. "The miracles of Jesus for a season attracted such crowds and excited so many that they saw and heard but little else than the power of Jesus to cure diseases; many did not appreciate his teaching, neither did they look forward with great anxiety to the coming kingdom. The miracles of Jesus, if properly understood, would mean that he who wrought the miracle had the power of God, and if he had the power of God in working miracles, God was with him in his teachings" (Commentary on Matthew, Boles, p.119).
 - b. Genuine miraculous activity will be seen as true manifestations of divine power. Even among widely-spaced communities, reports can quickly spread, and great crowds will gather. Mark does not elaborate the details of how far his fame spread, but Matthew fills in those details.
 - c. Compare: "And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him" (Mark 1:27).
 - 1) Casting out an unclean spirit was a miraculous work. The miracle proved to the audience that Jesus had the authority to do what he had just accomplished. By this action, which could not be denied by any who witnessed it, the Lord proved his identity and his message.
 - 2) Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - d. God promised that the unclean spirits would cease to afflict humankind: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they

shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zech. 13:2).

- 1) In connection with the opening of the fountain (Zech. 12:1), God would cause the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. During the first century, Satan was able to send evil spirits to afflict certain individuals. Although the subject is somewhat shrouded in mystery, some aspects are clear.
- 2) They were spiritual beings: "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick" (Matt. 8:16).
- 3) They were unclean beings, under Satan's control: "But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.... When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.... Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation" (Matt. 12:25, 43, 45).
- 4) They were intelligent beings: "Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24).
- 5) They had volition and locomotion: "Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation" (Matt. 12:44-45).
- 6) They often brought illness, affliction, or special powers on the individual:
 - a) Dumbness—Matthew 9:32.
 - b) Blindness—Matthew 12:22.
 - c) Convulsions—Mark 9:18.
 - d) Epilepsy—Matthew 17:15.
 - e) Special knowledge—Acts 16:16-18; 19:15.
 - f) Great strength—Mark 5:4; Acts 19:16.
 - g) Demon possession often brought physical ailments, but this was a symptom or side-effect (Matt. 4:24; 8:16).
- 7) Christ came to strip Satan of his power, including the power to afflict humanity with his demons (Matt. 12:29; Luke 11:20-33; Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:25-26). He was successful!
- 8) With the end of the age of miracles, demon-possession and the power to expel demons ended. There is no proof of demons taking over anyone today. The burden of proof is on one who claims that the problem still exists in the world. Zechariah (13:2) connected the end of unclean spirits with the opening of the fountain (verse 1) and the ending of prophets; since both of these others have occurred, the unclean spirits have been taken away.
 - a) Zechariah 13:2: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 13:8-10: "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

E. Luke 4:38-44: Christ Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law and Did Other Miracles.

1. Verses 38-39: "And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them."

- a. Luke reports that Peter's mother-in-law had a great fever. Parallel accounts of this healing are found in:
 - 1) Matthew 8:14-15: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."
 - 2) Mark 1:29-31: "And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them."
 - b. He stood over her bed, and rebuked the fever, and it left her (Luke 4:39). He "took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them" (Mark 1:31).
 - c. "A severe fever always leaves a person very weak, but the miraculous healing of Jesus was so complete that the patient was given normal strength at once" (Boles, p.193).
 - d. "It was impossible for the witnesses to doubt that the cure was miraculous" (McGarvey, p.77).
2. Verses 40-41: "Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ."
- a. Compare: "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him" (Mark 1:32-34).
 - b. As evening began, as the sun was setting, the people in the vicinity brought all that were ailing from disease, and those who were possessed by demons. Word had quickly spread that Jesus the Healer was present at the house of Peter and Andrew.
 - c. Mark succinctly reports that all who were thus afflicted were treated by miraculous cures; the diseased were healed and the demons were cast out. The Lord did not permit the demons to say anything; he did not want or need their testimony that Jesus is the Christ.
 - d. Johnson:
 - 1) And at Even, when the sun did set, I. e., the close of the sabbath, which, amongst the Jews, ended with the setting sun. There are two reasons why the time should be thus specified. (1) It was natural that the sick should be brought in the cool of the evening, rather than in the scorching heat of the afternoon. (2) It was the sabbath, and the feeling which made the Pharisees question the lawfulness of a man's carrying the bed on which he had been lying (John 5:10) on the sabbath, would probably have deterred the friends of the sick from bringing them as long as it lasted. They brought to him.
 - 2) *All that were diseased*. The term diseased in its current modern acceptation, is perhaps a trifle too strong to represent the import of the original expression; but when looked at etymologically, dis-eased, that is sundered from ease, or ill at ease, and thus unwell, it is all that could be desired.
 - 3) *All the city*. The effect was to rouse and gather the entire population of the city, to obtain healing for themselves or friends, or at least to see and hear the new teacher.
3. Verses 42-44: "And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee."
- a. Compare: "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils" (Mark 1:35-39).
-

- 1) Jesus arose very early in the morning and departed to a solitary place so he could enter into prayer, without being disturbed. It was also necessary for him to leave before daylight to avoid being mobbed by the multitudes. The evening before, the house of Peter and Andrew was invested by the crowd. We are not told how many were there or how late it was before the Lord was able to go to bed.
 - 2) The apostles [four are named in the context: Peter, Andrew, James and John] noted the Lord's absence and followed after him. Did they know when he left; were they able to see Jesus as he went to the solitary place? Did they know about this place beforehand? Probably not.
 - 3) The last part of this passage tells us that they found Jesus; they had to look for him. They told him that "all men seek for thee." He already knew this fact; that is why he left the house so early. They could have known that dealing with their maladies would have been an unending process. Not only are the poor always with us, but also those who are ailing or injured.
 - 4) The Lord grew just as tired physically as other men do. He was just as human as Mary and just as divine as the Father. He often had to seek solitude for rest and prayer; he had to continually teach the apostles, also.
- b. How would the apostles react to the immense popularity of the Lord? As his work with them went forward, they could come to see how tiring the relentless press of the multitudes was; they would need rest and solitude just at Jesus did.
- c. When the apostles brought him word about the people seeking him, he quickly arose to go to other towns where he would be able to preach to those folks also. He stated that this preaching lay at the heart of his earthly mission. To establish his identity and prove his message, he also performed many miracles. Mark here reports that the Lord cast out demons as he preached in these various cities, in their synagogues.
- 1) Matthew 4:23-25: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan."
 - 2) Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."
- d. Johnson: In Luke (4:43) he says. "I must preach the kingdom of God in other cities also." Towns. The word so translated means village cities, country towns, imperfectly enclosed towns, and unenclosed villages. Josephus says, concerning the two Galilees, Upper and Lower, "The cities lie thick; and the multitude of villages are everywhere full of people, in consequence of the richness of the soil, so that the very least of them contains about 15,000 inhabitants" (War, 3:3, 2).
-

Luke Chapter 5

A. Luke 5:1-11: A Miraculous Draught of Fish.

1. Verses 1-2: “And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.”
 - a. We are here told of the Lord being at the edge of the Sea of Galilee. He wanted to teach them, but he was so pressed by the large crowd, it was not practical to remain where he was and be heard by all. There were two boats nearby, where the fishermen were busy washing their nets, after a fruitless night of fishing.
 - b. Mark four also relates the case of Jesus entering a boat, which was moved a little ways from the shore, where he taught the people: “And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables...” (Mark 4:1-2).
 2. Verses 3: “And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.”
 - a. Matthew's account: “The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. “And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow” (13:1-3).
 - b. Luke reports his request to use one of the boats as a pulpit. This boat belonged to Simon. The Lord asked him to move the boat a short distance from the shore. He sat down and taught the vast crowd from that good place.
 - c. Sound can carry very well over water. The audience would be able to hear the message clearly. At this point, according to Matthew and Mark, he spoke to the multitude in parables, beginning with the one about the sower.
 3. Verses 4-7: “Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.”
 - a. Matthew and Mark do not record Jesus' preaching from the boat, hence some conclude that this is a different occasion; the order of events is also advanced as another reason against accepting this account as being the same as that given by Matthew and Mark. However no argument can be adduced that will justify making this account given by Luke as another one different from that recorded by Matthew and Mark. We have here a brief account of the multitude that gathered around him and heard "the word of God" as he preached from "the lake of Gennesaret." This body of water is called by four names in the Bible; it is an expansion of the river Jordan, about twelve miles long and six miles broad. (Boles).
 - b. Another case of a miraculous catch of fish such as this is recorded in John 21:6: “And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”
 - c. Our passage next takes up what happened after the Lord had completed his speech to the multitude. He instructed Simon to move the boat into deeper water and lower the nets into the sea. The fisherman told Jesus that they had worked all night, trying to catch fish, but he would do as the Lord said. Both of the boats cast out their nets.
 - d. Quickly, the nets of the ship caught a great multitude of fish, so that their nets began to tear. Their partners in the other boat were called to come and help. Between the men on both of the boats, the nets
-

were raised and the fish filled both of the vessels! There were so many fish, both ships sunk lower into the water.

4. Verses 8-9: “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 was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken”
 - a. What a phenomenal experience for these men who were soon to become apostles of Christ! Scholars report that Peter commonly used the word translated “Master” when he spoke to the Lord. John’s word was often “Rabbi.”
 - b. Peter went ashore and fell down before Jesus. He recognized that what he had just seen was truly a miraculous event, which could only be done by divine power. Peter recognized his unworthiness to be in the presence of someone so mighty! Compare: “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” (Isa. 6:1-5).
 - c. Boles: Peter stood the test, for after expressing himself and telling that they had failed in their efforts during the entire night, but "at thy word I will let down the nets." "At thy word" means relying on, or on the ground only of thy word I will do as you command. Peter sacrificed his own practical knowledge as a fisherman to the authoritative word of Jesus; his faith was not great, as the sequel shows, but he had the spirit of obedience. Peter was not expecting a miracle and probably, at the best, but a small haul of fish. Peter 's act was one purely of faith.
5. Verses 10-11: “And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.”
 - a. Compare: “Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him” (Mark 1:16-20).
 - b. John 1:40-51: “One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

- 1) Note: We have good reason to believe that Nathanael and Bartholomew are the same person. See the table at the end of this chapter.
 - 2) Note: It appears to this student that this passage provides the initial meeting between Jesus and the men named; and that the passage of our text tells of the occasion when some of them actually began to follow the Lord.
 - c. Peter, James and John are specifically named; we would not be surprised if Andrew, Peter's brother, was also in the number: Compare: "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers" (Matt. 4:18).
 - d. Jamieson has this view about the calling of these fishermen: "In our exposition of Matt. 4:18–22, we have shown, as it appears to us, that this was quite a different occasion from that, and consequently that the calling of the disciples there and here recorded were different callings. This one, as we take it, was neither their first call, recorded in John 1:35–42; nor their second, recorded in Matt. 4:18–22; but their *third* and last before their appointment to the apostleship. These calls are to be viewed as progressive stages in their preparation for the great work before them, and something similar is observable in the providential preparation of other eminent servants of Christ for the work to which they are destined."
- B. Luke 5:12-17: A Leper is Cleansed.
1. Verse 12: "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."
 - a. Parallel Accounts:
 - 1) Mark 1:40-45: "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter."
 - 2) Matthew 8:2-4: "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."
 - b. The Lord stated that it was indeed his will that this man might be cleansed from his leprosy. He willed it so, and it immediately became so! Although he does not perform miracles today, he is as much interested in our ailments, sorrows, and problems as he was back then. Compare: "Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Heb. 13:5-6).
 2. Verse 13: "And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him."
 - a. Jesus touched him. Touching a leper was forbidden under Old Testament Law, and one who did so was "unclean" until certain requirements were met. Cf. Leviticus 13,14.
 - b. No one besides Jesus would dare touch him. Perhaps the man was cured an instant before the touch or as the very instant of the touch. In no way did he violate the Law. In Luke 7:14, Jesus touched the bier of the widow's son, without becoming unclean.
 - c. Boles: Jesus stretched forth his hand and touched him; it was considered a dangerous thing to touch a leper; the leper was unclean, and the one who touched him became unclean, but Jesus touched him with the healing power. When he touched him Jesus said: "I will; be thou made clean." The leper had
-

- thrown himself on the mercy of Jesus, and had faith strong enough to prostrate himself at the feet of Jesus; hence Jesus said, "I will." Some think that Jesus violated the law of Moses when he stretched forth his hand and touched the leper; however we may look for an interpretation of the law in the divinity of Jesus; the law had been given for those who were subjects to the law, but Jesus was himself the lawgiver. The man was healed immediately; "and straightway the leprosy departed from him." The cure was instantaneous; the leprosy, the cause of his defilement, "departed from him" at the very moment that Jesus spoke. [It was not possible for the Lord to contract leprosy—bw].
3. Verses 14-15: "And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities."
 - a. Although this man was physically cleansed from his leprosy, the Law of Moses which was then in effect, called on such a person to present himself to the Levitical priests. "When the disease had departed he was to be examined by a priest, to see if this were a fact, and then he was to procure two birds, one of which was to be slain and its blood caught in a vessel of running water; he was to be sprinkled seven times with this bloody water; was to wash his clothes, shave off his hair, and bathe his body in water, both on that day and the seventh day thereafter; and after all this he was clean. He was then allowed to approach the altar, where certain other offerings were to be presented. (See Lev. xiv. 1-20) [McGarvey, Mark, p.272].
 - b. Jesus sent this man away with three instructions: Do not report your cleansing to anyone; and present yourself to a priest; and offer the sacrifices specified by the Law of Moses. This man did not follow the first of these orders. Mark reports: "But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter" (Mark 1:45).
 - c. The obvious reason for telling the man not to report his cleansing was to keep the Lord from being so beset by even greater multitudes. Luke reports that despite his wishes, his fame spread even broader and the multitudes increased. In a time of limited medical aid, everyone who had an ailment, would have rushed to the great miracle-worker!
 4. Verses 16-17: "And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed. And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them."
 - a. The press of the multitudes and the demands on his time and physical strength, it was necessary for him to withdraw to some quiet place, to pray and to rest. "And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread" (Mark 3:20).
 - b. Our Lord did not waste his precious time and strength: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Christ was given work to be done during his personal ministry. We all know that when the end of life comes, we can no longer work. The hands that were so strong and skillful in life, lie folded in death, unable to do anything else in this world. When the Lord stated on the cross, "It is finished," he spoke of his earthly mission.
 - c. Mark describes this same episode: "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3:22-25).
 - d. Luke reports that these Jewish leaders came from Jerusalem, Judea, and the towns of Galilee; they are described as scribes, Pharisees and doctors of the law (of Moses). The scribes were considered to be specialists in the law since they made copies of it. The Pharisees were the strictest sect of the Jews; but they bound matters which God did not bind. The "doctors" were specialists in the law.
-

- e. Boles: "Doctors of the law" were teachers of the law. They were supposed to be men of learning and ability to expound the Jewish law; they were "law-teachers," lawyers, scribes. Distinguished hearers of the Pharisees and teachers of the law were "sitting by" in their dignity while the people stood; there seems to have been a general assembly of them from "every village of Galilee and Judaea and Jerusalem."
- f. Pulpit: "These had been drawn from curiosity, some doubtless by higher motives, to hear for themselves the teaching of this now famous Nazarene Carpenter. These do not appear to have been actuated with the jealous malignity of some of those later deputations from the Jerusalem Sanhedrin and schools. The house was thronged within, and the crowd pressed round the doors. In the course of the quiet teaching, took place the incident which gave rise to one of the Lord's great sayings—an utterance so important that it evidently had been chosen by the apostles as a frequent theme or text in the preaching of the first days."
- g. Luke reminds us that even in the presence of these learned enemies, the Lord still possessed the power to heal. He was both willing and able—these evil men could not intimidate him!

C. Luke 5:18-26: The Healing of the Palsied Man.

- 1. Verses 18-19: "And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus."
- a. Mark (2:1-12) reports this same episode. The invalid was unable to walk (he was paralyzed); his friends could not enter into the house because of the press of people. Mounting the top of the house, they made an opening in the roof and lowered the man down into the presence of Jesus.
- b. This story is also covered in Matthew 9: "And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (9:2). Luke gives additional details. Mark reports that the crowd was so great that the four men bearing their sick friend could not enter the house where Jesus was. They got on top of the house, removed part of the tile roof (cf. Lk. 5:19), and lowered the sick man, still on his bed, into the Lord's presence.
- c. Christ observed the faith of the four friends and said to the sick man, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." We have only two occasions where the Lord expressly stated, "Thy sins are forgiven" (Matt. 9:2; Luke 7:48; cf. Luke 23:43). Why the Lord addressed the man's sins is revealed in Matthew 9:6: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house."
- d. No mention is made of faith on the part of the palsied man. The Lord could dispense his blessings on man as he saw fit, with or without conditions, since his Law (his last will and testament) had not yet taken effect: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For **a testament is of force after men are dead**: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:15-17).
- e. Nothing was said about whether the afflicted man possessed faith, but the Lord beheld the faith of the four men who transported him. We do not doubt that the man had faith; when the Lord pardoned him from his sins, and then healed his body, he immediately arose, took up his bed, and left the gathering. He must have had much gratitude for what he had been freely given!
- f. The four friends had demonstrated their faith by getting the afflicted man to the right place, and doing what was necessary to get him into the house. The easy thing for them when they saw the press of the crowd at the door was to take their friend back home. There were at least two obstacles to their getting in to the house: mounting the roof and opening a hole in the roof.

- g. The palsied man was able to hear and understand. The Lord spoke directly to him. "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." No one would have expected this statement. The Lord's words to him show that the condition of the man's soul was more important than the state of his physical body. The man, being a Jew, was thereby a child of God. But he was also guilty of sin. Christ released him from the taint of his sinful condition; he knew exactly what he was going to do.
2. Verses 20-21: "And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"
- a. Luke 5:17 reports that certain Pharisees and doctors of the law were on hand and heard this remark to the sick man. Matthew and Mark refer to them as scribes. The things these enemies of Christ said were not aloud but "within themselves." Yet the Lord was fully aware of their thoughts. This ought to have alerted them to the fact that this was no ordinary man: he knew they were thinking evil in their hearts although this evil remained unspoken. Deity has the ability to read men's hearts. Notice, that it is the heart of man that thinks.
- 1) 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."
 - 2) 1 Chronicles 28:9: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."
 - 3) Jeremiah 17:10: "I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings."
 - 4) John 2:24-25: "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."
 - 5) Romans 8:27: "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*."
 - 6) Revelation 2:23: "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."
- b. These men were all thinking the same thing: "Jesus is blaspheming God; only God can forgive sins; he asserts he can forgive sins, thus is putting himself in the place of Almighty God!" "The scribes were right in charging him with blasphemy if he was not the Son of God. He doubtless made the remark for the purpose of forming this issue, and thereby preparing his hearers for the demonstration which followed" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.81). Their error was in assuming Jesus was merely a man.
- c. "The word *blaspheme* originally means to speak evil of anyone; to injure by words; to blame unjustly. When applied to God, it means to speak of him unjustly; to ascribe to him acts and attributes which he does not possess; or to speak impiously or profanely" (Barnes, Matthew, pp.97f).
- 1) Mark 3:28: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme."
 - 2) Romans 2:24: "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."
 - 3) 1 Timothy 1:20: "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."
 - 4) Revelation 13:6: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."
- d. Boles: They reached the conclusion that Jesus was a blasphemer, but were not courageous enough to accuse him of blasphemy to his face; in their reasoning they came to the conclusion that he was speaking words of blasphemy, because no man could forgive sins except God. Their reasoning was
-

logical, if their premises were true. Their argument was: "It is blasphemy for any but God to claim to forgive sins"; this man claims the power to forgive sins; therefore he is a blasphemer. If Jesus is not what he claimed to be, he is a blasphemer.

3. Verses 22-23: "But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"
 - a. Jesus raised the question: Which is harder to say: Your sins are forgiven, or Arise and walk? "Of course, one of these is as easily 'said' as the other; but the overwhelming impact of this lies in the plain truth, presented here by Christ, that a person who cannot do *both* can do *neither*! Those of every age who dare say, 'I absolve thee,' should prove their power really to do it by demonstrating the other side of the same power, performing miracles. Christ consented to do this, and 'the servant is not above his master' (Matt. 10:24). Inability to do the miracle is proof that the pretender is also unable to forgive sins" (Coffman, Matthew, p.120).
 - b. The power to work miracles does not itself mean the individual has also the authority to forgive sins: the apostles and others of the first century were empowered to perform miracles, but only Deity can forgive sins. However, if one who claims to have the authority to forgive sins and confirms his claim with a genuine, undeniable miracle, that one's authority has been proved.
 - 1) No one *not* having the authority to forgive sins could perform a miraculous act to prove a claim that he *has* the authority to forgive sins. God did not empower evil men or false teachers with the ability to perform miracles. He did not work a miracle to confirm a false doctrine.
 - 2) "The power to work miracles does not in itself imply the authority to forgive sins; but it does when the authority is asserted and the miracles are wrought in proof of it" (McGarvey, *ibid.*, p.81).
 - c. The Lord asserted his authority to forgive sins and then promptly and undeniably proved that authority by the miracle he immediately wrought, as well as by the many others which followed. No one could sanely deny the miracle.
 - 1) The man had been brought into the Lord's presence on a bed; he could not transport himself; when he left he was carrying his bed. He was a man whose condition was known: four friends brought him to Christ.
 - 2) "It would be impossible without a miracle for this paralytic to do as Jesus commanded him; that they might know that Jesus had both right and might, authority and power, to forgive sins on earth, he would command the man sick of palsy to arise and take up his bed and walk: if the man obeyed his command, then they would know that he had the power and authority to forgive sins" (Boles, p.204).
 - 3) He was healed easily, instantly, completely; there were no "magical" incantations, no agonizing, no long and loud prayers; there was no prior staging or preparations; it was done in plain view of all; there was no doubt about the genuineness of the miracle.
 - d. In order to prove to them that he had the right to forgive, it was necessary for him to perform such a miracle. One cannot do the one without the other.
 - e. John 20:22-23: "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Does this mean that the apostles could actually forgive sin?
 - f. John's account of the Great Commission is parallel with that reported in Matthew, Mark and Luke.
 - 1) This is parallel to the other accounts of the Great Commission:
 - a) Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - b) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

- c) Luke 24:46-49: “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved 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 among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”
- 2) The apostles could pardon sin only through the presentation of the facts, commands, promises and warnings of the gospel. Neither they nor we can forgive sins; but when we teach the soul-saving gospel of Christ, then those who will believe and obey the gospel will receive remission of sins.
4. Verses 24-26: “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, 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 to day.”
- a. “All eyes were fixed on the paralytic and were anxiously awaiting to see the results. If Jesus was what he claimed to be, he could heal this man or could forgive sins; if he were not what he claimed to be, he could do neither. Jesus calmly commanded the sick man, not only to arise, but to take the bed or couch upon which he lay and bear it away. The man immediately obeyed Jesus, took up his bed, departed out of the house, ‘glorifying God.’ The man in the presence of all, not only stood up, but showed that he was fully restored by immediately taking up his bed and departing from the house and going to his own house, praising God as he left. The evidence of the power of Jesus was manifested in the presence of all” (Boles).
- b. The effect of the miracle on the people was great; literally "amazement took hold on all"; they were brought into a state of wonder, fear, and dread. Very likely the scribes and Pharisees had never given Jesus the credit of working a real miracle; or if they had, they had never carried out in thought this reasoning: he who can work a miracle must have divine power, and therefore the right to forgive sins. Now they had both the fact and the inference to dispose of in their thought. If they had been honest minded before God, they must have come at once to the conclusion that Jesus was really divine, and therefore the Messiah who was to come. They had never seen or heard of anything that could compare to what Jesus was teaching and doing; their conclusion should have been in his favor. [*ibid.*].

D. Luke 5:27-39: Matthew the Publican is Called into the Apostleship.

1. Verses 27-28: “And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him.”
- a. Other accounts:
- 1) Mark 2:13-17: “And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
- 2) Matthew 9:9-13: “And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth,

- I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
- b. The brevity of the account given by Matthew of his own call suggests a high degree of modesty and humility on the part of Matthew. All Matthew reports is that as Jesus passed by, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the place of toll.
 - 1) As the Lord "passed by," he saw a man; many only saw a despised tax-collector. The call of Andrew and Simon and James and John (Matt. 4:18-22) appears to be spontaneous, but John 1 shows that contact had already been made with Jesus. It is possible that some kind of previous contact had been made also with Matthew.
 - 2) The very nature of collecting taxes is complicated and requires records to be kept. We do not suppose that Levi left his work without closing out his books or turning this work over to someone else. At the least, he would notify his supervisor about quitting his office. Clearly, he could not have continued collecting taxes for the hated Roman government and serve as an apostle of the Lord at the same time. The Jews would have hated him even more!
 - c. McGarvey:
 - 1) “He saw Levi—There were many who fished in the lake—There were many more who came in and out of the city—from all of these would Levi collect taxes. Jesus had already healed one leper—he is about to heal another—a social leper of the society of His day. Here was a Jew hired to collect taxes of his own people for the despised Romans. If such tax collectors were paid a common wage for their work it would have been scorned as an occupation—but when all knew they assessed beyond the amount prescribed and kept the overcharge for themselves it became a position of utter contempt.
 - 2) “By Mark alone is he called the son of Alphaeus. There is no reason to suppose that this was any other Alphaeus than the one referred to in all the lists of the apostles where we have “James, the son of Alphaeus.” In three of the lists he stands next to Matthew and Thomas, Matthew and James are thus presumably brothers; and if, as is almost certain, Thomas was the twin brother of Matthew, Alphaeus was the father of three of the twelve
 - 3) “We have no record of a previous acquaintance of Jesus on the part of Levi. We can assume the following: (1) He could have heard the preaching of vs. 13. (2) One of his brothers could have introduced Jesus to him. (3) He could have been among the other publicans who were baptized by John (Luke 3:12, 13: 7:29). (4) Peter said the apostles were followers of Jesus from the baptism—or baptizing of John (Acts 1:21-22).
 - 4) “We must conclude that when the words of Jesus Follow Me fell on his heart it was one prepared to receive them. Here was a hungry soul in the most unlikely of circumstances—but then our Lord found several of these—we think immediately of the woman at the well (John 4:7-38).
 - d. Luke’s account is found in 5:27-28: “And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him.”
 - e. The other accounts show that Jesus was eating a feast in Matthew's house, which this new disciple had provided. Matthew does not record that it was he who made this feast. During the course of the proceedings, certain publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus. These were probably former associates and friends of Matthew.
 - f. "The publicans and other sinners habitually neglected the law and the traditions in regard to legal purifications, and therefore the Pharisees regarded it as incompatible with religious purity to associate with them" (McGarvey, p.82).
2. Verses 29-30: “And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?”
-

- a. "The Pharisees were not present at the feast, but they could pass along the street and observe what was going on in Matthew's house; the self-righteous Pharisee would not pollute himself by going into the house of a publican and making common with sinners" (Boles, Matthew, p.206). Thus, they asked the disciples of Jesus why their Lord ate with such people. His association with such people was shocking to their sense of morality. However, they were operating by tradition, not by God's word.
 - b. Publican: "Publican—one who farmed the taxes (e.g., Zacchaeus, Luke 19:2) to be levied from a town or district, and thus undertook to pay to the supreme government a certain amount. In order to collect the taxes, the publicans employed subordinates (5:27; 15:1; 18:10), who, for their own ends, were often guilty of extortion and peculation. In New Testament times these taxes were paid to the Romans, and hence were regarded by the Jews as a very heavy burden, and hence also the collectors of taxes, who were frequently Jews, were hated, and were usually spoken of in very opprobrious terms. Jesus was accused of being a "friend of publicans and sinners" (Luke 7:34)" [Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
3. Verses 31-32: "And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
- a. Matthew's account: "But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (9:12-13).
 - b. "Had Jesus been unable to vindicate himself in reference to these associations, his cause would have been damaged in the estimation of many good persons. But he here presents three brief arguments which are so conclusive, and so tersely expressed, that they must have taken his accusers by surprise" (McGarvey, pp.206f).
 - c. Those in need of a physician are sick people; those who are well have no need to seek medical assistance or treatment. If Jesus was to heal the spiritual ills of men, it was necessary for him to go where they were. Who could argue with such logic!
 - d. God had said in Hosea 6:6 that he wanted mercy and not sacrifice. It would do man little good to be careful to observe the outward formalities of the Law while ignoring the mercy which God also required.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 15:22: "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams."
 - 2) Micah 6:8: "He hath showed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"
 - 3) Matthew 23:23: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."
 - e. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance; to do this he must talk to them. This does not imply that the Pharisees did not need to repent; they had the appearance of being righteous, but the publicans and sinners obviously needed to repent.
 - f. The Great Commission is the embodiment of the work of the Great Physician [ASV]:
 - 1) Matthew 28:18-20: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."
-

- 3) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."
4. Verse 33: "And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?"
- a. Matthew's account: "Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?" (9:14). John's disciples came with a logical question. They fasted regularly as did the Pharisees, but Jesus' disciples did not. Why not? Mark's account shows that some of the Pharisees were with them in asking this question.
 - b. Consider: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14).
 - c. The Pharisees regularly fasted twice weekly, on Monday and Thursday, and on other special occasions (personal or national emergencies). "Fasting twice in the week was regarded by the Pharisees as a mark of superior piety (Luke 18:12) The feast at Matthew's house, which occurred on a fast day...very naturally brought the matter up for consideration, because it shocked the sensibility of the objectors" (McGarvey, p.83).
5. Verses 34-35: "And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."
- a. Matthew's account: "And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (9:15-17).
 - b. He asks whether the children of the bridechamber can mourn (which was done when one fasted) while the bride groom was present. The friends of the groom, his close friends, were called "sons of the bridechamber" because they "had access to it during the bridal week; the guests invited to a wedding go for joy and to have a good time generally; they go to feast and not to fast" (Boles, Matthew, p.209).
 - 1) When the groom departed, or was no longer accessible to these friends, or if he were taken away by accident or sickness, then there would be occasion for fasting. But while the wedding feast was in progress, then was the time for merriment and happiness.
 - 2) Jesus describes himself here as the bridegroom and his disciples as the sons of the bridechamber. While he was present with them, there was no reason for sadness and fasting. But the time is coming when the groom will be taken away (an allusion to his death); then will be the time for them to mourn.
 - 3) Notice that the Pharisees would be ringleaders in the murder of Jesus. They often bound piddling rules and complained when Jesus ignored them, but they were not averse to murder.
 - 4) The first answer is that his disciples did not fast because they had no cause to fast. The rule of regular fasting was man-made anyhow.
 - c. "No one 'seweth' a new piece of cloth, rough from the weaver, 'undressed,' unshrunk, upon an old garment; if it should be done the new would shrink and would rend the garment" (Boles, p.209). "He draws an argument from the absurdity of putting a patch of *new* (properly rendered *unfulled*) cloth on
-

an old garment. The unfulled piece, never having been shrunk, would shrink the first time it got wet, and would tear open the rent still wider" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.84).

- 1) In this illustration, the old, torn garment represents the old law; the new cloth stands for the gospel; Jesus did not come to make his new law a part of the old, merely a patch for the "rents" in the old.
 - 2) This would have destroyed the old law; he came to fulfill the old and to give an entirely new and different law—the New Testament. He was instituting a new system which did not call for or allow for their traditional fasts.
 - 3) Hebrews 8:6-13: "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."
- d. McGarvey thinks that all three illustrations are identical in application and simply show that it was not appropriate for his disciples to fast while he was with them: it was inappropriate for the bride-grooms' friends to mourn while he was there, it would be inappropriate to patch an old garment with an unshrunk piece of new cloth, or to put new wine in old wineskins.
- 1) Coffman asserts that the new wine is the gospel and the old wineskins were John's disciples and the new wineskins were the disciples of Christ.
 - 2) Boles suggests that this latter illustration was "intended to teach that his disciples were correct in not following the traditions of the Pharisees in fasting" (p.210).
 - 3) Luke adds this thought: "And no man having drunk old wine desireth new: for he saith, The old is better" (5:38). This lends credence to McGarvey's view.
6. Verses 36-39: "And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."
- a. "Only new wineskins could serve for unfermented or new wine. After fermentation, the skins hardened and became brittle, thus becoming entirely unsuitable for new wine, yet continuing to serve well enough as containers for old wine" (Coffman, p.125). This is identical in application to the preceding: the new wine of the gospel was not intended to be poured into the old wineskin of Moses' law. It was so powerful that it would burst asunder that old law and destroy it.
 - b. But McGarvey thinks that all three illustrations are identical in application and simply show that it was not appropriate for his disciples to fast while he was with them: it was inappropriate for the bridegrooms' friends to mourn while he was there, it would be inappropriate to patch an old garment with an unshrunk piece of new cloth, or to put new wine in old wineskins.
-

Listings of the Twelve Apostles Are Given in the Following Four Passages:

Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:13
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter
Andrew	James	Andrew	John
James, Son of Zebedee	John	James	James
John	Andrew	John	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
James, son of Alphaeus	James	James	James
Lebbeus, Thaddeus	Thaddeus	Simon Zelotes	Simon Zelotes
Simon the Canaanite	Simon	Judas, son of James	Judas, son of James
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

Luke Chapter 6

A. Luke 6:1-12: Regarding the Sabbath Day.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands."
 - a. The word *corn* in the King James Version has reference to barley or wheat, not to what Americans call corn. Footpaths ran next to the grain fields and those who passed by were allowed to pluck the heads of grain and eat it as they traveled; it would have been stealing if they had tried to harvest the heads in a larger number.
 - b. The Mosaic Law gave them the right to thus eat as they traveled. "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn" (Deut. 23:25).
 - c. Luke 6:1 says they rubbed the grain out in their hands. Wheat or barley could easily be removed from the head and eaten directly, although that was not a pleasant way to eat, as farm boys know. Our teeth are not made to crush such small items.
 - d. The Pharisees could always find fault with what our Lord said or did. Is there anything easier to find than "fault?" In this case, they held up their human traditions about the Sabbath to excoriate Jesus and his disciples.
2. Verses 2-4: "And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days? And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him; How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?"
 - a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Matthew 12:1-8: "At that season Jesus went on the sabbath day through the grainfields; and his disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears and to eat. But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which it is not lawful to do upon the sabbath. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was hungry, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and ate the showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? But I say unto you, that one greater than the temple is here. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath" (ASV),
 - 2) Mark 2:23-28: "And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
 - b. Christ said the disciples were without guilt when they plucked and ate on the Sabbath day. The only things they had transgressed were the Rabbinical traditions. The Talmud says: "In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered as sifting; if she rubs heads of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side-adherencies, it is sifting out fruit; if she bruises the ears, it is grinding; if she throws them up in her hand, it is winnowing" (ALC, 1959, p.130).
 - c. The Lord replied by showing that his accusers were being inconsistent when they justified David's unlawful act and condemned the disciples' action which he shows to have been lawful and right.

- d. "Jesus expressly admits that what David did was unlawful; and some have supposed that he here intends to justify it on the ground of necessity, and then to argue that his disciples, though guilty of violating the law of the Sabbath, are justifiable on the same ground. There is no doubt that on this ground David excused himself for eating the showbread, and that the Pharisees did the same for him.
- 1) "But it can not be that he who refused to turn stones into bread when tortured by a forty days' fast, and who said, 'Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,' would approve such a violation of law as David was guilty of. Neither can it be that he allowed his own disciples while under the law to break the Sabbath. If Christians may violate law when its observance would involve hardship or suffering, then there is an end of suffering for the name of Christ, and an end even of self-denial.
 - 2) "But it is clear that by the Pharisees David's act was thought excusable; otherwise they could have retorted on Jesus thus: Out of your own mouth we condemn you: you class your act with David's; but David sinned, and so do you.
 - 3) "Now the real argument of Jesus is this: David, when hungry, ate the show-bread, which it was confessedly unlawful for him to eat, yet you justify him: my disciples pluck grain and eat it on the Sabbath, an act which the law does not forbid, and yet you condemn them" (McGarvey, p.104).
- e. The showbread was replaced each Sabbath day, and the old bread eaten only by the priests: "And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute" (Lev. 24:9).
- f. "Just as the priests were required to perform some manual labor on the Sabbath in meeting the demands of the temple worship, just so it was in the case of Christ and his disciples. The service which they rendered to him sometimes prevented their obtaining food in the usual way, and they were therefore put to the necessity of gathering it as they did on the Sabbath day in question; and since Christ himself is greater than the temple, those serving him were justified in performing a needful service on the Sabbath If the priests in the temple can profane the Sabbath and remain guiltless, how much more can the disciples of him who is greater than the temple do so in his service and by his authority?" (ALC, 1959, p.131).
3. Verse 5: "And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
- a. Mark 2:27-28: "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
 - b. Christ affirmed that the Sabbath was made for the benefit of man; man was not made for the Sabbath. God saw the need for man to rest one day of the week. During the Mosaic Age, during which time the Sabbath was in effect, the Jewish people were to work the first six days of the week. When the weather was inclement of course outside work could not be done. Also, during the time when their crops were "laid-by," there was no need for field work. The crops would naturally grow to maturity and later be ready for gathering. For those who know little about the former activities of farmers, when the crops reached a stage of development that no cultivation was needed, the farmer could turn his efforts to other activities of his work. And during the winter, no work was necessary or perhaps even possible in the fields. God provided a weekly day of rest for the Israelites; a day which was to be used also for spiritual purposes.
 - c. Coffman:
 - 1) "Sabbath made for man, not man for sabbath ... is a reference to the sabbath: (1) as God made it, and (2) not as the Pharisees made it. God indeed had made it for man; and quite early in the history of the sabbath law a man decided that his "human needs" took precedence over it, picking up sticks on the sabbath. Did God approve of such conduct? He commanded Israel to stone the man to death. Christ was one with the Father, and it cannot be argued that Jesus was here critical of the way God made the sabbath for man. On the other hand, the Pharisees, by their unbelievable multiplication of little frills and furbelows [*decorations*] regarding sabbath-keeping, and their extrapolation of the basic God-given laws concerning it to include an entire dictionary of 'do's' and 'don't's' God never
-

- heard of, and then by their construing their own doodlings in that regard as on an equality with the law of God and as even more sacred than God's law—that was making man for the sabbath!
- 2) “The Son of man is lord even of the sabbath ... ‘Son of man’ as used in Psalms 8 is merely a synonym for man; but that should not be allowed to contravene Jesus' use of the words in a unique sense as applicable only to himself. In Christ's usage of this title it refers to one who has the power to forgive sins (Mark 2:10), hence to himself as God. Jesus meant everything by this title that he meant by ‘Son of God,’ the evident reason for his preference for ‘Son of man’ deriving from its freedom of the secular connotations (in the Jewish mind) of ‘Son of God.’ The latter title they identified with ‘Messiah,’ the re-establishment of Solomon's throne, and the lifting of the yoke of Roman tyranny.”
 - d. “These verses contain an argument not reported by either Matthew or Luke. That the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, implies that when the welfare of man conflicts with the observance of the Sabbath, the latter must give way. But of this, man himself is not to judge, because he can not judge with impartiality his own interests. No one is competent to judge in the case who does not know all that pertains to the welfare of man, and this is known only by the Lord. For this reason Jesus adds, ‘Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath;’ that is, as the Son of man came to provide for man’s welfare, and as the Sabbath law might need modification or even abrogation for the highest good of man, therefore lordship over the Sabbath was given to the Son of man. The passage teaches, then, not that men might violate the law of the Sabbath when their welfare seemed to them to demand it, but that Jesus could set it aside, as he afterward did, when his own judgment of man’s welfare required him to do so” (McGarvey).
4. Verses 6-7: “And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.”
- a. Luke states the events of this occasion was on a different Sabbath day. In Matthew’s account, we are told that his enemies precipitated the issue by asking whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. They were not interested in truth, but to expose the Lord as being in violation to their notions about what could be done on the seventh day of the week.
 - b. Matthew reports this scene in 12:9-13: “And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, **What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep?** Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.”
 - c. A withered hand would be as we can visualize; it was shrunken and weak; it could not keep pace with the normal hand. Maybe the problem hand had not developed as the other had; or perhaps an injury or disease had afflicted it.
 - d. The Lord added a side note to the matter in Matthew’s account:
 - 1) "The argument in this case is drawn from the practice of his accusers, and on their account it is an argument *ad hominem*; but the practice was proper in itself, and therefore it is also an argument *ad rem*. Assuming, with the consent of all parties, that it was lawful to relieve the sufferings of 'one sheep' on the Sabbath, he argues, much more is it lawful to do the same for a man; and hence the general conclusion that 'it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days.' It is not an excusable violation of law, but it is *lawful*. From the two disputations taken together, the people learned that works of religion, like those of the priests in the temple, and works of humanity, like feeding the hungry and healing the sick, were lawful on the Sabbath" (McGarvey, p.105). Note: *ad hominem* [personal; to the person]; *ad rem* [to the point; to the matter].
-

- 2) Even the Pharisees would think it right to pull an ox from a ditch on the Sabbath. They could see the truth when a beast was involved, but in their blindness of heart they could not see it when it was applied to a man.
 - a) Exodus 23:4-5: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."
 - b) Deuteronomy 22:4: "Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again."
 - e. It was obviously right to do good on the Sabbath; doing so was not a violation of the Sabbath law for there was a higher principle involved. Their many additions to God's law on the Sabbath were entirely without God's approval.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 4:2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
 - 2) Mark 7:5-9: "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."
 5. Verses 8-9: "But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?"
 - a. The Lord knew what was in the minds of those who opposed him. They asked their question, but without even a word being expressed, Jesus knew what they were thinking.
 - b. In response to their question, he told the man with the withered hand to stand up in the midst of the audience. He wanted them to see that a physical problem truly afflicted the man, and that the healing was likewise accomplished.
 - c. First, the Lord asked whether it was in keeping with the Mosaic Law to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath. Was it lawful to save a life or to destroy a life on the Sabbath?
 - d. Jesus now put them in a dilemma; he asked them: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm?" They must admit that it was lawful to do good; they must also admit that it is wrong to do harm or fail to do good when one has an opportunity. Some understand this to mean that the question is used in a general sense other than in a particular sense. However, Jesus first asks in regard to doing good or evil in a general sense on the Sabbath, and then in a particular sense, to destroy life or to save life. [Boles].
 6. Verses 10-11: "And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus."
 - a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. Boles: Mark records (3:5) that Jesus "looked round about on them with anger"; he had a righteous indignation because of the hardness of their hearts. He silenced his opposer and then proceeded to heal the afflicted hand. He performed the miracle without any bodily effort, or any word except the command, "stretch forth thy hand." The man obeyed and "his hand was restored." The enemies of Jesus could not charge him with laboring on the Sabbath; he did no work, but spoke to the man. The healing took place immediately; Jesus had only to speak and the man had to obey. The faith of the man is
-

brought into its natural relation to his obedience and cure. Jesus gave the command; the man believed, and obeyed, and received the blessing.

- c. These legalists were disarmed. That the man's hand was restored by miracle, they could not deny! And the Lord did nothing at all physically. He merely asked the man to stretch forth his withered hand. The man did no overt work; he put forth his bad hand. Even the most stringent Pharisee moved himself in many ways during the Sabbath. Even God's law of the Sabbath did not require anyone to remain entirely inert on that special day!
- d. Mark 3:6: "And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him." They were filled with rage! There was nothing they could say or do about what the Lord had just accomplished.
- e. Mark 3:5: "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."
 - 1) NKJ: 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.
 - 2) We are specifically told that the Lord looked toward his enemies with anger! Among other things, this passage shows that anger is not sinful of itself—the Lord was without sin of any kind (Heb. 4:15), yet he was angry on this occasion. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

B. Luke 6:12-16: The Apostles.

1. Verse 12: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."
 - a. Coffman: The humanity of Jesus is emphasized in Luke, the frequent mention of Jesus' prayers evidently having that purpose in view. Since the God-man continued all night in prayer, who is there among his followers who need not to continue steadfastly in prayers? Frank L. Cox wrote: Every great undertaking in our lives should be preceded by a season of solitude and prayer. This will assure us of God's presence and power in our undertaking.
 - b. We are told that he selected the twelve. "These he purposed to train up as the authorized exponents of his doctrine, and as the future leaders of his Church. Things had assumed a new aspect during the last few months. Jerusalem and the hierarchy, supported by the great teachers of that form of Judaism which for so long a period had swayed the hearts of the people, had, although not yet openly, declared against the views and teaching of Jesus. His acts—but far more his words—had gathered round him, especially in Galilee, in the north and central districts of Palestine, a large and rapidly increasing following. It was necessary that some steps should be taken at once to introduce among the people who had received his words gladly ... hence the formal choice of the twelve, who from henceforth stood nearest to him" (Pulpit Commentary).
2. Verse 13: "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles."
 - a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Mark 3:17-19: "And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house."
 - 2) Matthew 10:1-4: "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew;

- Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.”
- b. They are called apostles here for Christ was sending them forth: "apostle" means "one sent." Christ and Moses were sent by God (thus were apostles of God—Heb. 3:1); Barnabas was sent (along with Paul) on a missionary journey by the church at Antioch (thus he was an apostle of the church—Acts 14:14); Matthias was selected in Acts 1 to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Judas; Paul was appointed as apostle of Christ to the Gentiles.
- 1) Acts 9:15: "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."
 - 2) Romans 1:1: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:8-9: "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."
 - 4) Galatians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)."
- c. 2 Corinthians 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The apostles were Christ's representatives on earth. Their power was given to them, miraculously and directly, from heaven. They did not develop the message they preached, but received it entirely by inspiration. "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11).
- 1) These apostles had no replacements. Despite the empty claims made by the popes and others, Christ has no living apostles on earth today. The original apostles are still *reigning* through the word which was delivered to humanity by them. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28).
 - 2) Only the apostles were given the promise of Holy Spirit baptism, which would fully empower them to discharge the great obligations for which they were prepared. Such promises as those found in Luke 24:49, John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:12-13, and Acts 1:5, 8 were intended only for the apostles of Christ.
 - a) Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - b) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
 - c) John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
 - d) John 16:12-13: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."
 - e) Acts 1:5, 8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 3) Only the apostles were empowered to bear witness of the Lord's resurrection.
-

- a) Acts 10:39-42: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."
- b) Acts 4:33: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."
- d. Every child of God is a disciple (learner), and any child of God can make another disciple (Matt. 28:19-20); but only Christ could select an apostle on the order of the twelve and Paul. "Inasmuch as one of the chief duties of an apostle was to bear witness of Jesus, it was necessary therefore that the apostle see Christ. (Cf. Acts 1:21,22; 26:16,16.)" (ALC, 1959, p.119).
 - 1) Acts 1:21-22: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."
 - 2) Acts 26:16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
3. Verses 14-16: "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 Zelotes, And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor."
 - a. Peter is listed first in each of the lists of the apostles, but not because he was superior to the others (cf. 2 Cor. 12:12-13; Matt. 16:18; 18:18; Acts 2:1-4). He did not possess more power or authority than the other apostles; he simply lived up to his name, *Cephas* (a stone: John 1:42). He was rash, unstable, and impetuous at first, but became strong, resolute and firm under the influence of Christ.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 12:12-13: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."
 - 2) Matthew 16:18: " And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - 3) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." [All the apostles were included].
 - 4) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - b. Matthew and Mark list Thaddeus, while Luke in his two lists has Judas the son of James; Thaddeus (also called Lebbaeus by Matthew) is likely the same as this Judas.
 - c. Matthew and Mark list Simon the Canaanite, while in Luke's lists he is called Simon Zelotes (Simon the Zealot). "'Zealot' is a translation into Greek of the Aramaic 'Canaanaean.' Both terms indicate Simon's connection with the Zealot party of Galilee, a sect which stood for the recovery of Jewish freedom and the maintenance of distinctive Jewish institutions" (ALC, 1959, p.120).
 - 1) "The original is the Syro-Chaldaic name of a sect among the Jews, who took into their own hands, without process of law, the punishment of flagrant offenses. They acted the same part in Jewish

society that those bands of men sometimes called 'Regulators' perform in American society at the present day; and they justified their conduct by the example of Phinehas, who, in the time of general corruption about Baal-peor, executed summary vengeance on Zimri and Cozbi. (See Num. 25)" (McGarvey, pp.88f).

2) We know less about this Simon than any of the other apostles. He is not mentioned by name outside these four lists.

d. Judas Iscariot: "*Iscariot* designates Judas by his former place of residence. It means a man of Kerioth, a town in the tribe of Judah. (Josh. 15:25)" (McGarvey, p.89).

e. Matthew is called *the publican*. "Notwithstanding the reproach attached to the name *publican*, and the long period since Matthew had ceased to be a publican when his narrative was written, he still writes himself, 'Matthew the publican.'" (McGarvey, p.88).

f. Bartholomew is in all four lists but many Bible scholars think he is the Nathanael of John 1:45 and 21:2. These are the only two places his name is given. The reasons given why Nathanael is thought to be identical to Bartholomew are:

1) Both passages list him with the apostles of Christ or those who became apostles.

2) In the Synoptics, Bartholomew is always named immediately after Philip; John joins Nathanael with Philip.

3) Nathanael is not mentioned by the Synoptic writers and Bartholomew is not named by John.

C. Luke 6:17-26: Jesus and his Apostles Meet a Great Multitude.

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

a. Coffman does not think that the presentation in this chapter is the same episode as that which is given in Matthew 5-7. In other words, the truth the Lord taught in the Sermon on the Mount could very well have been presented on other occasions. This scribe is strongly inclined to agree.

b. Coffman: "This is Luke's prelude to the Great Sermon generally identified with the Sermon on the Mount; but the conviction here is that there is no way, logically, to view this as a report of the same sermon Matthew recorded. This sermon followed immediately upon the naming of the Twelve; Matthew's was long before that time. This sermon was on the plain, Matthew's on the mountain; here Jesus stood, there he sat. This sermon has thirty verses in the record; Matthew's has over a hundred. The beatitudes, as uttered here, are unlike those in Matthew. The woes given here are not in Matthew at all."

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

a. Other versions:

1) ASV: "And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed. And all the multitude sought to touch him; for power came forth from him, and healed them all."

2) NKJ: "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."

b. All those who needed his healing power, received it, even those who were troubled with unclean spirits. Some who merely touched the Lord also received his miraculous divine healing.

c. Other such cases:

1) Mark 5:30: "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?"

2) Luke 8:46: "And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."

3. Verse 20-21: "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for

ye shall laugh.” Similar statements are made in Matthew 5, which form a commentary on what Luke here records:

- a. Matthew 5:3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 1) The poor in spirit are those who are the opposite of the proud and self-righteous; they are the humble ones who understand their lowly state as compared to the Lord.
 - 2) It describes those who are contrite and reverent; it is the beginning point for those who seek to enter God's spiritual kingdom and go on to heaven.
 - 3) Those who have a sense of their own unworthiness are poor in spirit. The prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32), the Publican (Lk. 18:9-13), and the Pentecostians (Acts 2:37), saw themselves as they really were. The first step toward true happiness is this humble attitude. "For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*" (Isa. 66:2).
- b. Matthew 5:4: “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”
 - 1) But those who mourn in reference to sin will be comforted. "The mourning referred to springs from sympathy with God, whose will is so grievously disregarded and thwarted by men" (Boles, p.121). Consider again the plight of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32).
 - 2) The mourning considered here is over our own sins; it produces repentance which can result in salvation. Godly sorrow (mourning) produces repentance, which results in salvation, which in turn gives happiness! "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" (Matt. 11:28-30). To labor and be heavily laden (mourning) gives rest (comfort and happiness).
- c. Matthew 5:6: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”
 - 1) Righteousness is that state of acceptability which we acquire when we obey the righteous commands of God. It is the state of justification that comes with forgiveness of sins.
 - a) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - b) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - c) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
 - 2) The gospel is God's plan which, when an individual sincerely believes and obeys its conditions, is the means by which we are made righteous.
 - a) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - b) This righteousness is not that state of righteousness that pertains to the Father's holy person: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:1-3). The Jews were not ignorant of the fact that God has righteousness; they were ignorant of the gospel which is his means for making men righteous. His plan for making men to be righteous is revealed in the gospel. "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being

witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe" (Rom. 3:21-22, ASV).

4. Verse 22: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake."
 - a. Matthew 5:10-11: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."
 - b. Persecution for faithful saints is real (2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thess. 3:3-4; John 16:33; Mark 10:30; Jas. 1:2-3, 12; cf. John 3:19-20). A loyal Christian is different from the worldly-minded person. The world sees the distinction between itself and the faithful. A sinner realizes saints are holier than he, and resents it. But instead of making the needed changes, he rather makes charges (1 Pet. 4:4; Acts 13:45-46; John 15:18-20). A Christian's holy life rebukes sinners. Sometimes this influences some to obey the gospel; often it hardens sinners against us and the truth.
 - c. Persecution came to Abel (Gen. 4:8); to Moses (Ex. 5:21; Num. 12:1); to David (1 Sam. 18:8-11); to Jeremiah (Jer. 15:15; 20:7-9); to Daniel (Dan. 6:4, 16, 20); to John (Mark 6:17-20); to the apostles (John 16:1-4; Acts 4,5,12); to Paul (2 Cor. 11:23-28); to the saints in general (Acts 8:1ff); and to Christ (Isa. 42:3; 53). It comes to us today in various degrees.
 - d. By whom are the righteous persecuted? By foes within and without the kingdom (Mark 14:1; Luke 4:24; Matt. 22; 23; 2 Cor. 11:26-28). Religious people were the great persecutors of Christ and Paul.
 - e. This beatitude suggests some general truths about Christ and his people. The world did not, and still does not, like Christ. It hated him then and does so even now. Why do they take his name in vain? Why is his gospel hated and opposed? The gospel exposes sin of every kind!
 - f. Coffman: The principles taught here are non-resistance to evil, the overcoming of evil with good, and patient submissiveness to encroachment against one's personal rights. Ours is an era when men are screaming demands for their "rights"; but the Christian way includes the renunciation of rights, rather than the violent defense of them. It is not indicated that Christ intended such an attitude to be maintained absolutely under all conditions. The application of them to the conduct of the Christian, however, should be as extensive as possible, and much further, no doubt than is usually the case.
5. Verse 23: "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."
 - a. Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - b. What should be the attitude and reaction on the part of a Christian when persecution comes? Should he whine, complain, or indulge in self-pity? It was difficult for Jesus to suffer and die. It was trying for him to live on earth, suffer from lack of proper food and housing, to endure the envy and hatred and opposition of his enemies, to bear the agony of Gethsemane, to accept the horrible beatings of the scourgers, to face the cruel mockings of the soldiers and the religious leaders, to abide the rejection of those he had sought to help, to endure being separated from the Father while bearing the sins of the world on the cross, and to suffer the horrible physical pain and moral shame of dying as he did! None of this was easy for our Savior!
 - 1) We must refuse the impulse to retaliate (Rom. 12:17-21; 1 Pet. 2:21ff).
 - 2) We must not allow ourselves to become so discouraged that we give up the fight (Luke 4:16-17; Matt. 13:20-21; 1 Tim. 6:12; Eph. 6:10-18; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10).
 - 3) We are to pray for our tormentors (Matt. 5:43-48; Lk. 23:34; Acts 7:60).
 - c. We are to rejoice and be exceeding glad for our persecutions (Acts 16:25; 4:40-42; Matt. 5:10-12). We know that while our enemies may take away our physical belongings, comfort and life, they cannot deprive us of our heavenly mansion! Matthew 10:28; John 14:1-3. And we can know that the trying of our faith through persecution can increase our steadfastness (Jas. 1:2-4). The reward of such faith

is great, in heaven (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 5:1-10). This puts us also in exceedingly good company: the ancient people of God.

- d. Heaven will be worth every opposition we face, all evil words spoken against us, and even the many advantages we might have otherwise obtained. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). This is one of the great passages of the New Testament dealing with a description of heaven and the quality of life we will enjoy there. We are given a list of five negatives following the affirmation that God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. We need not be concerned as to how God will wipe away all tears. That he is able to do so is sufficient to all those who believe God means what he says and trust him to fulfill all his promises.
- 1) **No more death:** since all who will abide there will have incorruptible, immortal, spiritual bodies, death will not have any effect. Indeed, following the Lord's return, death will be utterly abolished (1 Cor. 15:25-28; Heb. 2:14). Death is the cause of much of the sorrow that we experience here; but in the long view, it is in the best interest of mankind. Without death, the wicked would only grow more wicked, the sick would become sicker, the pain would only grow more intense—with no relief possible; and for faithful Christians, it is the doorway through which we must pass in order to obtain eternal life in heaven.
 - 2) **No more sorrow.**
 - a) There are many causes for sorrow in this life: death of a loved one; sickness; financial problems; accidents; war; separation; marital difficulties; social dilemmas.
 - b) All of these will be totally absent from heaven!
 - 3) **No more crying.**
 - a) "No Tears In Heaven" is the scriptural title for a beautiful and encouraging hymn.
 - b) There will be nothing to cause us to cry there.
 - 4) **No more pain.**
 - a) Many people live in constant pain in their diseased or maimed physical bodies, but in heaven we will receive perfect, spiritual bodies which will not be subject to pain.
 - b) 2 Corinthians 5:1-10: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - c) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (ASV).
 - d) 1 Peter 1:3-5: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

- e) 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
- 5) **The former things are passed away.**
- a) The earthly conditions which were painful, hard, and dangerous will not be allowed in heaven: they will have passed away.
 - b) Sin, the root cause of grief, pain, death, etc., will have been destroyed.
6. Verse 24: "But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation."
- a. Barnes: "In this world's goods. They loved them; they had sought for them; they found their consolation in them. It implies, farther, that they would not seek or receive consolation from the gospel. They were proud, and would not seek it; satisfied, and did not desire it; filled with cares, and had no time or disposition to attend to it. All the consolation which they had reason to expect they had received. Alas! how poor and worthless is such consolation, compared with that which the gospel would give!"
 - b. This specific thought is not in the Sermon in the Mount [Matt. 5-7], although Jesus taught it elsewhere.
 - 1) As in the case if the story of the real-life experiences of the wicked rich man and Lazarus, who had to beg for a living (Luke 16:19-31). Compare: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Luke 16:25).
 - 2) Matthew 6:2: "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, **They have their reward.**"
 - 3) Matthew 6:5: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, **They have their reward.**"
 - 4) Matthew 6:16: "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, **They have their reward.**"
 - 5) Luke 12:15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
 - 6) Matthew 6:19-20: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."
 - 7) 2 Peter 2:13: "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you."
7. Verse 25: "Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger."
- a. Again, the specific thought is not in the Sermon in the Mount.
 - b. Barnes:
 - 1) Not hungry. Satisfied with their wealth, and not feeling their need of anything better than earthly wealth can give. Many, alas! are thus "full." They profess to be satisfied. They desire nothing but wealth, and a sufficiency to satisfy the wants of the body. They have no anxiety for the riches that shall endure forever.
 - 2) [Ye shall hunger] Your property shall be taken away, or you shall see that it is of little value; and then you shall see the need of something better. You shall feel your want and wretchedness, and shall "hunger" for something to satisfy the desires of a dying, sinful soul.
-

- c. Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - d. "The pursuit of earthly treasures is a disease that feeds and increases upon itself...The possession of any number of units does not satisfy the 'collector' but only sends him avidly in search of more. This hungry pursuit of wealth, or any earthly achievement, pierces the pursuer through with many sorrows, temptations, and snares, as well as thrusting him into many foolish and hurtful lusts 'which drown men in perdition' (1 Tim. 6:9,10). In addition to this, there is the uncertainty of earthly treasures. Christ here mentioned moth and rust and thieves, elementary sources of loss which have hardly changed since our Lord spoke these words. Riches make themselves wings and fly away (Prov. 23:5). If one is tempted to disbelieve it, let him ask any man who has seen a flood, a tornado, an earthquake, a volcano, a change in fashion, a war, a revolution, the death of a partner, the betrayal of a sacred trust, a serious illness, or an automobile accident, or any of a million other things that continually illustrate the truth of this divine wisdom" (Coffman, p.85).
 - e. Treasures in heaven are safe. These are spiritual in nature and eternal in scope; they are **reserved** in heaven. "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:3-5).
 - f. "The security of such treasures against the moth and the rust and the thieves which threaten earthly possessions is presented as a motive to obedience. The contrast is very striking. No man who pauses a single moment for reflection can fail to realize it" (McGarvey, p.66).
8. Verse 26: "Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets."
- a. Boles:
 - 1) This was spoken to his disciples; they should not court the favor of men; neither should they seek to please men. The reason given here is that "in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets." This woe is opposite to the beatitudes in verses 22 and 23. "All men" is a term used to include the world. A Christian should strive to have "good testimony from them that are without" (1 Tim. 3:7), but when his words and conduct are such as to please and delight the ungodly, affording no reproof for their wicked practices, he should be alarmed.
 - 2) "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God." (James 4:4.) The fathers sought to please "the false prophets" by encouraging them in their wicked ways, and the false prophets sought to please the people by crying "peace, peace"! when there was no peace. (1 Kings 22:6-14; Jer. 23:14; 28:10, 11; Ezek. 13:10, 11.)
 - b. "It should also be observed of the man who is superlatively blessed has always been the reverse of what is here taught. The doctrine was new and strange, not only to the heathen world, but even to the most cultivated students of the Mosaic law; yet those who have received the fullness of grace that is in Christ, have learned to realize the unquestionable truth of all these maxims" (McGarvey, p.51).
 - c. Again, Boles:
 - 1) **Woe unto you, ye that are full now!**—This is the opposite of those who have spiritual hunger. This class has no cravings after spiritual food, but are satisfied with the worldly pleasures which only the earth can give. There is coming a time when they shall "hunger." When they are brought to their senses and are bereft of all spiritual food, then they shall famish for need of that which only can make the soul happy in the world to come. This will be an endless hunger.
-

- 2) **Woe unto you, ye that laugh now!**—This woe is the opposite of weeping in verse 21. Those who engage in worldly pleasure, who indulge in frivolity, and dissipation, who live in gaiety and mirth in this world, shall in the world to come "mourn and weep." The frivolity will be turned into sorrow when they discover their miserable end, and are cast out into outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Prov. 1:25-28; James 4:9.)

D. Luke 6:27-38: Other Great Truths.

1. Verses 27-28: "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."
- a. The thought of this section of Luke is also addressed in Matthew 5:43-48: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." [The Lord could and most likely did speak on this theme on many occasions. It lies at the heart of practical Christianity].
- b. The following is from my material on the above passage in Matthew:
 - 1) The Old Testament did teach love for neighbor: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself..." (Lev. 19:18). But God did not tell the Israelites to hate their enemies. This was an addition or interpretation of the Jews. They were not allowed to make peace with the Canaanites (Ex. 34:11-16; Deut. 23:6). They were to exterminate these idol worshipers, just as Saul was commanded to utterly destroy the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15).
 - 2) The Old Testament taught an abhorrence of the character and practices of the heathen (Deut. 7:1-2, 16,23-26; 12:27,32; Josh. 23:12-13; Ps. 139:21-22).
 - a) Deuteronomy 7:1-2, 16, 23-26: "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, *and* utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them....And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that *will be* a snare unto thee....But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them. The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it *is* an abomination to the LORD thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: *but* thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it *is* a cursed thing."
 - b) Joshua 23:12-13: "Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even* these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of* these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you." Psalms 139:21-22: "Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies." It is not the individual God hates, but these evil deeds.

- c) "...The bloody wars which by God's own command they frequently waged against their enemies inevitably taught them to hate them" (McGarvey, p.59).
- 3) It would have been difficult for an Israelite to have an attitude of love toward a heathen enemy with whom he was in a life or death battle. Although the Law did not tell them to hate their enemies, by requiring them to kill their enemy in combat, it would in a practical way promote that attitude.
- a) McGarvey says, "It is a true representation of the law, therefore, in its practical working, that it taught hatred of one's enemies. This is one of the evils of the Jewish dispensation, which, like the privilege of divorce at will, was to endure but for a time" (p. 59).
- b) "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Heb. 8:6-8).
- 4) The Law did not teach hatred for an enemy. The Jews sought justification for their hatred from the fact they were told to destroy certain heathen nations or cities, but they were acting as executioners for God. What they did was in obedience to God's command, not as an act of personal vengeance. God did not tell them to hate their enemies. The Bible sometimes used "hate" in the sense of "loving less." Compare these verses:
- a) Luke 14:26: "If any man cometh unto me, and **hateth not** his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."
- b) Matthew 10:37: "He that **loveth father or mother more** than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
- 5) He that loves father or mother more than he loves Christ is not worthy of the Lord. This verse is parallel and thus explains Luke 14:26. To hate, as used here, means to love less.
- a) "And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah....And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated..." (Gen. 29:30-31). Jacob did not hate Leah, he simply loved her less than he loved Rachel.
- b) One who loves his parent more than he loves Christ is said to hate Christ. He hates him only in the sense that he loves him less than he loves the parent.
- 6) It is impossible to have the approval of the Lord while holding some one or some thing else in higher esteem.
- a) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
- b) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
- c) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
- d) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
- 7) "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).
- a) Notice that the Lord did not command that we like our enemies. Liking someone is natural or automatic, and depends on physical appearance, temperament, age and many other things. It is often easier to like someone than to love him. Affinity develops naturally but love must be cultivated. One cannot be commanded to like another, but he can be commanded to love another. Affinity is an emotion; love is a principle of action. For love (*agape*) to be present it
-

must be active, expressed. "This is the love of God that we keep his commandments" (1 Jn. 5:3). Love for God is a willingness and desire to serve him which will not and cannot be satisfied; and the only way it can be overtly expressed is by obedience to God's will. Faith works by love (Gal. 5:6). Both love and faith are expressed by action (doing what he wills for us to do).

- b) Similarly, love for another (even an enemy) is an active principle: it seeks to do good, not evil, to its object. It is expressed by appropriate words, attitudes, and deeds. It is therefore much more than mere sentiment or emotion. An emotion is a natural feeling which cannot be commanded. Your superior would be giving you an impossible command if he said, "You will do this dirty job and like it!" You could do the job, but he could not logically expect you to like it.
- c) "Love" here is translated from the root verb *agapao*. It "denotes a love founded in admiration, veneration, esteem....to be kindly disposed to one, wish one well...but *philein* (*phileo*) denotes an inclination prompted by sense and emotion....Hence, men are said *agapan* God, not *philein* and God is said *agapasai ton kosmon* (Jn. 3:16), and *philein* the disciples of Christ (Jn. 16:27); Christ bids us *agapan* (not *philein*) *tous echthrous* (Mt. 5:44), because love as an emotion cannot be commanded, but only love as a choice" (Thayer, p.653).
- d) *Phileo* and *agapao* are the two principal words translated "love" in the New Testament.
 - (1) Love in the sense of *phileo* is a strong feeling of personal attachment, natural inclination toward. Love in the sense of *agapao* means basically: the will to do good to, or toward (Roy Deaver, *The Sermon on the Mount*, p.149). Romans 13:10 gives a negative definition of this kind of love. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10).
 - (2) "Does the Lord command me to love my enemies in the same sense that I love my mother and daddy, my brother and sister....This is not what the Lord commands. We must 'will to do good toward' all men, even toward our enemies. *Agapao* love considers all that is right and good and just and honorable. It is bedrock-solid foundation" (Deaver, p.149).
 - (3) Christ gave examples of the kind of love this passage enjoins in the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), and in his own prayer on the cross (Luke 23:34). David exemplified it in sparing Saul (1 Sam. 24, 26).
- e) In the verse, Christ specified the following as ways by which love is had for our enemies:
 - (1) Bless them that curse you: reply to bitter words with kind words: repay evil with good (never evil for evil—Romans 12:17). "Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Pet. 3:9). The word "bless" here means to speak well of or to; the opposite of to curse or slander. "When we speak of our blessing God, it means to praise him or give thanks to him" (Barnes, P.61). *Bless* means *give thanks* in Matthew 26:26 (Luke 22:19).
 - (2) Do good to them that hate you: initiate benevolent deeds and words toward those who heap scorn on you or injure you; remove a stone from his path instead of placing one before him. It is natural to respond in like kind, but the Master demands more of us; we are special and different; we are intended to be a blessing, not a curse.
 - (3) Pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you: earnestly petition the God in heaven in their behalf. Do not ask him to rain down fire upon them, but to help and bless them. It is difficult if not altogether impossible to hate one for whom you are praying. We know the final destiny for one who thus abuses us; therefore we ought to be kindly disposed toward him, and pity him; thus will we sincerely pray for his good. See Moses' prayer for Miriam (Num. 12:13), Stephen's prayer for his enemies (Acts 7), and the Lord's prayer on the cross (Lk. 23:34).

- (4) This requirement of loving others is summed up in Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
- 8) "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:24-47).
- a) One reason behind the actions described in the previous verse is "that" we may truly be the children of God. Children imitate their father; the father in this case gives his blessings on his enemies (in this life); he sends his rain and sunshine on both the righteous and the unrighteous; he is the Saviour of all men (1 Tim. 4:10—in that he provides the essentials of life for all mankind). "The implication is that the Christian shall treat his enemies with fairness and equity, doing unto them as he would desire men should do unto himself" (Coffman, p.71).
 - b) The second reason for loving all others is that we may be unlike the publicans and sinners. By having love for our fellow man we become like our heavenly Father and unlike our sinful neighbors. The publicans were the Jewish tax collectors for Imperial Rome which had conquered Palestine. It was bad enough that the taxes went to Pagan Rome, but when it was collected by a fellow Jew, and extortion was used, it became terribly detestable. The publicans were commonly considered by the Jews to be the lowest of the low. They rebuked Jesus for having contact with them (Mt. 9:9-13).
 - c) "What reward have those whose love goes no further than to love those who love them? This would be only a reciprocal love and would be from its very nature selfish; but to extend love to those who do not love us makes us Godlike" (Boles, p.152). "God loves all regardless of their attitude toward him; however there is a special sense in which he loves those who adjust their lives to his will" (ibid., p.152). We are to do good to all men, but especially to those of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).
 - d) God loved sinners enough that he sent his precious Son to die for them; so we should love sinners and others that we do good toward them. To live any other way is to be like the lowest sinner. "Christ here enunciated a new and thrilling principle to take the place of the old proverb that 'One rotten apple will spoil a barrel of good apples!' That is, 'One good apple can heal a barrel of rotten apples!' Only Christ could have revealed such an exciting new and effective doctrine as this" (Coffman, p.71).
 - e) What do ye more than others? "Implicit in these words is the proclamation that Christians are different; they love more than others, will do more than others, and are in fact better in every way than others. Their righteousness is a matter of going beyond, giving the cloak also, going the second mile, turning the other cheek, loving enemies, praying for those who persecute them, and, in short, being 'sons of your Father who is in heaven'" (ibid. p.71).
2. Verses 29-30: "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again."
- a. Compare: "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). Jesus is teaching against retaliation, and denounces the Jewish misinterpretation of the Old Testament scriptures cited above. "God had never taught the spirit and practice of retaliation as the Jews were teaching and practicing it. It was never the law of God for any one who had lost an eye to knock out the eye of his enemy; or if in personal combat one had lost a tooth, that he could knock out a tooth of his assailant; no such procedure was permitted without (judicial) process...it did not permit personal vengeance....Jesus opposed their practice; he was not opposed to the law; he came to fulfill the law, but not to disregard it" (Boles, Matthew, pp.146f).
-

- b. Resist not evil; resist not him that is evil (ASV). We are to resist the devil (Jas. 4:7); we are to reprove (resist) the works of darkness (Eph. 5:11); we are to fight the fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12); we must denounce sin and error (Rom. 16:17-18). But we are not to resist evil with evil; we are not to oppose violence with violence (Rom. 12:14-21; 1 Pet. 2:11-17). If one should smite your right cheek, turn to him the other also. Slapping is a common insult (1 Kings. 22:24; Lam. 3:30; Matt. 26:67; John 18:22; 19:3). To slap was to both injure and insult (2 Cor. 11:20). "The principle and spirit that Jesus here gives are against retaliation, and emphasize his statement, 'Resist not him that is evil'" (Boles, p.148).
- c. Is this to be taken literally? If so, should verses 29-30 be taken literally? The Lord's own conduct gives us an insight into the proper course. When he was slapped by an officer at his trial, he gave a strong rebuttal: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" (Jn. 18:23). He did not strike the officer, but rebuked him.
- 1) When Paul was struck at the high priest's command, he replied with strong words. "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" (Acts 23:1-5). But Paul did not retaliate with physical force to exact vengeance.
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:21-25: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."
- d. We are taught against retaliating when we are insulted or injured in cases such as the Lord describes. However, it appears, if we are set upon by thieves, rapists, murderers, bandits, etc., we are not commanded to endure it without a struggle, if such is possible. This seems to be the more consistent view, for if we take this literally, then Matthew 5:42 must also be taken literally; and that would put us at the mercy of every bum and deadbeat who approaches us. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies" (2 Thess. 3:10-11).
- e. Brother Coffman relates a story about a missionary who bore the insults of a tribe of cannibals. After a long time, he was able to convert them to his New Testament views. He later asked the chief why they didn't eat him as they were wont to do. The chief said, "You see, none of us wanted to eat you, because the reason we eat people is to acquire their skills and bravery; but nobody wanted to be like you, taking all those insults, and patiently bearing every blow against you" (p.69).
3. Verses 31-33: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same."
- a. Compare: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). Given the obvious mutual benefits of observing this principle, why is it not followed?
 - b. Man is selfish: the natural man usually thinks of self first and is mostly unconcerned about others outside his own family (and maybe is not concerned about them). This causes domestic disputes, labor troubles, problems among workers, lawsuits, problems between neighbors, insurrections, wars, drug use, crime, and divorce.
 - c. The average man is sinful in his usual conduct (Rom. 3:23; Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 8:7; James 4:4). But a faithful Christian is righteous in his usual conduct (1 John 1:7-10).
 - 1) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - 3) Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."
-

- 4) James 4:4: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."
- 5) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 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. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (spoken to Christians).
- d. Compare: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:45-47).
- 1) One reason behind the actions described in the previous verse is "that" we may truly be the children of God. Children imitate their father; the father in this case gives his blessings on his enemies (in this life); he sends his rain and sunshine on both the righteous and the unrighteous; he is the Saviour of all men (1 Tim. 4:10—in that he provides the essentials of life for all mankind). "The implication is that the Christian shall treat his enemies with fairness and equity, doing unto them as he would desire men should do unto himself" (Coffman, Matthew, p.71).
 - 2) The second reason for loving all others is that we may be unlike the publicans and sinners. By having love for our fellow man we become like our heavenly Father and unlike our sinful neighbors. The publicans were the Jewish tax collectors for Imperial Rome which had conquered Palestine. It was bad enough that the taxes went to Pagan Rome, but when it was collected by a fellow Jew, and extortion was used, it became terribly detestable. The publicans were commonly considered by the Jews to be the lowest of the low. They rebuked Jesus for having contact with them (Mt. 9:9-13).
- e. "What reward have those whose love goes no further than to love those who love them? This would be only a reciprocal love and would be from its very nature selfish; but to extend love to those who do not love us makes us Godlike" (Boles, p.152). "God loves all regardless of their attitude toward him; however there is a special sense in which he loves those who adjust their lives to his will" (ibid., p.152). We are to do good to all men, but especially to those of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10).
- 1) What do ye more than others? "Implicit in these words is the proclamation that Christians are different; they love more than others, will do more than others, and are in fact better in every way than others. Their righteousness is a matter of going beyond, giving the cloak also, going the second mile, turning the other cheek, loving enemies, praying for those who persecute them, and, in short, being 'sons of your Father who is in heaven'" (Coffman, p.71).
 - 2) If this great principle were universally practiced fully, all of earth's social problems would be solved; there would be no more lawsuits, no more wars, no more quarrels, no more disagreements—that could not be settled.
4. Verses 34-36: "And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."
- a. Compare: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matt. 5:42).
 - b. It is obvious that this teaching is not to be taken literally. "This has its limitations and is still on the teaching against retaliation; the meaning of this can be understood from the conduct of Jesus. He said later, 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, that I will do.' (Jn. 14:14.) Jesus did not always give what was asked of him; sometimes God does not give what we ask of him. (2 Cor. 12:8,9.) Sometimes we do not receive because we ask amiss. (Jas. 4:3). Our beneficence must be regulated by a due regard to those who may ask of us" (Boles, Matthew, p.149).
-

- c. Those who ask to borrow what we have the ability to loan and of which they have a legitimate need, should not be turned away. "But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou giveth him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto" (Deut.15:8-10). The teachings of Jesus in this part of the sermon simply expressed the law given through Moses.
- d. The spirit of retaliation is still under consideration. If one who has injured us is in need, we are not to turn him away empty. "It is good to be in the habit of giving. At the same time, the rule must be interpreted so as to be consistent with our duty to our families (1 Tim. 5:8) and with other objects of justice and charity. It is seldom, perhaps never, good to give to a man that is able to work, 2 Th. 3:10. To give to such is to encourage laziness, and to support the idle at the expense of the industrious....To lend to every worthless man would be to throw away our property, encourage laziness and crime, and ruin our families. It should be done consistently with every other obligation, and of this every man is to be the judge" (Barnes, p.60).
- e. "...It is better to invest in people by helping and befriending them, than it is to invest in hoarding treasures for one's self" (Coffman, Matthew, p.70).
5. Verses 37-38: "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."
- a. Compare: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:1-5).
- b. To avoid being judged, avoid judging. "Judge" (*krino*) means to judge with the purpose to condemn. The Lord is not forbidding:
- 1) **All types of judging:**
 - a) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." We are required by this injunction to examine the fruit of teachers.
 - b) John 7:24: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."
 - c) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." To fulfill this requirement, the Roman saints [and we] must identify those who cause offenses.
 - d) 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." To fulfill this command, Timothy [and we] must determine who is a faithful man.
 - 2) **Forming or expressing conclusions:**
-

- a) Matthew 7:6: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."
 - b) Matthew 7:15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."
 - c) Matthew 7:20: "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
 - 3) **The judging and condemning of our judicial system:** "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:4).
 - 4) **The exercising of church discipline:**
 - a) 1 Corinthians 5:12-13: "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "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."
 - 5) **Identifying and exposing religious error:**
 - a) Matthew 15:9: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."
 - b) Mark 7:13: "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
 - c) Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
 - d) 2 Timothy 2:16-18: "But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."
 - e) Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."
 - f) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
 - g) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - 6) **Preaching and teaching against sin and religious error:**
 - a) 1 Timothy 5:20: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."
 - b) 2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
 - c. The kind of judging we are not to do:
 - 1) Pronounce final judgment on men. It is not our prerogative to consign anyone to eternal torment.
 - 2) Condemn another by means of a self-righteous attitude on our part.
 - 3) Hypocritical or hypercritical. We can be critical for another's good, but hyper-criticism is criticism done with gladness. Being hypocritical is to condemn another when we are guilty of the same or greater crimes.
 - 4) Condemning because of prejudice.
-

- 5) Reaching a conclusion to another's hurt without possessing all the pertinent facts, or by not properly considering all the evidence.
 - 6) Imputing motives: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - 7) Not considering the circumstances.
 - 8) Condemning people instead of what they do. We must ever love the individual and despise their sins.
 - 9) Using our opinions as the standard rather than the word of God:
 - a) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - b) John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
 - c) Proverbs 16:25: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."
 - d) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - d. "...That only such judging as is not required by the actual conduct of men is here condemned. All judging from surmise, or from insufficient premises, or from ill-will, is prohibited. It is adverse judging, of course, that is referred to" (McGarvey, p.69). The verse immediately following this passage (Matt. 7:6) requires the passing of judgment. We must identify who is a *swine* and who is not a *swine* in order to follow the Lord's counsel required by the passage.
 - e. The general rule is, the judgment we unleash on others is the kind we ourselves will receive from men and God.
 - 1) James 2:13: "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 10:8: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him."
 - 3) Haman was hanged on the gallows he had constructed for Mordecai (Esther 7).
 - f. "Do not cultivate a harsh, bitter, faultfinding spirit that looks on the ill side of persons and actions and that seeks to see evil in others so they can find fault and complain" (Boles, p.172f). Harsh, unfair, unkind, censorious judgment is forbidden. "God's judgment of us is always just, whether we judge others justly or unjustly; but men will usually judge us as we judge them" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.69).
 - 1) "The mote hunter is the nitpicker, the specialist in fine, disputed points, who focuses on the most minute deviations while ignoring far more basic and important considerations" (Coffman, p.92). The mote is any small particle; the beam signified a large piece of squared timber.
 - 2) "It is a very common thing that men who pronounce forbidden judgments on their brethren, possess themselves in a greater degree the fault which they condemn....the command, 'First cast the beam out of your own eye,' must not be construed as requiring us to get rid of all faults before we attempt to correct others; for on this condition none would be qualified for the position of teachers; but it requires that we shall rid ourselves of a given fault preparatory to rebuking that fault in another. The lesson is especially important to public teachers, for they have power for good only as their conduct coincides with their teaching" (McGarvey, p.69). Cf. James 3:1; Acts 1:1; Romans 2.
- E. Luke 6:39-49: Can the Blind Lead the Blind?
1. Verse 39: "And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?"
 - a. Compare: "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath

- not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Matt. 15:12-14).
- b. After the scribes and Pharisees and the multitude were gone, the disciples asked him a question: “Did you know that the Pharisees were offended at what you said to them?” “They seem to be taking the Pharisees’ part, ever so mildly, in this gentle remonstrance. Christ’s magnificent reply showed that the Pharisees were not merely wrong, but totally so, that they would be plucked up, and that they were blind leaders of the blind, destined for the ditch” (Coffman, p.230).
 - c. “The disciples were pained at the offense given to these highly respectable strangers from Jerusalem; for, like many Christians of the present day, their respect for the feelings of men was greater than their zeal for the truth. The ‘sayings’ (*logon*) which had given offense was the entire speech. He had proved that by their tradition they were nullifying the word of God; he had charged them with hypocrisy; he had declared that all of their worship based on the authority of tradition was vain worship; and he had swept away the entire fabric of their traditionary law of uncleanness, by declaring that a man is not defiled by that which goes into his mouth. He had not only defended himself, but he had turned their own weapons with irresistible effect against them, and it is not surprising that they were offended” (McGarvey, pp.135f).
 - d. The Lord’s statement concerning every plant being rooted up except those which God had planted has a broad application. God will root up every evil, every rebellious thought, every institution, every doctrine and every practice which run contrary to his will. The Lord here compares the Pharisees and their human dogmas as plants in a garden; they had not been planted there by God, and thus would be pulled up, roots and all, as a gardener would uproot all the unwanted weeds that cumber the ground. A similar thought is expressed in Psalm 127:1: “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”
 - e. The Lord told his disciples to let such men alone. “That is the admonition of Christ with reference to the worldly wise, socially prominent, sophisticated, unscrupulous, hypocritical religious leaders. The apostles would have been able to do the Pharisees no good, and there was a grave possibility the Pharisees would do the apostles harm by damaging their faith....Spiritual darkness and sin are set forth in this place under the figure of blindness, a symbol often so used in the Bible (2 Peter 1:9, etc.) (Coffman, p.230). The disciples were told to let such men alone, but not in the sense of ceasing to expose their error. They were to pay them no mind; they would be unable to convert such hard people; they were not to allow their opposition to hinder them. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). Christians today need to beware of modern false teachers.
 - f. Both the false teacher and his dupe will fall into the ditch. “It is sometimes thought that if a man is led by his teacher he will be excused for going astray; but Jesus here teaches that the blind man who is led will fall into the ditch with his blind leader. This is clear enough in reference to the literally blind, and Jesus asserts it in reference to the spiritually blind. If a man, knowing himself to be blind, allows another blind man to lead him, he deserves to fall into the ditch. He should choose a leader who can see, and as there is no leader who can see all the way that we have to travel except Jesus, let us take his word as our only guide, going only as it leads us. The word of God must be our pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night; we move when it moves, and stop where it stops” (McGarvey, p.136). Only the blind will follow the blind!
2. Verse 40: “The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.”
 - a. Compare: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them” (John 13:16-17, KJV).
 - 1) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, a servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them” (ASV).
-

- 2) Christ, the Son of God, reminded the disciples that they are not greater than he; since he humbly washed their feet, thus fulfilling a needy task, they ought to be willing to do such things for each other. In a slave and master situation, obviously the lowly servant is not greater than his owner. It is far more certain that the Messiah is vastly superior over any of his followers.
- b. Robertson: Precisely so in Matt 10:24 where "slave" is added with "lord." But here Luke adds: "But everyone when he is perfected shall be as his master" The state of completion, perfect passive participle, is noted in *kateertismenos* . The word is common for mending broken things or nets (Matt 4:21) or men (Gal 6:1). So it is a long process to get the pupil patched up to the plane of his teacher.
3. Verses 41-42: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye."
- a. The Lord did not say the brother with the mote in his eye should not be corrected. He is saying that before we can come to his assistance we must ourselves be free of the same or greater sin; that we not be hypocritical. "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" (Rom. 2:21-23).
- b. We should discipline wayward members so that we can be more effective in teaching the aliens in the community. Non-members in a community are able to perceive our inconsistencies; some are inclined to see fault even when no faults exist.
- c. The one who finds fault may be guilty of a far-more grievous sin.
4. Verses 43-44: "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes."
- a. Compare: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20).
- b. In Matthew, it is the false teacher who is exposed; in our present text, the Lord shows that our practice must be consistent with the true standard—we must make sure that we are not hypocrites.
- c. Boles: The general principle here announced by Jesus was that which all believe. The good tree cannot bear corrupt fruit, nor can a rotten tree bring forth good fruit. The character of the tree is determined by the kind of fruit it bears. The tree and its fruit illustrate the heart and the life; the bad heart yields a wicked life; the good heart, a worthy life. Honest and pure intentions, the sincere purpose to do right, yield naturally the fruit of right doing; so Jesus teaches us to estimate what the inner man is by what the outer man does. Men do not gather figs from thorn trees, nor grapes from a "bramble bush." Matthew uses "thistle," while Luke uses "bramble bush."
5. Verse 45: "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."
- a. Compare: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof
-

- in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:33-37).
- b. What is in the heart manifests itself in what a man does and says. The real state of the heart cannot for long be concealed. The evil hearts of these Pharisees manifested themselves in the wild and untrue charges they made against the Lord and the Spirit. Their wicked disposition led them to reject Jesus and his message.
 - 1) "The state of the heart, then, determines the speech and action of the man; and these, on the other hand, determine the state of the heart....When the heart is right, all the conduct is just such as it ought to be. Whenever there is an evil word spoken, an evil act performed, or a duty neglected, it is because the heart is not right at that point. Let us not deceive our own hearts (Jas. 1:26), nor be deceived as to their state. (Ps. 19:12)" (McGarvey, p.111).
 - 2) Therefore the warning: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).
6. Verses 46-47: “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like.”
- a. Our Lord taught on this matter in Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
 - b. Also, compare what he said in Matthew 7:24-27: “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”
7. Verse 48: “He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.”
- a. Notice that tests of faith come in hardship and pain rather than in comfort and ease; not in sunshine but in tempests. The Lord's illustration shows that following Christ is not always easy, that the way is often fraught with hardships.
 - 1) “Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that hath endured such gainsaying of sinners against himself, that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin: and ye have forgotten the exhortation which reasoneth with you as with sons, My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when thou art reprov'd of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye are without chastening, whereof all have been made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness. Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the palsied knees; and make straight paths for your
-

- feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed. Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled” (Heb. 12:1-15, ASV).
- 2) Romans 5:1-5: “Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope: and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us” (ASV).
- b. There are two types of teachers (truth and false); there are two types of hearers (those who obey and those who disobey). The obedient, wise man is pictured in Luke 6:48 as digging down to bedrock before starting his house. He wanted the foundation of his spiritual house on solid footing.
8. Verse 49: “But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.”
- a. The foolish builder was such because he did not use the right foundation: that of obedience to God. The Lord never set as part of his requirements for us anything that was redundant or meaningless. We may not always perceive his wisdom in a matter, but that is due to our own finite understanding.
 - b. It is absolutely essential that each individual cultivate an inner commitment to do the will of God; just having a general, nebulous notion that he is doing God’s will is not enough; it is very easy for one to deceive himself. “If any man **willeth to do his will**, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself” (John 7:17, ASV).
 - 1) NKJV: “If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak on My own *authority*.”
 - 2) Those who rejected the teachings of Jesus were also rejecting the teachings of the Father. Anyone who speaks by his own authority, is trying to bring glory upon only himself. But Jesus sought to bring glory only to the Father, thus he had not invented his own doctrine. Human religious productions such as “The Book of Mormon” bring glory only to its inventors and promoters and can proffer no salvation or eternal reward to any of their followers. That is very saddening.
 - 3) The Lord affirms that if one wills to do the will of God, this strong resolve will lead that student into a deep and honest investigation of the doctrine of Christ; this will result in his perceiving that this truth has God the Father as its source. He will assuredly know that it is God’s word.
 - 4) Woods: The honest heart, the sincere soul, whose only motivation is to do right will have no difficulty in determining what right is. Such will seek in the right place, the scriptures; in the right way, sincerely; and for the right purpose, to be saved and to do the will of God. Strong belief leads on to great faith (“from faith unto faith,” Rom 1:17), and unbelief encourages rejection of God’s word. One truly desirous of doing the Master’s will never quibble at its requirements or question its validity, one thus influenced gladly and happily bows in full submission to it. [John, p.147].
 - c. Regardless of the fact that a man may sincerely think or feel that he is following God, if his spiritual life is not built on the foundation of genuine obedience to God’s will, his spiritual house will inevitably fall, with eternal consequences.
-

Luke Chapter 7

A. Luke 7: 1-10: A Centurion's Servant.

1. Verse 1: "Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum."
 - a. Compare: "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (Matt. 8:5-13).
 - b. The servant was afflicted with palsy, "a contraction of paralysis; the term 'palsy' or 'paralysis' is used by the ancients in a much wider sense than we now use it; the term included what we now call tetanus, catalepsy, cramps, and other fearful maladies. He was 'grievously tormented,' which means that he was in that stage of palsy when the patient suffers great agony; Luke says that he was at the point of death" (Boles, Matthew, p.189).
2. Verses 2-3: "And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant."
 - a. Matthew's account indicates that the centurion personally approached Jesus; Luke's descriptions show that he did so by means of the Jews. What one does through another, he is said to have done himself. Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, but he did not personally baptize any of them (John 4:1-2).
 - b. Luke shows the closeness that existed between the servant and the centurion. One was a slave and the other was the master. This scribe learned many years ago of an eldership in a large congregation in a western state which was comprised, in part, of a bank president and a janitor. Each of these was fully qualified to serve as shepherds of the flock, despite the differences in their background.
 - c. Much of what we hear about the slaves and their owners during the eighteen hundreds in America is of cruelty and abuse, but that may have been the exception. Would a man who had invested a great deal of money want to harm his property? There were many cases of closeness and kindness that existed between the two groups. Properly, we do not condone slavery, but repudiate and reject it.
 - d. The case of Paul, Philemon and Onesimus illustrates the matter: "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever" (Phile. 15-16).
 - 1) Paul had converted Onesimus, a runaway slave who belonged to Philemon. His earthly master was told to receive him back, but not as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? Philemon 12-16.
 - 2) His statement also affirms the unending nature of a Christian's reward. Granting the faithfulness of both Philemon and Onesimus, the two would be in eternity together. Onesimus left the service of Philemon as a runaway slave; they were now to be reunited as brethren in Christ, and could look forward to being with each other eternally.
 - 3) Paul was guided in using a less offensive term in describing the separation. He did not speak of it as an escape or running away; he merely stated that Onesimus departed for a season. Paul describes Onesimus as now being much more than a servant; he was a brother in Christ. It was Onesimus'

- obligation to return to his master as a servant, filling the role he formerly held. But now he was also a brother in Christ. The relationship extended beyond the master-slave connection; they were beloved brethren.
- 4) “Any person obeying the gospel of Christ becomes the brother beloved of every other Christian, to whom all the rights, honors, privileges and love of Christian fellowship accrue as a right derived from their being ‘in the Lord’...” (Coffman, pp.373f). This relationship pertained between Paul and Onesimus, but even more between Philemon and Onesimus. Paul might not have direct contact in the future with Onesimus, but Philemon and Onesimus would be in service to Christ together until death.
- e. The gospel did not criminalize slavery, but regulated it. Think of the enormous hardship on the whole Empire of Rome if all slaves were quickly freed! Also, look how much more Christians would have been hated and persecuted!
 - 1) Ephesians 6:5-9: “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.”
 - 2) Colossians 3:22-24: “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”
 - f. This centurion was well-respected by the Jews in the area. This was true of Cornelius, another Roman centurion:
 - 1) Acts 10:2: “A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.”
 - 2) Acts 10:22: “And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.”
3. Verses 4-5: “And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.”
- a. “The elders were very urgent in their request that Jesus go as quickly as possible to the centurion's house. They give as their reason that he was ‘worthy’ that Jesus should do this for him. The Jews pleaded the worthiness of the centurion, but the centurion declared his own unworthiness; truly greatness and humility go together This centurion had built a synagogue at his own expense. Every town where there were Jews had its synagogue” (Boles).
 - b. There were certain characteristics of the Jews which caused them to be odious to the Gentiles. For them to speak so highly of the soldier was high praise indeed.
4. Verse 6: “Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof.”
- a. Jesus had agreed to go and heal the servant, but the centurion responded by saying he was not worthy that the Lord should come to his house. He requested that the Lord merely say the word and the servant would be healed. This message was sent to the Lord when he had drawn closer to the man's house.
 - b. The argument used by the centurion to conclude that it was unnecessary for Christ to come to his house was one based on authority: I am a man of authority; when I command that something be done, my orders are carried out; you are a man of authority (in this case over diseases); when you give the orders, they are carried out.
-

5. Verses 7-8: "Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."
 - a. When he said "I am a man *under* authority, he may have been adding another dimension to his argument: I am a man who is under authority to others and still have authority over certain subordinates; you have no discernible superior; therefore you have greater relative authority than I to command in your realm." This would be an even greater evidence of his faith in Christ's power.
 - b. This soldier was well aware of the matter of authority. One of the common factors in all military affairs is that of authority. Without authority an army would devolve into a mob, without direction and control.
6. Verses 9-10: "Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick."
 - a. The Lord was greatly impressed with this man's faith. He had not seen such great faith on the part of the people of Israel. This was one of the very few times that the Lord was surprised. He "marvelled" at the unbelief of the people of Nazareth (Mark 6:6) and here at the faith of the Gentile soldier. In all of Israel, the Lord was yet to find such great faith. The cause of astonishment was not because of his great faith, but that he had not seen such faith in Israel. The Lord's statement here was a severe rebuke of the Jews.
 - b. "The centurion's faith contrasted sharply with the lack of it in the Jewish leaders who, although they should have been the first to recognize Christ and believe on him, were nevertheless his carping critics and sworn enemies" (Coffman, Matthew, p.107).
 - c. We are also told of a certain woman, who was not a Jew: "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matt. 15:28).
 - 1) We can now see why Jesus did not immediately grant the woman's request. He knew the strength of her faith, and for the purpose of having her demonstrate it for her own sake, for the disciples' sake, and for our sake, he placed these strong obstacles before her. Being Divine, he could know her heart and thus determine the degree of faith she possessed, as well as her sincerity. Jesus had met with much unbelief, even in the face of the strongest possible evidence, on the part of many of his own nation. But with this woman he found a refreshing and bountiful supply of faith and humility.
 - 2) "It has been noted that the hindrances which were thrown in this woman's way tended only to increase her faith. The faith which was hers may be compared to a river, which becomes enlarged by dams which have been placed across it, until at last they are all swept away by the mighty stream which they helped to create" (ALC, *ibid.*, p.154).
 - 3) "The earnest perseverance of the faithful woman gains its point, and her mother's heart is made to rejoice. Less love for her child, or less faith in Jesus, would have caused a failure. The entire scene is often repeated in pious households. How often a pious mother, with a child grievously vexed with the demon of sin, cries piteously and long to the blessed Savior, saying, 'Lord, help me.' And how often does Jesus appear, for a while, to give no heed to the cry, until even a cold world begins to pity the wretched petitioner. But finally, when a mighty faith has been developed out of sorrow and weeping, the unheard answer comes, 'Be it unto thee as thou wilt.' The story of the Canaanite woman is a type, and it is written for our admonition on whom the ends of the world have come. It is another illustration of the Savior's doctrine, that 'men ought always to pray, and not to faint' (Luke 18:1-8)" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.139).
 - 4) "When her attitude is contrasted with some in later generations who become offended, puffed up, and repelled by the slightest suspicion of indifference in God's ministers, it is perfectly clear that many nominal seekers simply do not have the faith even to be saved, or having it, are so full of egotism and pride that it can never do them any good" (Coffman, p.235).

- 5) The New Testament only records two occasions where the Lord commended anyone's faith with such words, and both cases involved Gentile people (this woman and the centurion in Matthew 8). Among the Jews, it would appear, such faith was not often found, perhaps never found by the Lord. Among those who had been prepared for many centuries for the coming of the Messiah, surprising little faith was manifested by them. They had many benefits and advantages not owned by the Gentiles of those ancient times. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:1-2).
- 6) The Lord granted her request; her daughter was made whole from that very hour; when she returned home she found her daughter well and lying on a bed. "And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed" (Mark 7:30).
- d. Matthew's account adds another section to the case of the centurion: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:11-12).
 - 1) This statement suggests that many such Gentiles would be converted and enjoy the eternal blessings of heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Plainly indicated is the fact that these three Old Testament Patriarchs will be in heaven.
 - 2) Some think that the kingdom of heaven (the church on earth) is what is being described. However, none of the three Old Testament men named were ever members of the church. Also, the blessed condition described as sitting down with these three is put in contrast with the wicked Jews who would be cast into outer darkness, a description of the torments of hell.
 - 3) The figure of sitting down with Abraham and others is an allusion to the ancient Eastern mode of eating a feast. A fuller discussion of the statement of this passage is given in Luke 13:23-30: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."
 - 4) "This has the same prophetic import as Paul's words concerning the breaking off of the natural olive branches and the grafting in of the wild olive branches (Rom. 11:17-24)" (Coffman, p.107). "The Jews were 'children of the kingdom' in the sense that they were children and heirs of those to whom the kingdom was originally promised" (McGarvey, p.77).
 - 5) "The kingdom of heaven in which many Gentiles were to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (verse 11), must be the kingdom in its final state of glory; for these patriarchs lived too soon to sit down in the earthly kingdom. The outer darkness, then, which is contrasted with it, and into which those are to be cast out who are not admitted into the kingdom, must represent the final punishment of the wicked" (McGarvey, p.77).

B. Luke 7:11-17: The Son of the Widow of Nain.

1. Verse 11: "And it came to pass **the day after**, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people." ASV: "And it came to pass **soon afterwards**, that he went to a city called Nain; and his disciples went with him, and a great multitude."

- a. Soon after the healing of the centurion's servant, Jesus entered the city of Nain. There were many of his disciples and a large number of the people who accompanied him.
 - b. Easton's Dictionary: "The scene of Christ's raising the widow's son (Luke 7:12). Now Nein on N.W. verge of jebel ed Duhy (Little Hermon) where it slopes down to Esdraelon plain. The rock W. of the village abounds in cave tombs, also in the E. side. Eighteen miles from Capernaum, where Jesus had been the preceding day. Josephus (Ant. 20:5, section 1) notices Nain as on the way from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very way Jesus was going."
2. Verse 12: "Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her."
- a. As he was about to enter the gate of this city, he met a funeral procession. The dead person was the only son of a certain widow; her name is not given. There were many folks in this group.
 - b. It is evident that the widow and her son were well know and respected. Our Lord took a very great interest in the widow's needs.
3. Verses 13-15: "And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother."
- a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. "The young man was about to be buried in the Jewish manner, which differed from the Egyptian custom. The corpse was not laid in a coffin or mummy-case, but simply on an open bier, on which the dead lay wrapped in folds of linen; so Lazarus was buried at Bethany, and our Lord in his rock-tomb in Joseph of Arimathaea's garden. A napkin, or sudarium, was lightly laid over the face. It was pollution for the living to touch the bier on which a corpse was lying. The bearers, in their amazement that one so generally respected and admired as was Jesus, the Teacher of Nazareth, at this period of his career, should commit so strange an act, would naturally at once stand still to see what next would happen" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - c. The widow was in need; she had no husband and now she had no son. How would she be able to have the essentials of life? Jesus instantly saw her desperate circumstances. His compassion led him to tell this grieving lady, "Do not weep."
 - d. At his word, the dead young man who was indeed dead, immediately sat up and began to speak. What did he say? We do not know. His spirit had been in the Hadean world, as the case Paul described in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
 - e. The young man had not long been dead. In that climate, the dead were buried the very day they passed from this life [Cf. Ananias and his wife, Acts 5]. The Lord presented him to his mother! We can well perceive how happy this sad lady quickly became!
4. Verses 16-17: "And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about."
- a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. Boles: The people were filled with awe, and praised God for what they had seen. In their praise they said: "A great prophet is arisen among us; and, God hath visited his people." They at once recalled
-

Elijah and Elisha and declared that a great prophet like these had arisen "among us," and that God had visited his people again with a prophet. It had been about four hundred years since the prophets ceased to bring God's message to the people.

- c. Remember that a very large number of people witnessed this restoration to life of his young man. In the presence of such a mighty work, fear and awe were natural. The report of this deed would naturally spread far and wide!
- d. From the time of Malachi to the coming of John the Immerser, no new revelation had come to Israel. Now the people came to see that a great prophet had arisen among them, that God had truly visited his people!
- e. Compare: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high **hath visited us**, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel" (Luke 1:76-80).

C. Luke 7: 18-23: John and His Disciples.

1. Verse 18: "And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things."
 - a. Compare: "Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matt. 11:2-6).
 - b. The reference to "all these things" denotes the supernatural works our Lord had been doing, as well as the various messages Jesus had been presenting.
2. Verse 19: "And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"
 - a. Our Lord came to the earth to die for the sins of the world. He did not come to die for sedition against the constituted civil authority. He did not come to establish an earthly kingdom after the order of David and Solomon's kingdom. The Jews thought the Messiah's kingdom (Dan. 2:44; 2 Sam. 7:12) would be earthly in nature (John 6:15; Acts 1:1-7). The Lord's apostles thought the same, and it is likely that John likewise looked for a literal reign. John knew that Jesus was the Messiah, but he had seen no sign that Jesus was in the process of fulfilling Jewish expectations regarding the supposed overthrow of Roman rule and the establishment of an Israelite kingdom. Thus, John sent disciples to make inquiry regarding this.
 - b. "The natural and obvious supposition that he inquired merely because he wanted to know, has been very generally rejected as inconsistent with his previous testimony for Jesus, and with his inspiration. But we must remember that his inspiration passed away with the ministry on account of which it was bestowed, and that it was only the man John who made the inquiry. Moreover, it was the man John in hopeless imprisonment, and filled with the despondency natural to his situation....The inquiry is not, Are you what I declared you to be? but, being all of that, are you the one who should come, or must we look for *another*? Looking, as John did, in common with all the Jews, for an earthly king in the coming Messiah, and seeing in Jesus no aspirations for such a position, he was so far confused as to think that while Jesus fulfilled a part of the promises, there might be another Coming One who would fulfill the remainder. To satisfy his own mind, then, was the object of his inquiry, and he shows unabated confidence in Jesus by submitting the decision of the question to him" (McGarvey, p.96).
3. Verses 20-21: "When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight."

- a. The times in which Jesus lived on earth were dark and dangerous, times when one could be arrested easily, charged and convicted of crimes such as sedition, with or without proper evidence. It was important that the Lord keep his true identity quiet in the early part of his ministry lest he be hailed into court as a seditionist.
 - b. The Lord replied to their question by making reference to the miracles which he wrought. He referred to the statement in Isaiah 61:1 in giving this reply. "The spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*" (Isa. 61:1). This was adduced as proof that he was the Messiah. John did not perform miracles (John 10:41).
 - c. Remember also the occasion when certain men tried to take the Lord by force and install him as king (John 6:15). He would not allow it; first, because that was not the true nature of his kingdom, and second, their attempt would have brought the full might of Rome against him, requiring heavenly intervention in a miraculous way to prevent such an ill-advised scheme.
 - d. In the Lord's infinite wisdom, he chose not to give John's disciples a plain, categorical answer to their question. He simply called attention to Isaiah 61 which listed certain miracles the Messiah would do when he came, saying that these miraculous events are being wrought. To one who believed the Scriptures, this was a positive declaration that Jesus is the Messiah. He let his works prove his identity. This shows the true purpose of miracles: to confirm the Messenger and message as being from God. "The miracles Jesus mentioned to John's messengers were precisely those which Isaiah identified with the advent of the Messiah (Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1)" (Coffman, p.153). Jesus had earlier referred to Isaiah 61 in his presentation at the synagogue at his hometown of Nazareth (Luke 4:18-21).
 - 1) Isaiah 35:5-6: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."
 - 2) Isaiah 61:1: "The spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*."
 - 3) Luke 4:18-21: "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."
 - e. At the very time when these two disciples of John came with their query, Jesus performed various miraculous deeds, which were to serve as the full answer to be taken back to John.
4. Verses 22-23: "Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."
- a. "The earnest plea from Jesus' very heart and soul is a moving and powerful request that John would not take offense at our Lord's inability openly to declare himself at that time, nor at differences such as marked their attitudes toward fasting. The absence of any further inquiries from John shows that John understood" (Coffman, Matthew, p.153).
 - b. "The chief reason why the scribes were offended at the claims of Jesus, was because he did not come up to their expectations concerning the Messiah; and now John seemed in danger of falling into the same fatal error: hence the warning to John, 'Blessed is he who shall not be offended in me'" (McGarvey, p.97).
 - c. The word "offense" means "stumblingblock." "'Happy is he to whom I shall not prove a stumbling-block.' That is, happy is he who shall not take offence at my poverty and lowliness of life, so as to
-

reject me and my doctrine. Happy is he who can, notwithstanding that poverty and obscurity, see the evidence that I am the Messiah, and follow me. It is not improbable that John wished Jesus publicly to proclaim himself as the Christ, instead of seeking retirement" (Barnes, Matthew, p.118).

D. Luke 7:24-30: The Greatness of John the Immerser.

1. Verse 24: "And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?"
 - a. Compare: "And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 7:7-11).
 - b. In the area where John did his preaching, in the valley of Jordan which overflowed each year, there is said to have been cane or reeds in abundance (Barnes, p.118). These were lightweight and fragile in appearance, and were easily swayed to and fro, even by a small breeze. "A reed shaken by the wind symbolizes a man who is swayed by public opinion; and one clothed in soft raiment, is a man of self-indulgence. The questions of Jesus brought out with great emphasis the contrast between John and all such characters. In contrast with a reed shaken by the wind, stood his firmness in withstanding the Pharisees, and his fearlessness in rebuking sin even when Herod was the sinner, and when liberty and life were at stake. In contrast with soft raiment stood his camel's-hair coat with its raw hide girdle, and his food of locusts and wild honey. To remind the people of these things, was to rekindle their admiration of John" (McGarvey, p.97f).
 - c. "His praise of John the Baptist is unequaled by his praise of any other....He is no reed bowing in whatever direction the wind blows....The aptness of this reference to 'soft raiment' is notable. Nearly 2000 years after Jesus spoke these words, it is still true that the clothing that brings the highest price and is held as the most desirable is nearly always marked by its 'softness'" (Coffman, p.154).
 - d. Notice that the Lord did not praise John in the presence of John's disciples, but waited until they had left before offering this glowing tribute to their master.
 - e. The Lord in these questions simply asked the audience what it was that attracted them to John. He reminds them that they did not go out into the wilderness expecting to find an unstable character wearing soft garments. John was not such a person. And neither was Jesus! Neither John nor the Lord was weak, effeminate types. They were strong, dependable, fearless proclaimers of God's word. "That 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" (Eph. 4:14-15, NKJV).
 - f. John was the last and greatest of the prophets pointing to the Messiah and his kingdom. But John was more than a prophet for he actually introduced and identified Jesus as the "lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
 2. Verses 25-26: "But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet?"
 - a. Coffman: "The rugged nature of the mighty John was well known, as well as his garment of camel's hair, noted for its discomfort, John being the original man in a hair shirt; and Jesus was saying by this reference that John would stand by his identification of our Lord as "the Lamb of God," regardless of the hardships involved."
 - b. John's dress and the food he ate defined him as a man of toughness and courage. He lived in areas not inhabited by many others. He was used to hardship and his messages to the people betook of the same.
-

- c. Matthew 3:1-12: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."
3. Verses 27-28: "Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."
- a. John not only was a prophet, but his birth was announced beforehand, his name was given by the Lord, he was born of a previously barren mother, both his parents were well-stricken in years, he was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15), he was the last in the line of prophets leading up to Christ, he was privileged to baptize Jesus, and was the link that joins the old and new covenants. "Christ's selection of this prophecy from Malachi 3:1 and application of it to John proves two things, (1) that John the Baptist is that first messenger mentioned in that passage, and (2) that Jesus Christ is the Lord, 'the messenger of the covenant' who even then had suddenly come to his temple" (Coffman, p.155).
- 1) Malachi 3:1: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."
 - 2) The question was raised by the Israelites in the previous verse concerning the whereabouts of the God of justice. The reply given by Malachi is found here. God promised that he would come; God's coming was in the person of Christ, who was preceded by his *messenger*, John the Baptizer.
 - 3) The messenger is identified in Malachi 4:5 as Elijah the prophet. But this was not the literal Elijah, but John the Baptizer.
 - a) Isaiah 40:3: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."
 - b) Matthew 3:3: "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
 - c) Mark 1:3: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
 - d) Luke 3:4: "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
 - e) John 1:23: "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."
 - f) Luke 1:17: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."
-

- b. Of all those born of women, no greater (prophet—Luke 7:28) has risen. Thus, he is placed on a par with Enoch, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, et al. None of these is greater than John. "The point of comparison is still the same—the superiority consisting in closer connection with Jesus, and greater knowledge of him. In these respects, the least in the kingdom is greater than John, because he is a member of the body of Christ, and this is more than to be the messenger to go before him and to inquire, 'Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?'" (McGarvey, p.98).
 - c. "This remark implies that John was not in the kingdom; for, otherwise, the *least* in the kingdom could not be greater than he. The language can not be treated as a hyperbole, as when Paul declares himself, 'less than the least of all saints' (Eph. 3:8); for the contradiction in terms employed by Paul shows that he speaks hyperbolically; but there is no evidence of hyperbole in the passage before us. Neither can the expression 'kingdom of heaven' be construed as equivalent to *heaven*, for in the next verse it is said to suffer violence, and this language can not be construed as referring to heaven. Neither is the present sense, 'He that is least in the kingdom,' to be construed as implying that some were already in the kingdom; for, in that case, John himself would have been in it, and the comparison could not have been made. Moreover, it is not uncommon to use the present tense in making comparisons between things yet in the future. (See Matt. 22:30). The comparison in question is accounted for only by the fact that the kingdom of heaven, though preached, was not yet set up, and therefore John was not a citizen of it" (McGarvey, p.98).
 - d. "The least in God's kingdom are greater than John because (1) their sins are forgiven, whereas those of John were merely rolled forward to the cross, and (2) they enjoy full fellowship with Christ in his kingdom" (Coffman, p.155).
4. Verses 29:30: "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."
- a. There were many of the Jews and publicans who listened to John and were baptized in obedience to the commands of God. As Mark described it, "The common people heard him gladly" (12:37).
 - b. In their obedience, they justified God. "The people who heard and the publicans 'justified God' by being baptized with the baptism of John. In the strictest sense no one can make God more just than he is, since he is infinitely just; it means that the people perceived, confessed, and declared God's justice in all of his acts among men. These had been prepared to make this confession as they had been baptized of John, and must have openly confessed their sins" (Boles).
 - c. Coffman:
 - 1) These are among the most significant words in the New Testament, showing categorically that the refusal to accept baptism at the hands of John was, in fact, a rejection of the counsel of God on the part of the Pharisees. In the preparatory phase of the kingdom of God, no less than in its reality after Pentecost, refusal to be baptized was here pointed out by Jesus as a "rejection" of God's counsel.
 - 2) Water baptism is one of the elements of the new birth, the being "born of water" to which Jesus referred in his interview with Nicodemus (see comments in my Commentary on John, third chapter). It is therefore true in the present era that failure to heed Christ's command that all men should be baptized is no less a rejection of God's will now than it was when those ancient Pharisees and lawyers rejected it The new birth, without which none shall see the kingdom of God, includes being "born of water," although that is not the totality of it.
 - 3) In this passage lies the reason why the publicans and harlots entered into God's kingdom, whereas the Pharisees did not enter it. Another significant reason also appears in the next episode where the sinful woman is presented as "loving" Jesus more than the proud Pharisee; and, as Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).
 - d. Barnes: They "showed" that they approved of the message of God by submitting to the ordinance which he commanded—the ordinance of baptism. This verse and the following are not to be considered as the words of "Luke," but the continuation of the discourse of our Lord. He is saying what took place
-

in regard to John. Among the common people he was approved and obeyed among the rich and learned he was despised.

- e. The purpose of John's baptism was in order that those who obeyed received the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, any who rejected his baptism did not obtain that essential benefit. The ones who listened to John were already children of God because they had been born into the nation of Israel. The nation was in a state of rebellion against God at the time John came. His preaching led them to repentance and baptism brought them into fellowship with God again.
- f. As we have shown earlier in this material, there was no offering during the Patriarchal or Mosaic Ages which could remove the guilt of sin. Those who faithfully served God during those ancient times did receive pardon; it was based on the future perfect sacrifice of the Son of God on the cross. The benefits of his sacrificial death flowed backward in time to cover the ones who lived back then; it flows forward in time to cover all those who will obey the gospel from the cross to the end of the world.
 - 1) Romans 3:23-26: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness **for the remission of sins that are past**, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."
 - 2) Hebrews 9:11-17: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, **for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament**, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

E. Luke 7:31-35: The Condition of the People of That Generation.

1. Verse 31: "And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?"
 - a. NKJ: And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? 32 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.' 33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' 34 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!' 35 But wisdom is justified by all her children."
 - b. Compare: "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children" (Matt. 11:16-19).
2. Verse 32: "They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept."
 - a. There are many excellent qualities pertaining to the nature of children. The Lord made these virtues of prime importance in entering the kingdom (Mt. 18:1-6; 19:14). But there are other attitudes and practices common to many children that are objectionable. Christ here refers to some of the unfavorable dispositions and applies them to his enemies.

- 1) "In the comparison here instituted, two groups of children are supposed to be at play. One group makes a sound in imitation of a pipe, for the others to dance by, thus imitating the professional dancers; but the others refuse to dance. Supposing, then, that they feel more like weeping, the first group begins to mourn in imitation of the hired mourners at a funeral...but they others will not lament" (McGarvey, Matthew, pp.99f).
 - 2) "The ancient markets were places in which not only men transacted their business, but children played with each other. The figure not only represents the attitudes of the people as childish, but it represents them as being like crowds of children who are dissatisfied with one another and the games which they are playing; it is like one set wanting this plan and another that, one is angry or silent, while the others try to soothe and persuade to join their sport. They were not pleased with John or with Jesus; they wanted their own way, or no way" (Boles, Matthew, p.247).
3. Verses 33-34: "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!"
- a. Jesus showed that his enemies had rejected both John and Jesus, without any good reason. When John came not taking ordinary food and drink, they said he had a demon. When Jesus came eating and drinking normally, they accused him of being a gluttonous man and winebibber. "Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like unto children that sit in the marketplace, and call one to another; who say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not weep. For John the Baptist is come eating no bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a demon. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom is justified of all her children" (Luke 7:31-35, ASV).
 - b. "When Jesus, as if for the very purpose of pleasing them in that wherein John displeased them, came eating and drinking, they were still displeased, and said, Behold a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. They acted like the ill-tempered children" (McGarvey, p.100).
 - c. John was a Nazarite (Luke 1:15), and had to live as he did. The Jews exaggerated the conduct of Jesus for he was neither a glutton nor a winebibber. In charging the Lord as a friend of publicans and sinners, "they over-reached themselves, because what they intended as a slander is in fact the glory of our Lord..." (Coffman, p.159). One can be friendly toward sinners without encouraging them in their evil lives, and indeed contact must be made before they can be taught.
4. Verse 35: "But wisdom is justified of all her children."
- a. "But wisdom is justified of all her children. One of those bright, wise sayings of the Son of man which belong not to the society of Capernaum and Jerusalem, but which are the heritage of all ages. The words find their fulfilment in all those holy and humble men of heart—rich as well as poor—who rejoice in goodness and purity, in self-denying love and bright faith..." (Pulpit Commentary).
 - b. The simile spelled out by Jesus in this passage compares the rejection of both John and Jesus by the same generation to the perverse and unreasonable behavior of spoiled brats sitting in the marketplace, and who would not dance when the piper played, nor mourn when the wailer wailed. They would not play wedding, for that was too happy; and they would not play funeral, for that was too sad! The opposite personalities of John and Jesus were alike rejected by Israel. The last clause, that "wisdom is justified of all her children," shows that both John and Jesus were fulfilling the true mission God sent them to achieve. The criticisms Jesus mentioned here as having been leveled against himself were only a few of the vicious and unprincipled remarks directed against the Saviour. For no less than ten different false charges made against Jesus by the evil men in that generation" (Coffman).
- F. Luke 7:36-50: Events at the House of a Pharisee Named Simon.
1. Verse 36: "And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat."

- a. This Pharisee does not seem to be overtly opposed to Jesus; his invitation for the Lord to eat with him shows hospitality. Luke is the only account which reports this event.
 - b. The meal was started when the certain sinful woman entered the premises and stood at the Lord's feet. We remember that the Jews of that time reclined on a kind of couch as they ate from a low table.
 - c. "Luke gives the only record we have of this incident. He records two other incidences of Pharisees who invited Jesus to meals and he alone gives them. (Luke 11:37; 14:1.) Jesus would dine with a Pharisee or with a publican (Matt. 9:10; Mark 2:15; Luke 5:29), and he even invited himself to be the guest of Zaccheus who was a publican (Luke 19:5). In this account two characters are brought together; they are not only diverse, but strongly contrasted. Valuable lessons may be learned from these two opposite characters. Jesus accepted the invitation to eat with this Pharisee. This Pharisee seems not to have been as hostile toward Jesus as many other Pharisees were; there is no evidence that he invited Jesus to his table to do him harm" (Boles).
2. Verses 37-39: "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner."
- a. The woman from the city, a sinful person, learned about the Lord's presence for a meal at the house of Simon, a Pharisee. That she knew about Jesus is obvious from what she did. As she stood near his feet, her tears fell upon his feet; she dried them with her hair, and kissed his feet. We do not doubt that she was penitent over his sins, and was seeking help for her soul.
 - b. In the process of wiping his feet with her hair, she anointed them with the ointment which she had brought for that purpose.
 - c. Simon thought within himself that if Jesus was truly a prophet, he would know this woman was a sinner, and would not have allowed her to even touch him.
3. Verses 40-43: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."
- a. The Lord addressed his host, telling him he had something to tell him; Simon invited Jesus to speak whatever he had to say.
 - b. He related a story about a certain creditor who was owed money by two different men. This creditor decided to forgive the debt of each of these men. Neither of these debtors had the means of repaying the loan. Jesus asked Simon [not Peter] which of these two men would love the creditor the most. "The one who had the greater debt." The Lord told him that he had properly answered.
4. Verse 44: "And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head."
- a. Jesus called Simon's attention to the woman who had washed the Lord's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. The host thought evil of the Lord for saying nothing about the woman's sinful past. Jesus bluntly stated that Simon had provided no water with which to wash his feet, but this woman had provided for this needed custom.
 - b. It is hyper-ridiculous to equate this with the anointing by the devout Mary, as recorded in the other Gospels. This person was a "sinner," and her knowledge of what was going on in this Pharisee's house speaks volumes about the Pharisee. Her free access to his house shows some affinity between them, although it did not extend so far as a common attitude toward Jesus, whom the Pharisee dishonored, and whom the woman honored. This unfortunate daughter of Israel had fallen into a life of sin, but she
-

recognized in Jesus a holiness and love which opened up the fountain of her tears falling inadvertently upon his feet, a fault (as she viewed it) which was quickly corrected by her wiping them with her hair, and anointing them with the precious ointment. Her kisses, lavished upon his feet, were a further expression of her love for the Son of God. [Coffman].

5. Verses 45-46: "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."
 - a. Simon had not welcomed the Lord with a kiss, something that also customary. But this woman had not ceased to kiss the Lord's feet and to anoint them with ointment; Simon had done neither of these kind deeds.
 - b. By this statement, Jesus pointed out Simon's omission of these ways of greeting and welcoming an honored guest.
6. Verses 47-48: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven."
 - a. The Lord knew this woman's sinful conduct, that she had plunged deeply into sin. Her depraved condition was entirely open to his divine insight.
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) Jesus now directed Simon's attention to the woman who had bestowed such gracious favors upon him. It seems that this was the first time that Jesus looked at the woman, and he asks the Pharisee to look at her; she was behind Jesus, hence he would have to turn to look at her. Jesus was an invited guest; the Pharisee had neglected some points of common and customary hospitality; the contrasts here made, scholars tell us, have the rhythm of Hebrew poetry; in each contrast the first word is the point of defect in Simon's conduct toward Jesus. "Water," "kiss," and "oil" are the points of emphasis.
 - 2) The water which Simon had failed to give was supplied by the tears of the woman; the failure of Simon to show affection for his guest was supplied by the kisses of the woman; and the failure of Simon to honor his guest was supplied by the precious oil with which she anointed the feet of Jesus. Simon had failed as a host to anoint the head of Jesus, the nobler part, with ordinary oil, but the woman had anointed his feet with costly oil.
 - 3) This penitent, sinful woman had done far more for Jesus than had the Pharisee; it was expected of the Pharisee to show such acts of customary honor to Jesus as his guest, but it was not expected of this woman to bestow any acts of honor upon him.
 - c. Luke 7:47-48: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven" (ASV).
 - 1) This woman had stood at the feet of our Lord, weeping with her tears falling upon his feet; she probably did not intend to wet his feet with her tears. The eating arrangement of the Jews was to recline on cushions which were against the low table on which the food was placed. Of course Jesus was fully aware of the woman's presence and what she was doing; he knew the kind of person she had been. It seems to have been common knowledge that she was a sinful woman.
 - 2) In his mind, Simon had thought ill of the Lord, reasoning that if he were a prophet, surely he would have known the kind of woman this female was. Evidently, Jesus had not even seen her, although his divine would have made her spiritual condition known to him.
 - 3) Simon's house was accessible the people who passed his abode. The woman had not been invited but had put in her appearance. She had learned about Jesus and was fully aware of her own sinful behavior. Her condition was undoubtedly the cause of her copious tears. It was not for the healing of some physical malady that she approached the Lord—it was for the wicked status of her soul that she was seeking relief.

- d. Jesus stated audibly that her sins, which had been many, were now pardoned. Being the Son of God, possessing all traits and powers of the Godhead (Col. 2:9), he had the power to forgive sins even while he was living on earth. He proved that to be true in the healing of the palsied man in Mark 2:1-12.
 - 1) Mark 2:10-12: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."
 - 2) To prove to these skeptical scribes that he had the authority to forgive sins even while he lived on the earth, he told the palsied man to get up onto this feet, pick up his bed, and return home. This miracle established for all time that Christ could forgive sins. The man immediately got off his bed, picked it up, and went home.
 - e. "It would be impossible without a miracle for this paralytic to do as Jesus commanded him; that they might know that Jesus had both right and might, authority and power, to forgive sins on earth, he would command the man sick of palsy to arise and take up his bed and walk: if the man obeyed his command, then they would know that he had the power and authority to forgive sins" (Boles, p.204).
 - 1) He was healed easily, instantly, completely; there were no "magical" incantations, no agonizing, no long and loud prayers; there was no prior staging or preparations; it was done in plain view of all; there was no doubt about the genuineness of the miracle.
 - 2) McGarvey: "The reason why sinners do not now show their faith in him as plainly, when they have it, is because they have not so great a desire to be healed. Men who would risk every thing for the cure of bodily disease, often bear very patiently the maladies of the soul" (p.274).
 - f. The Lord stated that this woman had **loved** much. The word comes from the Greek we call *agape*. It is the willing of good to another. This woman had shown much love for Jesus by coming to him with a heart breaking from guilt and sorrow; she showed him great respect by washing his feet in this unique fashion, and by anointing him with costly ointment.
 - 1) It is the case that this unnamed woman had done a considerable amount of good in behalf of others, for the Lord said she had *loved much*. Certainly she had shown love toward Jesus.
 - 2) Christ had just related a story to Simon about a man who had two debtors; one owed him a large amount and the other a lesser amount. The creditor graciously and without condition forgave both debtors. The man who was forgiven the greater amount would have cause to love him more; the one who owed a smaller amount would likewise love the man for the cancellation of the debt.
 - 3) Some sins have greater consequences than others; a victim of a sinner's hatred had rather have him tell a lie about him than to shoot him. In either case, the wicked man would still be guilty of sin, a sin which is able to condemn his soul.
 - 4) From Luke's report about Simon, that Pharisee carried the guilt of sin on his record [Eccl. 7:20, 29]; evil thoughts about the Savior would have constituted sin—if not, why not [Matt. 15:18-20]? He showed complete unconcern for this sinful woman, he even stated within himself that she was a sinner, yet he did nothing to aid her to a righteous life.
 7. Verses 49-50: "And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."
 - a. The fact that Jesus told the woman that her sins were now forgiven, was a shock to those who were at the meal. This was at a different time, place and in other circumstances from that of which we are told in Mark 2.
 - b. "And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (Mark 2:8-11).
-

- 1) Instantly, the Lord perceived their reasoning thoughts within them. How his response to their thoughts must have disconcerted them! He knew their very thoughts! Nothing was hidden to him. The spirit of Jesus knew what they were thinking. The heart is able to know things—another feature of the heart. “Why do you **reason** these things in your hearts?”
 - 2) He then stated which is easier: to tell them palsied man that his sins are forgiven, or to say, take up your bed and walk. Being deity, Christ could just as easily say one as the other—with equal results. This same situation occurred in this current case also.
 - 3) To prove to these skeptical scribes that he had the authority to forgive sins even while he lived on the earth, he told the palsied man to get up onto this feet, pick up his bed, and return home. This miracle established for all time that Christ could forgive sins.
 - 4) "It would be impossible without a miracle for this paralytic to do as Jesus commanded him; that they might know that Jesus had both right and might, authority and power, to forgive sins on earth, he would command the man sick of palsy to arise and take up his bed and walk: if the man obeyed his command, then they would know that he had the power and authority to forgive sins" (Boles, p.204).
 - 5) He was healed easily, instantly, completely; there were no "magical" incantations, no agonizing, no long and loud prayers; there was no prior staging or preparations; it was done in plain view of all; there was no doubt about the genuineness of the miracle.
 - 6) McGarvey: “The reason why sinners do not now show their faith in him as plainly, when they have it, is because they have not so great a desire to be healed. Men who would risk every thing for the cure of bodily disease, often bear very patiently the maladies of the soul” (p.274).
- c. In our present passage in Luke, the Lord did no direct or immediate miracle to prove that he had power on earth to forgive sin. The very text of the chapter recorded a number of miracles. His supernatural demonstrations were widely known and accepted by the multitudes. What Jesus had been teaching and doing led this woman to the him.
 - d. Jesus stated that it was her faith that had saved her from the consequences of he sins. He told her to go in peace. Can you perceive the great burden of guilt that had been lifted from her heart? Do you recall the same weight lifted from your soul as you were raised up from your immersion in water?
-

Luke Chapter 8

A. Luke 8:1-4: Jesus Goes Through Various Cities and Villages, Preaching the Glad Tidings.

1. Verse 1: “And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.”
 - a. Boles: This is probably the second tour that Jesus made through Galilee. He went "about through cities and villages" on this circuit. He took city by city and village by village on this tour. Luke in this brief paragraph covers the entire circuit. The first circuit may be referred to in Luke 4:42-44, and more definitely in Matt. 4:23-25 and Mark 1:35-39, before the formal selection of the twelve. This second circuit is mentioned only by Luke and was made after the twelve apostles were chosen. A third circuit in Galilee seems to be referred to in Matt. 11:1 and Mark 6:6, though it is not certain that there were three distinct circuits in Galilee. The purpose of Jesus in traveling through the cities and villages was to preach and bring the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the attention of the people.
 - b. Jesus preached and showed the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Eight-four preachers were sent to announce that the coming of the kingdom was at hand:
 - 1) Matthew 3:2: “And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” [John].
 - 2) Matthew 4:17: “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - 3) Luke 10:1-2: “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.”
 - 4) Luke 10:9: “And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” [The Twelve].
 - c. The kingdom inculcates certain, and many, good things—thus providing glad tidings. The kingdom of Christ is identical to the church of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19).
 - 1) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who [God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - 2) Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”
 - 3) Ephesians 5:24-26: “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:22-28: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”
2. Verses 2-4: “And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.”

- a. Coffman: Only Luke gives this glimpse of the part women played in supporting the ministry of Jesus. This must not be thought of as a small group. There were "many others" besides the three mentioned. These faithful women, from their own resources, ministered unto Christ and the Twelve.
 - 1) Mary Magdalene ... This means that Mary came from the town of Magdala, thought to be the same place as Magadan on the west side of the sea of Galilee, today called El-Mejael and consisting of some twenty residences, and pointed out as the traditional home of Mary Magdalene. It is built on the water's edge at the southeast extremity of the sea of Galilee.[1] "There is not the least bit of evidence, either here or elsewhere in the New Testament, that Mary Magdalene was an immoral woman." [2]
 - 2) The sevenfold demon possession and the serious physical or mental condition that accompanied such a condition do not suggest immorality; nor can the fact of her being included in this remarkable group of women who were permitted to accompany the Lord and the Twelve be reconciled with the allegation that this woman had been a prostitute. As Adam Clarke said: There is a marvelous propensity in some commentators to make some of the women in scripture appear as women of fame.
 - 3) The opinion that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute is a vile slander.[3] There are seven Marys mentioned in the New Testament,[4] but this was one of the most signally honored. She was the first person to whom Jesus appeared after the resurrection and was entrusted with the announcement that Christ would ascend into heaven.
- b. The only biblical reference to Joanna and Susanna is here. We are told that Joanna's husband was Herod's steward—he took care of the property belonging to that prominent politician. If Joanna and her husband were both followers of Christ, then our Lord's influence reached even into that king's court. Compare: "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22).

B. Luke 8:5-10: The Parable of the Sower.

1. Verse 5: "And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable."
 - a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Mark 4:1-2: "And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine."
 - 2) Matthew 13:1-2: "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore."
 - b. The crowds were unwilling to leave Jesus, looking first for some miraculous aid for those among them who were diseased or afflicted; we cannot blame them for this desire—we would likely have done the same. There were some who were interested in learning the truth. There were usually some who had made themselves enemies of Jesus.
 - c. Jesus used parables on this occasion. Parables were used in the Bible for several purposes:
 - 1) To *reveal* truth. "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:26-29).
 - 2) To *preserve* the truth (to fasten it tightly to the heart so that it would ever be remembered). The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates this facet of parables very well (Luke 10:30-37).
 - 3) To *conceal* the truth from those who would abuse it. This is the reason the Lord had to explain to the apostles why he spoke in parables:
 - a) "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By

hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*" (Matt. 13:13-17).

- b) "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25).
- 4) To *cause men to acknowledge the truth* before they realized it applied to them (2 Sam. 12:1-14).
- d. The Lord began using a new teaching method which enabled him both to instruct his sincere disciples and still not furnish his enemies any useful ammunition they could use against him. The word "parable" literally mean "to place alongside for comparison or measurement."
- e. "A parable is a species of allegory. An allegory is a discourse in which an object is described by describing another which resembles it, or which is analogous to it. Parables differ from other allegories in that they are taken from actual occurrences, while most others are taken from imaginary occurrences. Every parable contains an illustrating example, and indicated certain points of resemblance between it and the subject which it illustrates....
 - 1) "In interpreting the parables of Jesus two fundamental rules must be observed: first, when Jesus himself gives an interpretation, it must be accepted as final and exhaustive; second, only those points of analogy which were certainly in the mind of the author should have a place in the interpretation.
 - 2) "The chief error to be guarded against is a violation of the latter rule; and in order successfully to guard against it, one must have a well balanced judgment and an accurate knowledge of the subjects which the parables illustrate" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.116).
2. Verses 6-9: "A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - a. This parable begins with, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." There were no farm houses in that ancient time and place; the people lived in cities and villages from which they literally went forth to work in the fields. The sowing was done by the broadcast method, in which the seed was carried in a bag, taken out by the handful, and spread from side to side as the farmer moved across the field. With practice, one can spread the seed evenly over the field, with scarcely a bare spot. When the seed comes forth, producing plants, the ground is virtually covered with life.
 - 1) With all the equipment, methods, and supplies farming has greatly changed in recent years. Farms used to be small, worked by the farmer and his family, plowing and cultivating used horses and mules, and formerly seeded by hand. A practiced hand and eye were essential for the seed to be evenly spread as the farmer strode across the field.
 - 2) Of course, the seed could not be placed on the ground individually, thus some fell in places where it was impossible for it to take root and grow. The fields in Palestine had pathway around them, which were hard packed by the passing of many feet, of both man and animals. The seeds which fell on these way side places were quickly consumed by birds.
 - b. The Lord said some seed fell on stony ground; this does not mean it fell on a flat rock, for that would virtually be the same as the way side. We are told that this stony ground had soil over it, but there was not much depth. There was enough earth for the seed to take root and grow, but because there was not enough soil, the heat that followed would cause the plant to wither and die. The soil being thin, it could

- not hold moisture for long. Clearly, the dirt was spread over a layer of rock. The soil present would be fertile, but its thinness would not allow moisture to be retained, so that when the sun grew hot on the earth, the plants would die.
- c. Some seed fell among the thorns. These unwanted plants had not yet sprung up, but were present in roots or seeds underneath the surface. These thorns would spring up with the good plants, and choke out the intended crop. To a farmer, it seems that weeds and other unwanted plants will grow better without any care than good plants will grow with the best of care. The devil's spiritual work often progresses at a faster pace than the Lord's. His material blessings are more greatly desired by worldly-minded people than the Lord's spiritual blessings.
 - d. Some seed also fell on good ground. This soil had been properly prepared, had sufficient moisture and fertility, and thus produced a good crop, in varying amounts. Not all soil has the same richness, so different amounts are produced.
 - e. **He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.** "This warning, habitual with Jesus when he desired to direct especial attention to a speech or a remark, was necessary to prevent the people from regarding the parable as merely a beautiful and life-like description. It warns them of a meaning beneath the surface, and hidden as yet from their view" (McGarvey, *ibid.*, p.117).
 - 1) "This means that those who have faculties are responsible for their proper use; those who have powers of attention should exert them as very important lessons are about to be given" (Boles, p.287).
 - 2) "This was Christ's invitation to study that innocent story for its hidden meaning. Even yet, the true and full implications of this rich narrative come only to those with perceptive minds and hearts, attuned to the detection of spiritual truth" (Coffman, pp.188f).
 - 3) This command is repeated in each of the seven letters to congregations in Asia (Rev. 2-3). It is similar to a statement frequently made by Jesus in his ministry.
 - a) Matthew 11:15: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - b) Matthew 13:9: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - c) Matthew 13:43: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - d) Luke 14:35: "It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 4) The Lord taught the need to take heed how we hear and what we hear.
 - a) Mark 4:24: "And he said unto them, Take heed **what** ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given."
 - b) Luke 8:18: "Take heed therefore **how** ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."
3. Verse 10: "And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."
- a. The question they raised indicates that this was a radical change in the teaching methods of the Lord. They did not understand why he was now using parables or the meaning of this parable. Weak brethren in the church today are pressing for a change in the teaching methods. It has become painfully obvious to the observant that the sophisticated and the worldly-minded people of modern America have little interest in the gospel. Seeing a decline in conversions, these liberal church leaders decry the "traditional" teaching methods, thinking that a new method will increase interest.
 - 1) What is happening in American society was foretold by inspiration. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and
-

shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2-5).

- 2) The problem is not with the method of teaching, but the rejection of the message itself. It is impossible for a doctor to cure a sick man who rejects the medicine that can effect his recovery. It is impossible for a man to be converted who refuses to learn and accept the gospel. Liberal preachers and others have failed to grasp this simple truth. Their shallow plan is faulty to the core; it can do little if any good, but has the potential for a great amount of evil—a replacement of the gospel with human methods, entertainment, and philosophy.
 - 3) We are told by these “change agents” in the church that modern men will not listen to a plain presentation of the gospel, through Bible classes, private studies, or sermons; that they will heed presentations which use role-playing, drama, antiphonal singing. They assert that they are sure the Lord is not concerned with the method. But why did not the Lord, the apostles, and other inspired men use these modern methods? Why did they invariably teach the truth by a straight-forward presentation of God’s word? In the face of the very problem we now see in our world, where the great majority has rejected the true gospel, why did the Lord require us to “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2)?
 - 4) The Pharisees and others of the first century had developed a system of religion that placed emphasis on outward appearances. When they gave alms, they sought to use it as a means of calling attention to themselves (Matt. 6:1-4). When they prayed, they did so in prominent places and in ways so as to obtain the praise of men for their own “spirituality” (Matt. 6:5-8). They used fasting as a means of getting praise from men (Matt. 6:16-18). The emphasis of their religion was on an outward show of spirituality. "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:5-12).
 - 5) A preacher who uses oratory, pulpit shenanigans, scholarly words, smooth speech, suave manners, etc., as the primary means of obtaining more converts or bigger audiences, has failed to use the only power God uses to save souls—the gospel of Christ.
 - a) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - b) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - c) James 1:21: “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
 - d) Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
 - e) 1 Peter 1:18-25: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through
-

the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

- 6) The same is true with those who use stage productions, role playing, drama, etc. To what are people attracted when such tactics are employed? To the truth of God’s word? To the people giving the performance? To the method which gained their attention?
 - 7) It is remarkable that the same people who decry gospel preaching and teaching will build great displays, depicting Biblical events, as a means of attracting attention. They have been known to place a man on a cross in order to “make the Bible come alive” to the observers. Again, the emphasis is on the outward demonstrations, rather than on the truth itself. The praise offered by the pleasure-seekers who come to view the displays is more apt to be directed toward the talent, work, and money used in their construction than in the truth of the event depicted.
- b. The quick and simple answer was that it was for the disciples to know about the kingdom at this time, but it was not profitable that those who had been indifferent to his message should know this now.
- 1) “Jesus proceeds to give several reasons for speaking in parables, the first of which is that it was given to the disciples, but not to the unbelievers, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. This is merely an assertion of the fact that it was so ordered by God, without assigning a reason why he so ordered. By the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, are not meant things incomprehensible; for, in that case, the disciples could not know them; but the yet unrevealed truths of the kingdom, which were mysteries only because they were as yet unrevealed” (McGarvey, p.117).
 - 2) “Mystery” is a term often used in the New Testament in reference to the unrevealed plan which God originated in eternity, and which was revealed fully only when the gospel was given.
 - a) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 2:7-10: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."
 - c) Ephesians 3:3-5: "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

C. Luke 8:11-15: The Meaning of the Parable of the Sower.

1. Verse 11: “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.”
 - a. The audience could and should have been able to grasp at least the general meaning of the Parable of the Sower. Something was being sown; they were aware of the purpose of sowing seed by the farmer—the very surface of this parable addressed this operation; the seed was intended to take root, grow plants, which would produce grain, which could be gathered and used to prepare bread. This was a very common matter. Having heard the Lord present spiritual truths, they should have turned their minds in the direction of spiritual application. Closed minds cannot perceive such truths, because they have little or no interest in such truths. The worst blind person is one who will not see! Even the men chosen to be the apostles of Christ were unable to perceive the meaning of the parable.

- b. The Lord began his exposition of the parable by stating that the seed is the word of God. Literal seed is to be sowed in the earth so that the crop may be grown and the produce to be used as food and seed for other crops. The gospel is to be planted in the minds of people; that information is received and considered, which produces faith in the individual. That faith moves the believer to obey to Lord.
- 1) Acts 2:36-41: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."
 - 2) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
- c. "Christ named this parable....The parable of the Sower. The sower in this analogy stands for God, the Great Architect of redemption. The central place belongs to him. Men may or may not receive his word; but the seeds still fall, and the harvest is still produced, regardless of human failure, indifference, or opposition" (Coffman, p.192). The different places where the seed falls represent the various conditions of heart possessed by men.
- d. The identity of the seed is plainly declared to be the word of God in Luke 8:11. Matthew describes this seed as "the word of the kingdom."
- 1) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
 - 4) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
2. Verse 12: "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."
- a. McGarvey (Matthew):
 - 1) "The peculiarity of him who is represented by the way-side consists in the two circumstances, that he does not 'understand' the word, and that the wicked one catches away that which was sown in his heart. The word reaches his heart, which fact implies some favorable impressions on him; but his not understanding it, implies a want of proper attention to it.
 - 2) "Failing of proper attention, he allows the devil, by taking it away, to deprive him of the little good which he had received, and of all that he might have received in the future. (Comp. Luke 8:12.)
-

- Satan catches the word away by means of all those worldly allurements through which men are led to be inattentive to the word of God.
- 3) “The class of persons represented are those whose ideas of Scripture teaching are too crude for an intelligent faith, or who allow good impression made by the word to speedily pass away” (McGarvey, p.119).
 - b. Each individual is responsible for the condition his heart develops. Worldly concerns and attitudes can cause our hearts to be indifferent, or rebellious, or in some other way, unresponsive to the message of the gospel. The warning was given in the long ago to “keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23; cf. Matt. 13:15). We can only blame ourselves if our hearts cannot accept the gospel!
 - c. The devil may steal the word from the hearts of men by various means: through their own hard attitudes; by the errors of false teachers; by the influence of family and friends; through the sins or thoughtless words and actions of the brethren.
3. Verse 13: “They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.”
- a. “The rocky ground hearers are the emotional type; they are touched by the gospel, but only superficially so. They do not understand what a commitment to Christ involves; and, having no root in themselves, they quickly fall away when difficult and unpleasant situations arise. Premature action will not ultimately succeed. High pressure methods in many modern revivals may cause people to accept religion gladly, but as soon as the meeting closes, the evangelist leaves, and they return to normal life, their religion vanishes” (ALC, 1959, p.137).
 - b. There are many hearers who are easily touched with the gospel story; there are many who sincerely desire to have God’s approval. But these often want an easy religion and are not willing to undergo the struggles and efforts necessary to develop genuine commitment to the Lord. They want to hold on to the Lord with one hand and cling to the world with the other. Christ said such was impossible: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt. 6:24).
 - c. Neither a shallow emotional response nor a half-hearted commitment will suffice. Faith and repentance are key words in this connection. If one genuinely believes the gospel, it will change his life. If such a believer repents, he will be a changed person altogether. Repentance is produced only by godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10).
 - 1) When one learns the truth and believes it, he will see his true condition; that realization will cause him to be deeply sorrowful for how he has been living. This godly sorrow will lead him to reach a major, life-changing decision (called repentance) in which he commits himself to changing his way of living; he can know he has repented if he carries out his decision in the way he now lives, the things he does, in the motives by which he operates, in the thoughts he entertains, and in the way he speaks.
 - 2) Repentance is a major undertaking: it cannot be lightly or easily done. Therefore, we ought to give the most earnest attention to our lives, for if we sin willfully, thinking we can quickly repent tomorrow, our hearts may become hardened, no godly sorrow is produced, and thus no repentance is possible—and we remain in a lost condition.
 - d. The Lord, in his interpretation of this part, says that this describes those who will fall away when hardship or persecution arises. They obey the gospel in fair weather, and remain faithful while the way is easy, but quickly show their weak faith when the going gets tough. Every great cause has its “summer soldiers” and its “sunshine patriots,” but the Lord requires men and women, young and old, who are committed to him regardless of outside circumstances.
 - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
-

- 2) Philippians 4:11-13: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
- 3) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
- e. The term "offended" means "to be made to stumble." "There is nothing in tribulations and persecutions to make one feel 'offended' at the word; but there is, to cause him to stumble, as when his foot is caught in a snare" (McGarvey, p.120).
- f. "The shallow soil, overlaying rock, produced quick but impermanent results. The sun's scorching heat in the analogy stands for tribulations and persecutions because of the word. The shallowness of the ground represents impressionable, easily influenced persons, who have little stability" (Coffman, p.192).
4. Verse 14: "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."
- a. This describes a case where an individual hears and obeys the gospel, but because of the cares of the world, he is overtaken again and becomes unfruitful. This plainly and undeniably teaches that one can become a Christian and then fall away and be lost. If it be said that nothing is said about being lost, it only needs to be noted that if this one described is not lost, then people who are filled with the cares of this world, deceived by riches, and who have the word choked from their hearts, are going to heaven!
- b. "This represents a class of hearers which may be described as capable of salvation, possessing many excellent qualities, but who subordinate the most important things to secondary considerations and are thus robbed of eternal life. Cares, riches, and pleasures are not, in and of themselves, evil; but a well may be as effectively choked and stopped with a load of flowers as by a load of rotten carcasses" (Coffman, pp.192f).
- c. "Those represented by the thorny ground, do not, like the first class, allow Satan to catch away the word, nor do they, like the second, allow persecutions to cause them to stumble; but, while retaining the word, they allow 'care' about worldly matters, and the deceitfulness of riches—that is, the deception which love of riches causes men to practice on themselves—or both these combined, to render the word unfruitful....The great majority of the disciples of every age and country have been more or less chargeable with the sin of this class" (McGarvey, p.120).
- 1) Mark 10:24: "And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"
- 2) Luke 21:34: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares."
- 3) 1 Timothy 6:9-10: "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
- d. "The seed is good, the soil is good, the growth is genuine, internally everything is right; but while all is going well within there are difficulties without, which in time prove fatal" (Boles, Matthew, p.294).
5. Verse 15: "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."
- a. "The man represented by the good ground differs from the wayside man in that he 'understands' the word, and does not allow Satan to take it from him. His understanding it is the result, not of some natural superiority, but of the superior attention which he gives to it. He differs from the stony ground character, in that, though assailed by tribulation and persecution because of the word, and often more violently assailed than his vacillating neighbor, he overcomes them....He differs from the thorny ground character, in that he endures the cares of life so patiently, and resists the deceitful influences

- of riches so successfully, that the word of God in him triumphs over both. Finally, he differs from all, in that he alone 'beareth fruit'" (McGarvey, p.120).
- b. He had an honest heart which caused him to examine the message sincerely (cf. Lk. 8:15). "He is willing to be guided by the truth of God and is satisfied with that truth..." (Boles, Matthew, p.295).
6. Matthew 13:13-15: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." "And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, And I should heal them" (ASV).
- a. "The illative *therefore* (*dia touto*, on this account) refers not to the preceding, but to the statement which follows. Another reason for speaking in parables is given: because, when the people saw they saw not, and when they heard they heard not; that is, though they saw the miracles, they saw them not in their true light, and when they heard his words, they heard them not in their true meaning. This was a good reason for speaking to them in parables; for it showed that it was immaterial whether he spoke intelligibly or unintelligibly; and it left him free to speak as best suited the wants of his disciples alone. It may be observed, also, that he spoke more for future readers than for present hearers" (McGarvey, p.118).
- b. "How wonderfully were the parables designed to accomplish Christ's purpose! They were marvelous devices for the separation of his hearers and polarizing them with reference to the approaching kingdom. Those who desired and expected some worldly conqueror who would break the back of Roman tyranny and restore secular power to the Jews were repelled by the innocent and innocuous descriptions of such prosaic and commonplace things as those which formed the basis of the parables. On the other hand, spiritually minded disciples would read the deeper meaning and know the mysteries of the kingdom of God" (Coffman, p.190). God gives light but if a man blinds himself, God does not force his eyes open!
- c. The statements cited here are from Isaiah 6:9-10, and are also used by Paul (Acts 28:23-29) to describe the rebellious Jews who rejected Christ and his word. The Lord acted in full accordance with the ancient predictions concerning his work.
- d. "In these verses Jesus gives the fourth and final reason for speaking to the people in parables, and at the same time he points out the cause of those facts on which the preceding reasons were based.
- 1) "As Isaiah had written concerning his own generation (Isa. 6:9,10), this people's heart had 'waxed gross;' that is, it has become filled with earthly and sensual desires, and especially so with reference to the expected kingdom of the Messiah.
 - 2) "This state of heart made their ears dull of hearing; that is, it made them indisposed to hear with favor the words of Jesus. It led them also to close their eyes; that is, to refuse to see the evidences of his divinity. This closing of their eyes is treated (15) as the fatal act....
 - 3) "The evil state of the heart might have the result of having voluntarily closed their eyes against the light which had come into the world, causing parables and dark sayings to be as intelligible to them as the simplest lessons which Jesus taught; their ears were equally closed against both" (McGarvey, p.118).
- e. The Jewish nation was usually characterized by this obstinate attitude. "The strong inference from the application that Jesus makes of it is that, no matter what he would do or say, they would not obey him or receive what he said. It was like casting the pearls of truth before swine to present his teachings to their sensual and prejudiced minds" (Boles, p.289).
-

- f. Their heart was gross (fat: encased in fat); thus was insensitive to his words; his truth could not penetrate. Their ears were dull (deaf; unable to hear). They had closed their eyes (an individual, conscious action). This passage destroys the Calvinistic claims which assert that man came into this dreadful condition by inheriting it from his parents. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).

D. Luke 8: 16-18: The Candle is Intended to Provide Light.

1. Verse 16: "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light."
 - a. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 6:14-16).
 - b. Luke 8:16-18 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.
 - c. The verse under consideration implies that the world is in a state of darkness. This is the first plank in the Christian's platform. If the world was not in trouble, our great mission would be meaningless (Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Eccl. 7:10; 1 John 5:19; Luke 19:10; Heb. 2:10; 1 Tim. 1:15; Eph. 2:1-12).
 - 1) The first step in bringing a lost soul into Christ where light and salvation are found, is to get him to see that he is lost. This is difficult enough in heathen societies where nothing is known about the gospel. But it is more difficult in cases where people have accepted a counterfeit gospel and think they are saved. Before the truth can be profitably planted in such hearts, their error must be shown. Often they allow their prejudices to keep them from the truth.
 - 2) The world is in darkness but boasts of its great enlightenment. People in the industrialized nations are better educated in secular knowledge than ever before. During the 18th century an age of so called "enlightenment" began with the emergence of skepticism which began pressing grievous attacks against the Bible. A very great many scholars, preachers, priests, rabbis, men of medicine and science, and other well-educated men and women, have accepted human philosophies and theories which stand in opposition to the Bible. If the Bible appears to contradict some precept of modern philosophy or theory, the Bible is deemed to be wrong. Those who are highly educated in worldly wisdom are nevertheless in darkness and need the gospel! (Rom. 3:23; Eph 2:12; Rom 1:16-17; Heb.4:12).
 - 3) Worldly knowledge pertains to that which is material, mechanical, biological, and therefore temporary. It is a one-sided education, and even much of that is wrong because it stands on man's prejudiced theories instead of truth. Many people have been willingly convinced that they are just another form of animal life, thus have begun to live out their convictions! Why is there so much crime, strife, and moral decadence? It is because many do not know, believe, or follow the absolute standard of the Bible. Possessing knowledge of genuine earthly truth is good, but that only enlightens in matters of an earthly nature. God's spiritual truth governs the affairs of the soul, of human relationships, of moral behavior, and of preparing for death and eternity. A secular education is at best incomplete. The best education is that which incorporates sufficient secular information to enable one to get along well in this world, and enough information about the Bible to bring him into Christ, cause him to loyally serve the Savior, and thus be prepared for his real goal—eternal life in heaven!

- d. Faithful Christians are the only ones who can really give light to the world (and this is the reflected light of Christ!). The world of the first century was in utter darkness as is shown by the crime, strife and sin which were so prevalent. The great Greek philosophers (Plato, Socrates, Aristotle) had given their wisdom and influence to the world but the world was still steeped in spiritual and moral darkness.
- 1) In the face of the failure of the earth's great men (philosophers, political and military leaders, religionists, *etal*), the Lord announced in this passage that those lowly Jewish disciples (fishermen, tax collectors) would be the world's hope for light! The great thinkers have been baffled by this.
 - 2) The average Christian who knows little or nothing about philosophy and other human wisdom, knows and understands more about life than the greatest worldly experts. This is possible because he knows the Book, which gives us all that pertains to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; Acts 20:32; John 10:10; Matt. 5:1-12; 5:13-7:29).
- e. Coffman: "Thus, this verse has an application to Jesus himself; but there is also an application to Jesus' disciples. A true follower of the Lord, upon lighting a lamp, that is, by becoming religiously and spiritually enlightened through obedience to the Gospel, should not hide it under a bed, symbolizing either laziness or licentiousness; nor under a vessel, symbolizing the cares and preoccupations of life; nor under a bushel (Matthew 5:15), symbolizing business, industry and commerce; but he should display his light upon the "stand." The Scriptures do not leave us in the dark as to what this stand is. It is a local congregation of the Lord's church (Revelation 1:20)."
2. Verse 17: "For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad."
- a. Lying in the background this and previous verse is the Parable of the Sower, which told us about the spreading of the gospel of Christ among the world's population. Everything that is needed to save lost humanity is included in the gospel. Every truth is revealed.
 - 1) 2 Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."
 - b. Other passages tell us that every secret sin and hidden false doctrine and practice, will be exposed on the Day of Judgment. That fact is not the primary point in our verse.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - 4) Romans 14:11-12: "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 5) Revelation 20:12-15: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This
-

is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

3. Verse 18: “Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”
 - a. “And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath” (Mark 4:24-25).
 - 1) We are told to take heed to **what we hear**. We are to be careful what we hear—what we accept as our authority. Corrupt or misguided men can lead us astray; the writings of men can misdirect us.
 - 2) There are many creed books and other productions of humans which purport to be sanctioned or revealed to them by Heaven. We would do well to follow the Lord’s injunction given here.
 - 3) Some teachers, writers and preachers very often and continually present to their auditors a vast amount of untruths, perversions of the truth, and at least an incomplete version of the truth.
 - b. In Luke’s account, the Lord cautioned us to **take heed how we hear**: “Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have” (Luke 8:18). We are to hear with an open and testing mind; we are to take heed what we hear and how we hear it. Compare: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).
 - c. Coffman:
 - 1) This is no high-handed injustice of robbing the poor to enrich the affluent; but it is the statement of an eternal law, applicable in context or out of it.
 - 2) In context: To the diligent student of divine truth more of divine truth shall be revealed. The slothful student shall not only learn no more, but shall even forget what he already knows[27] In another context: Jesus applied this law to the judgment of the one-talent man from whom the one talent was taken and given to the man who had ten talents (Matthew 25:19-28).
 - d. Boles: The manner of hearing and the matter heard are both supremely important; some things possibly should not be heard at all; others that are heard should be forgotten; still others heard should be treasured and practiced. Those who had the truth and taught it to others would receive a clearer conception of the truth themselves; "for whatsoever hath, to him shall be given."

E. Luke 8:19-21: His Mother and Brethren.

1. Verse 19: “Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.”
 - a. Compare: “There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother” (Mark 3:31-35).
 - b. Someone from the multitude reported to Jesus that his mother and brothers were outside the house, wanting to see him. Because there were so many people, they were unable to enter the house. Mary, his actual mother, and his brothers his actual half-brothers were there; the multitude recognized these facts. Jesus and his four brothers (and his sisters) all had the same mother; except for Jesus, they shared the same father. "There is no reference to Joseph, Mary's husband; in fact he does not appear in gospel history after the period of Jesus' childhood (Luke 2); it is likely that Joseph was dead; this is strengthened by the fact that 'the carpenter's son' (Matt. 13:55) is called in the parallel (Mark 6:3) 'the carpenter'...(Boles, p.281).
 - c. "...He would allow no interference with his work on the score of earthly relationships; and it shows plainly to us that the supposed subserviency of Jesus to his mother, which is the ground of the worship of Mary, is most emphatically repudiated by Jesus himself" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.115).

- d. "Probably due to his foresight of the gross idolatry that would flourish around the name of his mother, Christ was careful to guard against it....Mary was never set forth as a female deity by Christ. If she had been, in any sense the 'Mother of God,' Christ's treatment of her on this occasion was improper" (Coffman, p.185).
 2. Verse 20: "And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee."
 - a. Mary and her other sons sent word into the place where Jesus was teaching, advising him that she and his half-brothers were outside, wanting to talk with him.
 - b. The mother of Jesus here is his literal mother. Since this is so, then the brothers indicated must be his literal brothers (his half-brothers). Matthew 13:55-56 identifies by name his four brothers, and at least two sisters are implied. Again, there is no reason for us to think of these as other than his actual close physical kinsmen.
 - c. "To send a message to him in the house (13:1) while he was speaking to the people, was an interruption; and the message itself, that they desired to speak with him, was an interference. It was assuming that the business which they had for him was more urgent than his business with the people, and that the latter should give way to the former" (McGarvey, pp.114f).
 3. Verse 21: "And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."
 - a. "But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. 12:48-50).
 - b. "It is here taught with emphasis that Jesus holds all who do the will of God as his brothers, sisters, mother; that is, as sustaining a relation to him as intimate as that sustained by these relatives. This statement not only shows the extreme absurdity of the worship of Mary, but it teaches us that our duty to the church is never to be sacrificed to the caprices, prejudices, or preferences of our earthly relatives" (McGarvey, *ibid.*).
 - c. Luke 11:27-28: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
- F. Luke 8:22-25: A Storm on the Lake.
1. Verse 22: "Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth."
 - a. Mark's account: "And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (4:35-41).
 - b. Matthew's account: "Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side....And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (8:18, 23-27).
-

- c. We remember that the previous episode took place near Capernaum, at the shoreline; the Lord had entered a boat belonging to Peter, which was a short distance from land. From that location, Jesus taught the multitude. See Luke 5:1ff. When evening came, Christ expressed the desire to go to the far side of the Sea of Galilee; that would be of course the eastern side.
 - d. This beautiful lake was surrounded by at least a dozen towns in the time of Christ and was the most densely populated area of Palestine. It is thirteen miles long, six miles wide, pear-shaped; and the surface lies 700 feet below sea level. Steep mountains rise along both the western and eastern shores. It is fed by the Jordan river which enters at the north end and exits at the south where it resumes its course to the Dead Sea. The water is fresh and sweet, abounds with fish, and is edged with sparkling pebbly beaches. Due to its depression below sea level and the bordering mountains, it is subject to very severe and sudden storms, such as the one related here. [See Coffman].
2. Verse 23: "But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy."
- a. A violent storm endangered the boat; the text calls it a "great tempest." "And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full" (Mark 4:37). Much water was now in the boat, causing debilitating fear in the twelve.
 - b. "Many travelers to Palestine have commented on the violent storms which so often lash the Sea of Galilee, their intensity augmented by the steep mountain gorges that rim its shores, and by the greater density of the atmosphere so far below sea-level. Such storms are common, still; but that this was no ordinary storm is evident from the terror it struck into the hearts of these bold men who were so familiar with the usual character and intensity of such disturbances" (Coffman, p.112).
 - c. "Small as the lake is, and placid, in general, as a molten mirror, I have repeatedly seen it quiver and leap and boil like a caldron, when driven by fierce winds from the eastern mountains" (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, vol. ii, p.59; quoted by Barnes, p.90).
 - d. Our Lord was unconcerned about his own safety during the storm; he was at the rear of the boat, sleeping on a pillow. Was he aware of the storm? Undoubtedly. He knew there was no danger. He even rebuked the disciples for their lack of trust.
3. Verse 24: "And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm."
- a. He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea. Mark records him saying, "Peace, be still" (4:39). Instantly the storm ceased! What modern "miracle-worker" would attempt this? The winds did not taper off—they completely stopped instantly.
 - b. On the Lord "rebuking" the wind, Trench says: "To regard this as mere oratorical personification would be absurd; rather there is here, as Maldonatus truly remarks, a distinct tracing up of all the discords and disharmonies in the outward world to their source in a person, a referring them back to him, as to their ultimate ground; even as this person can be no other than Satan, the author of all disorders alike in the natural and in the physical world" (p.156). Whether Satan is behind all the storms, etc., of nature, we may not be able to know, but it appears that his handiwork is behind this particular storm, for if he could cause the untimely death of Christ in a storm, he would have defeated God's plan. But the Lord demonstrated his superiority over even the forces of nature.
4. Verse 25: "And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him."
- a. Christ rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith. Fear and faith are opposites.
 - b. "And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark 4:40). This report from the inspired Mark emphasizes one of the great purposes of this account, to show the marvelous strength and power the Lord possessed. Mark wrote especially to the power-loving Romans.
 - c. "And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him" (Luke 8:25).
-

G. Luke 8:26-40: The Gadarenes and their Herd of Swine.

1. Verses 26:27: “And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.”
 - a. Matthew’s account: “And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts” (Matt. 8:28-34).
 - b. Mark’s account: “And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit” (5:1-8).
 - c. Different names are applied by the inspired writers to this location. “The reason of the difference is not certainly known; but the conjecture of Alford, that the country of the Gergesenes was a part of the country of the Gerasenes, Matthew using the more specific designation, and Mark and Luke the more general one, is highly probable. (See Alford on Matt. viii. 28.) The place designated was in the still larger district called Decapolis” (McGarvey, p.289). The area was on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. The Lord and his disciples had left the western side, near the city of Capernaum at evening the previous day, and after their stormy passage, they came safely to the eastern shore.
 - d. Johnson:
 - 1) The demoniac may have belonged to Gadara, but have met Jesus in the vicinity of Gergesa. Gadara was one of the ten confederated Gentile cities which, with the district in which they were located, were called Decapolis (The Ten Cities). Though they were located in Palestine, yet in the time of Christ they had a Gentile instead of Jewish population. Matthew speaks in the parallel passage of the Gergesenes. The Gadarenes and Gergesenes were simply two different names for the same people. Gadara and Gergesa were in the same district.
 - 2) Mark and Luke, in this account, speak of the Gadarenes, while Matthew calls the people the Gergesenes. This difference for a long time caused a difficulty to biblical students and caused rationalists to throw a doubt over the whole narrative. Gadara is three hours’ journey south of the lake and it is not likely that the miracle was wrought there. The discovery of Gergesa, now called Gersa, on the eastern shore of the lake and on the borders of the district of Gadara, has made all plain. This discovery, made by Dr. Thompson (Land and Book, Vol, 11, pp. 34, 35), reconciles every difficulty.
 - 3) Two of the writers, writing for Gentiles, mention Gadara, one of the best known Gentile cities of Palestine, in the territories of which it occurred, while Matthew, a tax-gatherer on the shores of the lake and familiar with every locality upon its borders, mentions the obscure village, right on the shores, where it took place. The modern Gersa, or Chersa, is within a few rods of the shore. A

mountain rises immediately above it, so near the shore that the swine rushing madly down could not stop, but would be inevitably driven into the sea and drowned; the ruins of ancient tombs are still found on this mountain side, and Capernaum was in full view “over against it” (Luke 8:26) on the other side.

- e. Mark and Luke mention only one demoniac approaching the Lord, while Matthew says there were two. Critics have judged this a contradiction, however if a logical explanation can be given, the "contradiction" vanishes. It appears that there were two such persons, but that Luke and Mark merely focused on the one who was the fiercer. The one was included in the two. Neither of these two inspired writers said there was only one; Matthew's account simply gives added information regarding the number of demoniacs Jesus healed. "There is a similar incident in the account of the healing of the blind near Jericho. Matthew (20:30-34) speaks of two, while Mark (10:46-52) and Luke (18:35-43) speak of but one. No special importance is attached to these differences" (Boles, p.200).
 - f. "Mark and Luke say that they dwelt in the tombs. The sepulchres of the Jews were frequently *caves* beyond the walls of the cities in which they dwelt, or excavations made in the sides of hills, or sometimes in solid rocks. These caves or excavations were sometimes of great extent. They afforded ...to insane persons and demoniacs a place of retreat and shelter. They delighted in these gloomy and melancholy recesses, as being congenial to the wretched state of their minds. Josephus also states that these sepulchres were the haunts and lurking places of those desperate bands of robbers that infested Judea..." (Barnes, p.92).
 - g. "When the Lord Jesus Christ had taken to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, when the word was made flesh and dwelt among men, Satan, by himself or by his servants took possession of the bodies of men, cruelly torturing their flesh and agonizing their spirits" (Givens, J.J, *Pulpit Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1962; quoted by Coffman, p.114). The problem these demoniacs had was not some mere illness or insanity; rather they were being afflicted by the demons possessing them.
2. Verses 28-29: “When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)”
 - a. These were exceedingly fierce and dangerous men. Their strength was not bound by the normal bodily restraints. When one is in a great state of agitation or terror, he is capable of lifting huge weights; so also are those who are not in their right minds; and so also in this case of demon-possessed men. "Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones" (Mark 5:3-5). Fetters were foot shackles.
 - b. Matthew reports that there were two of these demoniacs. The fact that there were two of them made this location an even more dangerous place. Satan would have rejoiced if the demon-possessed men had assaulted Jesus.
 - c. This man's extreme wretchedness (McGarvey) brought upon him the tragic condition Mark describes here—he spent day and night crying, roaming the tombs and the mountains, crying and afflicting himself with sharp stones. This dreadful state was not the man's fault, but was due to the presence of the demon. [We are soon to be told that there were other demons in the man].
 - d. Compare a similar case: “And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall
-

- I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour” (Matt. 17:14-18).
- e. The demons used the word adjure in requesting the Lord not to torment them: "to cause to swear, to lay under the obligation of an oath" (*horkos*, Mark 5:7; Acts 19:13). (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.)
 - f. The demon [s] in the man caused [?] him to rush up to Jesus and bow before him and cry out to him. Though the demons had caused them man to afflict himself and represented a real danger to anyone who passed the tombs, they knew they could not harm Christ.
 - g. “The demon-possessed seem always to have been able to recognize Christ. The man's worshipping Jesus is a reference to his falling down before him; and, in view of the man's behavior after he was healed, it must also have included (on the man's part, if not the demon's) an adoration of the Lord spiritually. The effect of his possession was that of splitting the personality, making it impossible, in each instance, to distinguish between what was done by the demon and what was done by the man” (Coffman).
 - h. In Matthew’s account, the demon asked the Lord whether he had come to torment him before the time. The demons, speaking through their host’s mouth, cried out to Jesus, asking if he had come to torment them prematurely; in Mark's account they also implored him not to torment them at all. The time of their torture was not to begin, according to their thoughts, until the day of Judgment.
 - 1) We learn from 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 that sinful angels were cast down to Tartarus, and delivered "into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment." This Tartarus is undoubtedly the same place to which the sinful rich man of Luke 16 was consigned and is being punished in the dreadful fire of that awful place. Thus, if these angels which sinned are identified with these demons, they are likewise even now being tormented, and will continue in that state subsequent to the "judgment of the great day."
 - 2) These demons knew the identity of Jesus, and thus called him the "Son of God." "Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24).
 - a) Acts 16:17: "The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation."
 - b) James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." [The present episode in the study above is one case where the demons were greatly afraid of what Christ was able to do to them].
 - 3) Coffman: *Adjure thee by God, torment me not ...* This petition of the demon seems here to have been predicated upon God's prior promise that the demonic world would be vanquished at some time certain in the future, hence his invoking God's name in the request. "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" as in Matthew, carries the same implication A glimpse of God's ultimate plan of destroying evil, surfaces here in the demonic knowledge that such a destruction is in store for them and that an appointed time for it has already been determined. See Acts 17:31, also Zechariah 13:1,2. To adjure is to entreat solemnly, as if under oath, or the penalty of a curse. This is the language of the demon, not of the man; not a mere blasphemy, but a plausible argument. Nothing is more common than swearing by God, on the part of the ungodly, the infidel, and even the atheistic. Torment me not. In Matthew, “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?”, *i.e.*, we implore thee to deal with us as God himself does; not to precipitate our final doom, but to prolong the respite we now enjoy. —Alexander. [See Johnson].
 3. Verses 30-31: “And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.”
 - a. NKJ: Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27 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. 28 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!" 29 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. 30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.
- b. Jesus asked the demon for the name by which he was known. The Lord could have known the name, but may have been asking for our benefit. The answer the demon [s] gave was "Legion" for many demons had entered into the man.
 - c. McGarvey:
 - 1) *What is thy name?*—This question naturally followed the entreaty of the demon. The case was so unusual that Jesus chose to develop it to the multitude, before commanding the demon into silence. The answer, "My name is legion, for we are many," at once brought the fact that not a single demon, but a multitude of them, had possession of the man.
 - 2) A legion was a division of the Roman army, composed, when full, of six thousand men, but varying in number, like the brigades of a modern army, according to losses experienced in the service. The amazing fact is therefore developed in this case, that some thousands of evil spirits had crowded into this one unfortunate man [p.291].
 - d. The words came through the possessed man, but the demons made the request. These demons entreated the Lord not to send them out of the country, i.e., into perdition. "Let us enter into some other body, a bird, beast, or even a reptile; do not send us into the place which is our eventual destiny!" They were aware of the awful punishment awaiting them— "Do not torment us now."
 - e. McGarvey:
 - 1) Luke has it, "that he would not command them to go out into the deep" (abussos), the abyss. The abyss, rendered "the bottomless pit" in Revelation ix. 1, 2, 11, and in other places, was their proper abode.
 - 2) To be expelled from a man, under ordinary circumstances, was to be driven back into this abode, and consequently, to be sent away "out of the country." How they had managed to escape from the abyss and get into this man, is one of the unsolved mysteries of the spirit world. Knowing so little as we do of that world, we need not be surprised that we know not this. [*ibid.*].
4. Verses 32-33: "And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked."
- a. ASV: "Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they entreated him that he would give them leave to enter into them. And he gave them leave. And the demons came out from the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd rushed down the steep into the lake, and were drowned." [Mark 5:13 reports that the swine numbered about two thousand].
 - b. "The demons made the further request that they be permitted to enter the swine; Jesus granted their request. The herd of about two thousand were 'feeding on the mountain.' Jesus did not forbid or restrain them from going into the swine; the Greek word for 'suffered' or "gave leave" means primarily 'to turn over,' hence to suffer, allow, or permit. We do not know why Jesus did not restrain the demons from entering the swine, which led to the drowning of the herd. When granted the permission, the 'demons came out from the man, and entered into the swine.' When they entered the swine, they caused the herd to rush 'down the steep into the lake,' and they were 'drowned.' They were feeding on the mountainside and rushed down into the sea and were strangled which resulted in their death. This miracle and that of the withered fig tree which Jesus cursed (Luke 11:12-14, 20) are the only ones which resulted in any destruction of property" (Boles).
-

- c. Cambridge: Near Kherza is the only spot on the entire lake where a steep slope sweeps down to within a few yards of the sea, into which the herd would certainly have plunged if hurried by any violent impulse down the hill. If it be asked whether this was not a destruction of property, the answer is that the antedating of the death of a herd of unclean animals was nothing compared with the deliverance of a human soul. Our Lord would therefore have had a moral right to act thus even if he had been a mere human Prophet. Besides, to put it on the lowest ground, the freeing of the neighbourhood from the peril and terror of this wild maniac was a greater benefit to the whole city than the loss of this herd. Jesus did not command the spirits to go into the swine; if He permitted any thing which resulted in their destruction it was to serve higher and more precious ends.
 - d. Coffman:
 - 1) The destruction of the swine was necessary in order that Christ might thereby show what is the true intent and purpose of Satan. If people desire to know what Satan is and what he will do to them who permit his evil domination, let them behold the example of these swine. Look what Satan did to the family of Job in a single day; solely because he had God's permission to do it. From the gates of Paradise to the present hour, Satan has had one invariable purpose, that of the total destruction of man.
 - 2) The example of the swine is an instructive example of Satan's perpetual intent. But what about the property issue? Christ did not destroy the swine; the demons did. Christ's permission of such a thing is no more than God's permission of all natural disorders like earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, droughts, and tornadoes, etc., which kill millions of people (not swine alone); and yet all thoughtful persons find no difficulty reconciling this with God's love and justice.
 - 5. Verses 34-36: "When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed."
 - a. "And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts" (Mark 8:14-17).
 - b. "And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts" (Matt. 8:33-34),
 - c. The swine-keepers reported these events to the owners, who promptly asked Jesus to leave their land. The physically and spiritually sick of that area did not receive the healing hand of the Master. They thought more of their hogs than they did of the two demoniacs or their own benighted countrymen. And they placed more value on their herd of swine than the benefit the Lord could give their souls.
 - d. There is a fine harmony between the statement that the demoniac was now clothed, and the statement in Luke that before the Lord cast out the demons, he was unclothed (8:27). The contrast of the man's former condition sets off to advantage the marvel of his present condition.
 - e. Perhaps we could draw this parallel: One who is not in his normal condition, can go around without clothes and be unashamed; what is the condition of one who apparently is in his normal condition of mind and yet is unclothed [for the most part]?
 - f. The inhabitants requested that the Lord leave their land. There is no record that Christ ever returned to that place. Impulsive decisions can result in spiritual disasters. We might wonder what their future brought to them, having rejected the Lord.
 - 6. Verse 37: "Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again."
 - a. Boles:
-

- 1) And they that saw it told them—Those who had been eyewitnesses, and others who may have gathered through curiosity, reported how the man who had been afflicted with the demons was "made whole." The keepers of the swine who had fled and told the owners may have returned with others and related what had taken place. "And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about asked him to depart from them." The effect of this miracle brought together a great multitude of people from the surrounding country. When they saw and heard what was done they made a unanimous request or entreaty that Jesus "depart from them." They were afraid of him; they were not only filled with a superstitious awe at such exhibition of power, but with fear that similar results might attend other miracles. Other owners of swine may have thought their traffic in danger. (Acts 19:24-31.) It may be that the loss of the swine concerned the people more than did the curing of this unfortunate man.
 - 2) But the man from whom the demons were gone—There is a wide contrast between the request of the people of the community and that of the man who had been made whole. This man "prayed him that he might be with him." Jesus was entering the boat (Mark 5:18) when this man came to him and asked to accompany him. There may have been several reasons for the man making this request; he had a warm desire of gratitude and love for what Jesus had done for him; the mean and selfish request and treatment of the Gerasenes strengthened his feelings for Jesus. It may be that this man feared a repossession by the demons after Jesus departed. (Matt. 12:43-45.)
 - 3) The demons prayed, and their prayers were granted to their own discomforture (verses 10, 12); the Gerasenes prayed, and their prayer also was granted by Jesus leaving them to their own destruction; the man made whole prayed and his petition is not granted for it was not best and he had a work to do.
7. Verses 38-39: "Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him."
- a. "And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel" (Mark 5:18-20).
 - b. The man who was formerly possessed by demons, asked the Lord to allow him to go with him. No doubt he could have served Christ well had he been admitted into the group of disciples.
 - c. But the Lord directed him to go home and be in company with his friends. He could be of greater service by telling his friends what Christ had done for him. This testimony could undoubtedly have had a great influence on them. And they could have spread that information to others. Also, this man most likely was a Gentile, and could not innocently fit into the Lord's company of Jewish apostles; his presence would have had a strong negative effect upon the Jewish population.
 - d. The apostles were later told that they would go to various parts of Judaea and Samaria. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Their work would have included this present location.
 - e. The Lord does all things well! He picked the right man to become a preacher in his behalf, among his own friends and countrymen. We would like to think that when the gospel began to be spread in earnest, that there were a sizeable number who had been made ready to receive it where this man lived.
 - f. Acts 8:1, 4: "...And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." Did these men also go to **Decapolis**?
-

- g. Compare: "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:19-21). Did some of these preachers go to the area on the eastern side of the Jordan River?

H. Luke 8:40-48: The Cases of Jairus and the Woman With the Issue of Blood.

1. Verses 40-42: "And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received 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 besought him that he would come into his house: For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him."
 - a. On their arrival to the west coast of Galilee, a crowd of people were waiting for Jesus; they gladly welcomed him back to their presence.
 - b. Mark's account: "And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him" (5:21-24).
 - c. Mark's record appears to give the greatest detail. Matthew's account merely describes the man as a ruler, but the other accounts say he was a ruler of the synagogue. Matthew's record indicates that the daughter was already dead, while the others show that she was at the point of death. When Jesus arrived at his house, the daughter was indeed dead. Luke points out that the man's name was Jairus, that this was his only daughter, and that she was about twelve years of age.
 - d. Jesus arose and started toward Jarius' house with him. When Jairus left home his daughter was then at the pont of death; she lay dying. He could properly say that by now she was dead.
 - e. The little girl was about twelve years old. Boles:
 - 1) "Luke gives the reason that Jairus besought Jesus to come to his house. He had an only daughter and she lay dying, She was "about twelve years of age." Mark says (5:23) that she was 'at the point of death.' However, Matthew records (9:18) that she was "even now dead." Jairus on reaching Jesus may have first given vent to his fears by the strong statement that she 'is even now dead,' or rather has just now died, and then have explained himself by saying that she was at the point of death. His strong faith is shown by his leaving his dying daughter to seek the aid of Jesus, and by his earnest entreaty for him to come at once.
 - 2) "It is to be noted that he made this request for his 'daughter'; in the East daughters were and still are regarded as of small importance in the family; but the birth of a son is cause for great congratulation. This incident shows how Jewish life differed from ordinary Eastern ideas in esteem for girls in the family. Luke brings out the touching fact that this was an 'only daughter.' So he mentions an 'only son' of the widow of Nain (7:12), and the 'only child,' the lunatic boy (9:38)."
 - f. Resurrections in the Bible are found in 1 Kings 17, 2 Kings 4, 2 Kings 13:21, Luke 7, Matthew 9, John 11, Acts 20, and Acts 9.
2. Verses 43-44: "And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd."
 - a. The preceding verse reports that the Lord was thronged by a mass of people. This is important for what happens next. We are told that a certain woman who, for twelve years, had been afflicted by a issue of blood. The reader is left to understand the obvious ailment. For years she had spend money in a vain attempt to find a cure from physicians.

- b. The lady pushed her way to Jesus, approaching from behind; getting near enough, she was able to touch the hem of his garment. This act of faith immediately healed her.
- c. Mark's account: "And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague" (5:25-29).
- d. Coffman:
- 1) The gospels are so human, despite their divinity, that the interplay of human personality often reveals little touches or glimpses of pleasantries, or even humor. Mark gave here a rather brutal description of the experience this poor woman had received from many physicians. The doctors had taken all of the woman's money, prescribed many useless and ineffective remedies, none of which did any good; and all the while the patient only got worse!
 - 2) Notice however, that Luke, himself a good physician, gave the essential facts a little differently, not contradicting Mark in any way whatsoever, but with a different emphasis, saying "(she) had spent all her living upon physicians, and could not be healed of any" (Luke 8:43). The inherent implication in Luke is that perhaps the physicians had done the best they could, but the malady was beyond their power to heal.
 - 3) He omitted the reference of Mark to the sufferings the poor woman had endured through the application of outlandish remedies, and the implication, though not clearly stated in Mark, that the physicians had made the woman worse.
- e. Having known of the supernatural powers the Lord exercised, and perhaps having seen them in action, the lady had great faith in his ability to help others. With the throng of people pressing around Jesus, it appeared impossible to directly make a request for aid; she reasoned that if she could only touch his garment, she could be healed. Somehow, she was able to draw near to the Lord.
- f. The hem or border of the garment literally means "a tassel of threads suspended from each of the four corners of the upper garment; it means the fringe worn on the border of the outer garment." (Boles, p.211). Numbers 15:38: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue."
- g. "She was a heathen living at Caesarea Philippi, near the sources of the Jordan. Her house is shown in the city...and at the gates of which, on an elevated stone stands a brazen statue of a woman on her bended knee, with her hands stretched out before her like one entreating. Opposite to this is another statue of a man, erect, of the same materials, decently clad in a mantle, and stretching out his hand to the woman. This statue, they said, was a likeness of Jesus Christ" (Eusebius). [This ancient writer, who was not inspired, lived from about 260 to 340 A.D.].
3. Verses 45-46: "And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."
- a. Mark's account: "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" (5:30-34).
 - b. Mark and Luke tell that Jesus demanded to know who it was that had touched him. Peter and the others were incredulous at such a question, since there were so many people around them. But Jesus was not asking for information; he looked at the woman; she was very fearful and trembled at what she had done, and told the Lord all. Her faith had brought her to Christ, to touch him, and by that faith she was
-

- healed. Jesus perceived that “virtue” had gone out of him. This word references the power to heal which the Lord possessed. This does not imply that this power was limited.
- c. Johnson: The following from Farrar's Life of Christ gives a bird's eye view of the whole incident and its meaning:
- 1) Among the throng there was one who had not been attracted by curiosity to witness what would be done for the ruler of the synagogue. It was a woman who had suffered for twelve years from a distressing malady, which unfitted her for all of the relationships of life, and which was peculiarly afflicting, because, in the popular mind it was the direct result of sinful habits. In vain had she wasted her substance, and done fresh injury—to her health in the direct effort to procure relief from many different physicians, and now, as a last desperate resource, she would try what could be gained without money and without price from the great Physician.
 - 2) Perhaps, in her ignorance, it was because she no longer had any reward to offer; perhaps because she was ashamed in her feminine modesty to reveal the malady from which she was suffering; but from whatever cause, she determined, as it were, to steal from him, unknown, the blessing for which she longed. And so, with the strength and pertinacity of despair, she struggled in that dense throng until she was near enough to touch him; and then, perhaps all the more violently from her extreme nervousness, she grasped the white fringe of his robe. It was probably the tassel that she touched, and then feeling instantly that she had gained her desire and was healed, she shrank back unnoticed into the throng.
 - 3) Unnoticed by others but not Christ, who stopped and asked, "Who touched me? She perceiving that she erred in trying to filch a blessing that would have been graciously bestowed, came forward fearing and trembling, and, flinging herself at his feet, told him all the truth. All her feminine shame and fear were forgotten in her desire to atone for her fault. Doubtless she dreaded his anger, for the law expressly ordained that the touch of one afflicted as she was, caused ceremonial uncleanness until the evening. But his touch had cleansed her, not hers polluted him.
4. Verses 47-48: “And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”
- a. “But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague” (Mark 5:33-34). NKJ: But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction."
 - b. Coffman:
 - 1) Jesus knew already who had touched, had already judged her faith, and had by his own volition healed her. We should not fall into her superstition by supposing the tassel did it! Nor should we fall into the guilty error of ascribing ignorance to Jesus as the reason for his asking the question. Was God asking for information when he inquired, "Adam, where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9), or when he asked of Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" (Genesis 4:9).
 - 2) The reason for the question was resident in the fact that Jesus desired to bestow upon the woman a greater blessing than mere healing. He would not permit her, in a sense, to steal a blessing, but would provide it for her openly, and before all.
 - c. The woman saw instantly that nothing was hidden from the Master, and, fearful that he might be displeased with her actions, she fell in worship at his feet and poured out the entire story of her twelve years of wretched sorrow, spent resources, frustrated applications to physicians, and of her desperate resolve to find at last in Jesus the healing of her shame. It is a matter of the utmost discernment and tenderness with regard to human sensibilities that Jesus had not required such an outpouring of the inmost secrets of her life while her pitiful condition still sat upon her; but, at a moment after she was
-

fully restored to health, the Lord permitted the confession then. How beautiful: how tender, how so like Christ, and unlike men, is the tender regard of the Lord for this woman. Her condition was one with overtones of great sorrow. As McMillan said, "Not only was there a depressing physical problem, but such a condition would also have prohibited her participation, in any full sense, in the religious rites of Judaism (Leviticus 15:25-30)." [See Coffman].

I. Luke 8:49-56: The Raising of the Daughter of Jairus.

1. Verses 49-50: "While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole."
 - a. "And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land" (Matt. 9:23-26).
 - b. After the episode of the woman, the great company arrived at Jairus' house; the news that the daughter was dead greeted their ears. The minstrels (flute-players, ASV) were present; these were the professional mourners that those who were affluent could hire. "Minstrels in a house of mourning would be incongruous according to western taste. But among the Jews it had been customary for ages to call to their service, on funeral occasions, certain women who were professional mourners, and who, by continual wailing and plaintive instrumental music, intensified the grief of the family and friends of the deceased" (McGarvey, p.85).
 - 1) Jeremiah 9:17: "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come."
 - 2) Jeremiah 16:6: "Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, neither shall *men* lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them."
 - 3) Ezekiel 24:17: "Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not *thy* lips, and eat not the bread of men."
 - 4) Amos 5:16: "Therefore the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus; Wailing *shall be* in all streets; and they shall say in all the highways, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing."
2. Verses 51-53: "And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead."
 - a. At this very point of the healing of the unfortunate woman, news came that the ruler's daughter had died. Those bringing this report suggested that he no longer trouble the Master. They had given up hope for the little girl's life. The worst dread of Jairus was now reported as a reality! The cold finality had stricken this good man in the death of his daughter.
 - b. "As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe" (Mark 5:36). When this hard news was told, Jesus spoke to the ruler of the synagogue: Do not be fearful. Let faith fill your heart. In other words, your daughter shall live again!
 - c. If Jairus had taken the counsel of the messengers, he would have been bereft of the little girl, and she would have remained dead. Faith had brought him to the Lord, being fully persuaded that the Lord could heal his daughter; he was told to retain that faith.
 - d. Johnson: Belief is in one sense the only thing needful, because it is the one condition on which we can receive salvation and grace from the Lord. But what does the Lord here mean by "only believe?" Only believe what? Why, evidently, that "I have power after death, that My might reaches beyond the grave." If the man believed that his daughter was dead, and the Lord bid him "fear not," it must mean "fear not, but that I will give her to you again." [Commentary on Mark].
 - e. "At the command of Jesus the crowd left the room and Jesus in the presence of Peter, James, and John and the father and mother 'took her by the hand; and the damsel arose.' In the presence of these five

- persons who could be witnesses to the miracle Jesus brought the damsel to life; the noisy crowd and minstrels were excluded from the presence of so sacred a scene. Jesus did not take her by the hand to raise her up, but accompanied his miracle with some outward act....'The damsel arose' shows that Jesus did not raise her up; according to Mark and Luke, Jesus had said, 'Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise,' and "Maiden, arise.' 'Her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately'; Jesus then commanded that food be given her" (Boles, p.213).
- f. "And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly" (Mark 5:37-38). When Jesus came to the house of Jairus, he allowed only Peter, James and John to enter with him. This was one of the several episodes in which these three disciples were chosen to be present. Peter filled an important role from Pentecost onward; James was to be first of the twelve to be martyred; John was to outlive all of the apostles.
 - g. Compare:
 - 1) Matthew 17:1-2: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."
 - 2) Matthew 26:36-38: "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me."
 - h. NKJ: At the house, the people who were gathered there were making a tumult. And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. When He came in, He said to them, "Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping."
3. Verses 54-56: "And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done."
 - a. That the little girl was dead is evident from the fact that the professional mourners were already plying their trade. All those present knew that the girl was dead, and were shocked when Jesus said she was only sleeping. They laughed him to scorn. Death is often figuratively described in the Bible as sleeping, a figure growing out of the appearance of the body in death. Some have mistakenly make a literal application of this figure of speech. To take this view forces one to the position that there is no consciousness after death, a view that is contradicted by the story of Lazarus and the rich man, and Paul's experiences he related in 2 Corinthians 12:1ff.
 - b. "At the command of Jesus the crowd left the room and Jesus in the presence of Peter, James, and John and the father and mother 'took her by the hand; and the damsel arose.' In the presence of these five persons who could be witnesses to the miracle Jesus brought the damsel to life; the noisy crowd and minstrels were excluded from the presence of so sacred a scene. Jesus did not take her by the hand to raise her up, but accompanied his miracle with some outward act....'The damsel arose' shows that Jesus did not raise her up; according to Mark and Luke, Jesus had said, 'Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise,' and "Maiden, arise.' 'Her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately'; Jesus then commanded that food be given her" (Boles, p.213).
 - 1) McGarvey: "Just five persons were permitted to go with him into the room where the dead lay—the father and mother of the child, and the three chosen disciples. This was to guard against misconceptions and false reports. If the room had been crowded with an excited mass of men and women, only a few could have seen clearly what was done, or could have heard distinctly what was said; and, as a consequence, many incorrect stories might have gone abroad. But with only five besides himself, all could stand about the bed in full view of the damsel, all confusion was avoided, and a correct report from the lips of each one present was secured" (p.296)

- c. “And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment” (Mark 5:41-42).
 - d. Jesus took the young girl by the hand, and she stood up and walked. That she was dead, was known by all. That she was alive again, all could now know. Mark tells us that she was twelve years of age. She was old enough to bear witness on her own, in days following; she would not be able to give any report of anything she might have seen or heard during the time she was dead. Compare: “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Cor. 12:2-4).
 - e. When the child was seen alive and well, walking and eating, the derision of the mourners and the incredulity of the messengers were turned into astonishment. The astonishment was great in proportion to the previous incredulity, and to the novelty of the event itself; for this was the first person whom Jesus had raised from the dead. No doubt, at the final resurrection of all the dead, those most astonished will be those who in life have “laughed to scorn” the promise of Jesus that “all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth.” [See McGarvey, p.297].
 - f. For scholars: They were astonished with great astonishment. Robertson: “Amazed [*exesteesan*]. We have had this word before in Matt 12:23 and Mark 2:12, which see. Here the word is repeated in the substantive in the associative instrumental case ... with a great ecstasy, especially on the part of the parents (Luke 8:56), and no wonder.”
 - g. “That is, no man except those of the multitude who were present. It was not to be expected that all, or even any of them, would be entirely silent in reference to the event, but this charge would have a restraining influence, and would prevent much of the popular excitement which might otherwise result. It is remarkable that we read not of a single instance in which Jesus was requested to raise the dead: and the fact may be accounted for in part by this charge of privacy, indicating that he did not wish to be importuned for this exercise of his power” (McGarvey, p.297).
 - h. It was the raising of Lazarus, at a later date, that precipitated the crucifixion; and too great a confirmation and publication of this miracle could possibly have interfered with the divine schedule of the Lord's death. It was not the time to confront the religious hierarchy with a miracle they could not deny; nor was this the place. It would occur in Jerusalem, not in Capernaum, and at the time of the fourth Passover, not upon this occasion in the home of Jairus. In line with this was the instruction recorded in Mark 5:43. [Cf. Coffman].
 - i. This was fairly early in the Lord's public work; to avoid to some extent being thronged by multitudes of the curious and the demanding, who would interfere with teaching the people, he firmly charged them to keep this special case quiet. This young lady was the daughter of a prominent man, and every time she was seen by others would bring to their memory that she had been dead but was alive again.
 - j. Jesus knew that the little girl would be hungry; she had been seriously ill for some period of time. Food would be the first thing she would need. When Peter's mother-in-law was healed from their illness, she arose from the bed of affliction and began to serve those in the house (Matt, 8:14-15). This girl stood up, walked and ate.
 - k. Following this miracle, the Lord's fame spread throughout the land. Raising up one who was plainly and undeniably dead would be an event impossible to conceal. But one miracle is as great as another; the effect some had on the witnesses was greater than that of others. It is as easy for the Lord to raise up a person who has been dead for thousands of years as it is to raise one who has been dead only for a few moments.
 - l. This miracle and the others in this chapter were wrought in Capernaum. It is most strange that after such wonders the general population remained in unbelief. “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin!
-

woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:20-24).

Luke Chapter 9

A. Luke 9:1-5: The Twelve Are Sent Out on the Limited Commission:

1. Verse 1: “Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.”
 - a. The Lord had kept the twelve apostles with him for a period of time which, among other things, would give them on-the-job training. They learned from Jesus what to do and how to handle situations. Being paired in teams of two, they could encourage and assist each other in the work.
 - b. They were provided with the power [that is, miraculous abilities] and authority [the right to use this power]. They were operating under the power and authority of the Master.
 - c. The next verse shows what their mission was to be—to preach the kingdom of God. But how were they able to convince their audiences that what they spoke was true? He gave them authority and power over all demons (cf. Mark 16:15-20).
 - d. Valuable note from brother Coffman:
 - 1) “Both Matthew and Mark record this preaching mission of the Twelve (Matthew 10:5ff; Mark 6:7ff); and despite the fact of Luke's narrative partially following Mark's order, it actually is unlike both the others, indicating the independence of the sacred authors. There is more than a mere possibility that Jesus sent forth the Twelve twice, this possibility resting upon the fact that Matthew records such a mission BEFORE the deputation of John the Baptist came to Jesus, and Luke recorded it substantially AFTER that event.
 - 2) “It seems to this student that it is arbitrary to conclude that there was only one "sending forth" of the Twelve, and that this or that Gospel erred in the placement of it in the holy record. In keeping with Luke's style of relating TWO of many typical acts of Jesus, rather than merely one, it would not be exceptional if he did the same thing here. In the very nature of training Jesus gave the Twelve in preparation for their worldwide mission, a training that extended over a period of about four years, it appears that there easily could have been two, or even more, occasions when the Twelve were sent out to preach.”
 - e. Pulpit Commentary offers this interesting background: The Galilee ministry was just over; *outwardly* it had been a triumphant success; vast crowds had been gathered together. The Master was generally welcomed with a positive enthusiasm; the people heard him gladly. Here and there were visible, as in the cases of the woman who touched him and the synagogue ruler who prayed him to heal his little daughter, just related (ch. 8.), conspicuous examples of a strange or mighty faith; but the success, the Master knew too well, was only on the surface. The crowds who to-day shouted "Hosanna!" and greeted his appearance among them with joy, on the morrow would fall away from him, and on the day following would reappear with the shout "Crucify him!"
 - f. Boles: “The number twelve is significant in the scriptures. Jacob had twelve sons; there were twelve tribes of Israel; twelve stones in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:17-21); twelve loaves of showbread (Lev. 24:5-8) ; the altar and the twelve pillars which Moses erected at Mount Sinai (Ex. 24:4); the altar of twelve stones of Elijah (1 Kings 18:31) ; the twelve spies who went to search the promised land (Num. 13:1; Deut. 1:23) ; twelve stones taken from the bed of the Jordan (Josh. 4:3). The woman with a crown of twelve stars (Rev. 12:1) and the new Jerusalem with twelve foundation stones (Rev. 21:14) are mentioned.”
2. Verse 2: “And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”
 - a. Mark 6:7: “And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits.” The Lord paired them up into six teams of two each. This was logical and wise. One man alone might become discouraged or fearful; one could encourage and support the other. Mark is the only writer on this operation to mention their going out two-by-two; Luke's account includes this point in reporting the sending out of the seventy other disciples on another occasion (Luke 10:1).

- b. John the Immerser and Jesus had preached the nearness of the kingdom's establishment; clearly, this would be the emphasis of the preaching of the twelve. These miraculous actions would confirm the accuracy of their message. "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 9:7).
 - c. They were given the power to cast out demons, cure diseases and heal the sick. None of those who saw or experienced the use of their supernatural power could deny the reality of those miracles or the message these men taught.
 - d. They were given the power to "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 9:8). He empowered them to perform a wide range of miraculous feats to confirm the truth of their message. They had not been charged for this power, and they were to dispense freely the benefits of this power. They were forbidden to receive any monetary compensation for the use of these miraculous powers.
 - 1) These apostles were common people; they were not learned men, or men with any great or special talents; they were not men of wealth with which to bribe men to accept their message; they were not powerful men so as to compel men to believe. But they were just average men, the kind that make the best witnesses in a court of law; men of good sense and character; men who were entirely convinced that their message was truth. They were fully prepared to suffer all manner of opposition, deprivation and shame in behalf of their message.
 - 2) These facts, coupled with the exercise of supernatural powers, were sufficient to convince any fair-minded person that their message was truly from God.
 - 3) Today, we have their confirmed word, accompanied with a clear record of their willingness to suffer for the truth they preached; this is more than enough to convince fair-minded people today of the reliability of their message.
 - 4) This was the first bestowal of miraculous power on the apostles. "The Lord has never asked people to believe his word which was meant for their salvation in the absence of sufficient evidence that it was from on high. Cf. Mark 16:19,20. But after the kingdom of Christ was set up and the message confirmed, there was no further need for the exercise of miraculous power by man. Cf. I Cor. 13:8; Eph. 4:11-14; Jude 3; Gal. 1:6-9" (ALC, 1959, p.121).
3. Verse 3: "And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece."
- a. Matthew reports that they were to limit their travels to the Jewish people: "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 9:5-6). This commission is commonly called "the limited commission." They were limited to carrying the message only to the Jews. They were specifically barred from going to the Gentiles or Samaritans. When the Great Commission was given, these other groups would be included, for the gospel was for everyone.
 - b. Compare: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat" (Matt. 9:9-10).
 - 1) They were forbidden to take gold, silver or brass along for money. Brass coins were the lesser pieces of money; our pennies are made of copper; the greater coins were made of more expensive metal, just as in more modern times."The prohibition is against procuring the articles mentioned before starting, and at their own expense. They were to thus procure neither money to pay expenses; nor script (provision bag) which would enable them to carry cold provision..." (McGarvey, p.89).
 - 2) These prohibitions made it necessary for them to place their trust in God to provide their necessities. This mission was a proving and training experience for their later and greater mission of taking the gospel to the entire race. Without learning to trust God, they could not perform their mission. And neither can we!
-

- 3) They were not to take an extra coat, extra shoes (sandals), or a second staff. (Note: a stave is a staff; cf. Matt. 26:47). Mark's account tells them to take a staff; Luke's appears to tell them to take no staff at all; Matthew's account resolves the "problem" by saying they were not to take an extra staff.
 - 4) "The workman is worthy of his meat." God has always required his people to support his special servants as they go about their duties. Provisions for the support of the Levitical priests were made; provisions for the support of the apostles and gospel preachers, and certain elders (I Tim. 5:17) have been made (cf. I Cor. 9:7; Luke 10:7; Gal. 6:6; John 13:20; I Thess. 4:8; 5:12). God would see to it that the apostles would be provided for by means of the "worthy" Jews to be found in many of the cities.
4. Verses 4-5: "And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them."
- a. Matthew 9:11-13: "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you."
 - b. When they entered a city, they were to inquire for a "worthy" family with which to stay. They were to make this house the center of their work in that city. "An unnecessary change of one's lodging-place, while temporarily laboring in a town or city, is attended with many slight disadvantages, as every experienced evangelist can testify, and the Savior exhibited a wise foresight in forbidding it during this hurried mission of the twelve" (McGarvey, p.90). They were not to be shifting from house to house; this would imply that they were not satisfied with the hospitality given, or were looking for an improved situation. This would detract from the power of their message.
 - c. A worthy family was one possessed of a good and spiritual character; one which would be a ready audience to the message they were to deliver. Through the influence of such a family, others could be drawn in to hear this message; and through the efforts of such people, the message could be insured of a wider audience after the messengers departed to another locale. When Paul, in his travels, came to a strange city, his practice was to go to the synagogue, for there he would expect to find kindred souls, who already believed in God, knew the Old Testament to some degree, and who knew about the coming Messiah. This kind of people frequently made an ideal audience for the gospel.
 - d. When they entered the house, they were to salute it; actually, the "salute" would be directed toward the inhabitants of the house, the family dwelling there. They were to search out "who" was worthy, not which edifice was worthy (cf. John 4:53; Matthew 12:25).
 - e. If the house (family) was worthy, they were to let their peace come upon it. [Instructions are given to the seventy disciples in Luke 10:5-6]. By saluting the family, "...the apostles were to pronounce a benediction or blessing upon the homes they entered, or at least make some expression of good will on behalf of every member of the home into which they came" (Coffman, p.138).
5. Verse 6: "And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where."
- a. Boles:
 - 1) After receiving their commission, they followed the instruction of Jesus and "went throughout the villages." The names of the villages are not given. It seems that they went through the southern and southeastern portion of Galilee. Jesus cautioned them against entering a city of the Samaritans (Matt. 10:6), which implies that they would at least come near the borders of Samaria. It also seems that Herod had his attention directed to Jesus by this mission of the twelve. (See verse 7.)
 - 2) It is probable that they visited Tiberias or its vicinity, the capital of Galilee, where Herod resided most of the time. As they went they preached "the gospel." They announced the glad tidings to the people, individually and collectively, as they had opportunity. Mark records that they preached that men should repent. (Mark 6:12.) They healed the sick in all of the villages. Luke is brief, but comprehensive. Mark 6:13 says "they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them."
-

- b. Luke reports that the twelve fulfilled their mission, going to the various towns, preaching to all, and healing those they met.

B. Luke 9:7-9: Herod Became Perplexed.

1. Verse 7: “Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead.”
 - a. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) This was Herod Antipas; he was a son of Herod the Great; his mother’s name was Malthace. After his father’s death he became tetrarch or prince-ruler of Galilee, Peraea, and of a fourth part of the Roman province of Syria. His first wife was daughter of Aretas, a famous Arabian sheik spoken of by Paul as "king of the Damascenes" (2 Co.11:32c).
 - 2) This princess he divorced, and contracted a marriage at once incestuous and adulterous with his niece Herodias, the beautiful wife of his half-brother Philip. Philip was not a sovereign prince, and it was probably from motives of ambition that she deserted Philip for the powerful tetrarch Herod Antipas.
 - 3) It was owing to his fearless remonstrances against this wicked marriage that John the Baptist incurred the enmity of Herodias, who was only satisfied with the head of the daring preacher who presumed to attack her brilliant wicked life.
 - 4) What Herod now heard was the report of the widespread interest suddenly aroused by the mission of the twelve—a mission, we know, supported by miraculous powers, following close upon the Galilaean ministry of the Lord, which, as far as regarded the numbers who thronged his meetings, and the outward interest his words and works excited, had been so successful. Rumours of all this at last reached the court circle, wrapped up in its own selfish and often wanton pleasures and false excitement.
 - b. What especially bothered Herod was the claim of some that this Jesus was John the Baptizer risen from the dead.
 - c. “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14-15). Mark’s shorter report omits many things that were not germane to his inspired purpose. In Matthew’s account, John’s ordeal is not reported until chapter fourteen. In this text [Mark 1:14-15], we are told that John had not been imprisoned when the Lord was preaching (cf. Mt. 4:17).
 - d. McGarvey: “The imprisonment of John is the only event named in the gospels to fix the time when the Galilean ministry of Jesus began. (Comp. Matt, iv 12). An account of the imprisonment is given in Mark vi. 17-20" (p.267): “For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.”
 - e. The Galilean ministry of Christ was at its height; John had been dead for some time. Antipas heard of the great miracles of Jesus and thought, as did some Jews, that this was John raised from the dead (cf. Luke 9:7-9; Matt. 16:14). “So tragic an end as had befallen John, in early manhood and in the midst of so brilliant a career, was well-calculated to startle the imagination, and the guilty conscience of Herod was ready to second any suggestions which might spring from the superstition of the people. His conception was not, as some have supposed, that John’s spirit, according to the doctrine of transmigration of souls, had been born again in the person of Jesus; for John had but recently died, and Jesus was nearly as old as he; but it was the conception, as expressed in the text, that Jesus was John risen from the dead. There was a prevalent idea among the ancients that departed spirits were endowed

- with superhuman powers; hence Herod's conclusion that the supposed resurrection of John would account for the mighty works in question" (McGarvey, p.128).
- f. John worked no miracle (John 10:41), but Herod accepted the common superstition noted above, and thus concluded that Jesus must be John whom he had killed. He is an example of one who has been made a coward by a guilty conscience.
2. Verse 8: "And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again."
 - a. Other notions had developed to explain Jesus and his work. Jewish misinformation held that Elijah would return to the earth as the same person he had been during his lifetime on earth.
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) "They were willing to assign Jesus any place but his rightful place. Some thought that Elijah had been brought back to earth according to a misinterpretation of Mal. 4:5. Still others thought that he was "one of the old prophets" who had been raised from the dead. There were those who were not ready to regard him as John the Baptist, neither would they regard him as Elijah, but they thought that he was some prophet who had come from among the old prophets.
 - 2) "The people, however, accorded to Jesus a higher mission; some higher than others, but none so high as that of the Messiah. His Messiahship was perceived by faith. (Matt. 16:16, 17)."
 3. Verse 9: "And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him."
 - a. Through the machinations of Herodias, the king was coerced to have John slain. Although this was against his better judgment, he allowed himself to be manipulated to have that righteous man killed.
 - b. Mark tells us that the king had arrested John and kept him bound in prison. To be incarcerated was bad enough, but he even had John bound. Paul and Silas were bound during their confinement in prison at Philippi (Acts 16).
 - c. Herod had arrested John because of the hatred of Herodias. We are not told how much time had elapsed between John's murder and the time of the present events of Matthew 14.
 - 1) "Herod had put John in prison where he remained probably a year. John was imprisoned soon after Jesus began his public ministry; John's ministry and Jesus' ministry overlapped about six months" (Boles, p.310). Josephus says the imprisonment was in the castle Macherus, located a few miles east of the Dead Sea. Matthew had previously alluded to John's imprisonment (4:12).
 - 2) John was impartial and fearless in exposing sin: he rebuked the common people, the religious leaders, and even the king. No man is worthy of being called a gospel preacher who will condemn sin only in safe settings or before those who can do him no harm, and wink at sin on the part of those in high places. Herod claimed to be a believer in the law of Moses; the law forbade the marital situation he was in; but he would not repent of his evil. When John plainly said, "It is not lawful for you to have her," the king bound him and threw him into prison, "for Herodias' sake."
 - d. Antipas was minded to kill John; the fear of a popular uprising prevented it. The purpose was already in his heart, even though he respected John highly.
 - 1) Mark 6:19-20: "Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly."
 - 2) "He was restrained not only by his own respect for John, but by fear of a violent insurrection of the people—a result which would have occurred but for the refusal of Jesus to head the movement" (McGarvey, p.129).
 - 3) The people are said to have been outraged over the conduct of Herod in his marital affairs. Public opinion is powerful; the Jewish leaders were anxious to get it turned against Jesus (cf. Matt. 27:20).
 - e. Both Herod and Herodias knew John told them the truth, but when truth condemns the soul, it often arouses resentment, anger and hatred for him who speaks the truth. Paul encountered this on many occasions, even from some who were Christians (Gal. 4:16). When men are unwilling to accept the
-

truth as pertaining to the way they live or in the tenets they believe and practice, the gospel proclaimer is in for trouble!

- f. “Among those baptized by John was Jesus of Nazareth, who began his own ministry in Galilee, causing Antipas, according to Matthew and Mark, to fear that John had been raised from the dead.[37] Luke alone among the Gospels states that a group of Pharisees warned Jesus that Antipas was plotting his death, whereupon Jesus denounced the tetrarch as a ‘fox’ [Luke 13:32] and declared that he, Jesus, would not fall victim to such a plot because ‘it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem’.[38] Luke also credits the tetrarch with a role in Jesus' trial. According to Luke, Pilate, on learning that Jesus was a Galilean and therefore under Herod's jurisdiction, sent him to Antipas, who was also in Jerusalem at the time. Initially, Antipas was pleased to see Jesus, hoping to see him perform a miracle, but when Jesus remained silent in the face of questioning, Antipas mocked him and sent him back to Pilate. Luke says that these events improved relations between Pilate and Herod despite their earlier enmity.[39] [Internet].
- g. Why did Herod want to see Jesus? To have the Lord put on a magic show? This same ruler was still in power when Jesus was sent by Pilate to him during his trials. “And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing” (Luke 23:8-9).
- h. This man ruled from 4 B.C, at the death of his father, Herod great, until 39 A.D.

C. Luke 9:10-17: The Feeding of the Five Thousand.

1. Verse 10: “And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.”
 - a. Mark’s account: “And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately” (6:30-32).
 - b. The twelve apostles returned to the Lord when they completed the limited commission on which Jesus had sent them. They reported to him all the things that they had done and taught on this important teaching tour. No detail are reported, but they had followed the Lord’s instructions; they were thus faithful in their work.
 - c. These men, and the Lord himself, were tired from their various activities. Christ invited them to go with him into some unoccupied place so they could rest. At the present time, they had not been able even to eat, because of the press of the multitudes. Another factor was that Herod had taken notice of Jesus. On the eastern side of the Lake of Galilee, he and the apostles would be out of his authority.
 - d. Matthew’s account: “When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (13:14).
 - 1) The desert place was not a waterless place, but an uninhabited place. Matthew calls it a desert but says there was grass there (verse 19); Mark reports that “green grass” was there (6:39); John speaks of “much grass” (6:10). Luke locates the place as being near Bethsaida (9:10). Wide, level grassy places may still be seen there, but they were so far from the city as to make it impractical for the people to return there for food. (See Coffman, p.216).
 - 2) The disciples returned to him at this time; apparently they were just now getting back from the limited commission (Lk. 9:10; Mk. 6:30ff). He, the apostles, and the people gathered at the desert place described. Once again, Christ was moved with compassion, and healed the sick among them. In their excitement to be with Jesus immediately after the news of John’s martyrdom broke, they still had presence of mind enough to bring sick ones along for healing.

- e. John's account includes a plain declaration that some among the multitude sought to take the Lord by force and make him king. This knowledge led him to go into the mountain alone where he prayed: "When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world. Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain himself alone" (John 6:14-15).
2. Verse 11: "And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing."
- a. Mark 6:33-34: "And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things."
- b. Matthew 14:13-14: "When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick."
- c. "Here, and here alone between the beginning of the Galilean ministry and the week of the Passion, we have four parallel reports. John comes into parallelism with the synoptists at this crossing of the lake, and continues parallel through the record of the return, when Jesus walks on the water, though here we lose our four-fold record by the silence of Luke. John contributes a valuable note of time in the remark that the passover was at hand" (Johnson).
- d. "Such was the popularity of the Lord, that when the multitudes saw him and his disciples get into a boat to cross over to the other side, they simply ran around the northern extremity of the lake and come together at Bethsaida Julius on the northeastern shore, the same being an uninhabited area along the shore, a beautiful grassy slope beneath a bold headland overlooking the scene" (Coffman).
- e. The multitude perceived where the Lord was going, in crossing the sea. They were able to reach the other side before the ship got there.



- f. The Lord and his group of apostles were still unable to get any rest and quiet. Reaching the north-eastern shore of the lake, the crowd was already there. He was moved to compassion toward this large gathering; they appeared to be a flock of sheep which was bereft of a shepherd to provide for them, to guide and protect them.
- 1) What was the Lord to do? He began to teach them many things. Teaching is the source of salvation and the solution of many problems. "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught

- of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me” (John 6:44-45, ASV).
- 2) McGarvey: Healing and teaching filled up the day until late in the afternoon, and the manner in which these labors are treated by the four evangelists, illustrates the striking variety of their methods as historians. Matthew says that Jesus “healed their sick” but he says nothing of teaching (Matt. xiv. 14); Mark says, “he began to teach them many things,” but he says nothing of the healing; Luke mentions both (Luke ix. 11); while John says nothing of either (John vi. 3-5)” [p.303].
 3. Verses 12-13: “And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.”
 - a. John’s account: “After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased” (6:1-2).
 - 1) Following the events just related in the preceding chapter, our Lord crossed over the Sea of Galilee, which the author tell us is also known by some [Gentiles] as the Sea of Tiberias. However, we are not told how long afterwards it was when he passed over the Sea of Galilee.
 - 2) In chapter five of John, the episodes which transpired occurred in Jerusalem, at the feast of Passover. In the next verse of our present chapter, John reports that the Passover Feast was again at hand. It seems clear that an entire year had passed between the closing of chapter five and the beginning of chapter six.
 - b. Johnson on John:
 - 1) If the view that I have adopted concerning the time of the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda is correct, John leaves a whole year of the ministry of Christ, that between the Lord’s second passover and the third, which is named in the present chapter, to be supplied from the other Evangelists. That year was one of activity.
 - 2) Following the chronological table of Andrews, given in the Appendix, and referring to the three preceding Gospels, we trace the Savior from the passover in April to Galilee in the latter part of the month, where he enters vigorously upon his ministry, as though the fierce opposition from the religious authorities at the capital of the nation had only incited him to a more determined effort to win Galilee to the gospel.
 - 3) Making Capernaum his home, from thence he made the circuit of the province, teaching and healing. At an early period of the year occurred the miracle of the first draught of fishes in the Sea of Galilee (p.95).
 - c. Matthew tells us that just before he made this short sea voyage from the western to the eastern side of Galilee, he learned about the death of John the Baptizer (Matt. 14:1-13). This move would put him out of Herod’s jurisdiction, and would give the Lord and his disciples a place and occasion for rest. “And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat” (Mark 6:31). This area is called a desert place, meaning that it was uninhabited.
 - 1) But the great multitude which had witnessed his miracles before he took to the boat, followed him, by walking around the northern end of the Sea of Galilee. “And the people saw them going, and many knew them, and they ran together there on foot from all the cities, and outwent them” (Mark 6:33). Think of the unruly crowds crushing individuals at big stores, or at some music festivals.
 - 2) When the Lord learned of John’s fate, he decided to depart to an uninhabited area on the north edge of the sea. The multitude heard of his departure and traveled around the north end of Galilee to meet the Lord on the other side.

- 3) Jesus was deeply moved by John's death. "The cruelty of the deed, the love which he bore to the victim, the thought of his own fate which it brought to mind, and the excitement of the people, all combined to stir within him a variety of emotions. These feelings must be held in abeyance, and the excitement of the people must be allowed to subside. To promote both of these ends, he sought the privacy of the desert, where, as the sequel shows (22), he intended to spend a long time in prayer" (McGarvey, p.130).
- d. Other accounts:
 - 1) Matthew 14:15-16: "And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat."
 - 2) John 6:4-13: "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."
4. Verses 14-15: "For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. And they did so, and made them all sit down."
 - a. Mark's account: "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes" (6:34-38).
 - b. "This statement gives us a note of time and shows that the country was green with the freshness of spring. It was not far from April 1st, and the trees were in full leaf. The proximity of the greatest of the festivals that were celebrated at Jerusalem (the passover, which began that year A. D. 29, on April 17th), would give occasion for a large increase of visitors around Galilee, as the crowds gathered for the journey. The gathering at such a time of a crowd of 5,000 men, attracted by so famous a teacher, is not incredible. The mention of the passover is an aid to the chronology of the Lord's ministry" (Johnson, commenting on the report given by the apostle John).
 - c. What about the two hundred pennyworth? "Two hundred shillings ... The money problem surfaced at once. A shilling was the equivalent of a day's wage in that economy; and the equivalent value in our society with a minimum hourly wage of \$5.00, making a day's wage \$40.00, would be \$8,000, a sum the apostles considered utterly beyond them" (Coffman).
 - 1) Pulpit Commentary: The penny, or "denarius," was the chief Roman silver coin, worth about eight-pence halfpenny. Upon the breaking up of the Roman empire, the states which arose upon its ruins imitated the coinage of the old imperial mints, and in general called their principal silver coin the "denarius." Thus the denarius found its way into this country through the Anglo-Saxons, and it was for a long period the only coin. Hence the introduction of the word into the Authorized

Version. Two hundred pennyworth would be of the value of nearly seven pounds. But considering the constant fluctuation in the relation between money and the commodities purchased by money, it is in vain to require what number of loaves the same two hundred denarii would purchase at that time, although it was evidently the representation of a large supply of bread.

- 2) Jesus was showing the apostles how great the problem was: there was not enough food present that was sufficient to feed such a large number of people. It was obvious that five loaves of bread and two fish would not begin to feed so large of group.
5. Verses 16-17: "Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets."
- a. Compare:
 - 1) Mark 6:39-44: "And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men."
 - 2) John 6:11-13: "And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."
 - b. Jesus gave thanks for the bread, which was distributed to the disciples who passed the food to each one in the great audience; he did likewise for the fish. Each person took as much of the food as he wanted; they was more than enough to go around.
 - c. Notice that Christ "gave thanks" for the food. In Matthew's account [also in Mark] we are told that he "blessed" the food. To give thanks is to bless; to bless is to give thanks.
 - d. Each person ate as much as he wanted, but there was still much left over. Twelve baskets of the left-overs were collected. The Lord did not allow this extra food to be wasted. Jews who traveled used baskets as suitcases; this accounts for the presence of these containers in the deserted area.
 - e. The miracle wrought was in the multiplying of the original amounts; as each was served, the amount did not decrease. There was more than enough for everyone.
 - f. Mankind is known for being wasteful. Notice how full plates are left at buffet restaurants. Parents will fill (or allow their children to fill) plates to overflowing, with perhaps most of that food being thrown out. What happened to the left-over food after the feeding of this great host?
 - 1) Think of all the resources which are wasted to produce such things as liquor, beer, wine, tobacco, etc. These are used to the detriment of humanity. A nation's natural resources can be squandered for the financial profit of a few.
 - 2) Think of all the fine farmland that is being destroyed today to build super-highways, unnecessary shopping centers, huge buildings for banking enterprises (which are paid for by consumers), night-clubs, gambling casinos, great temples used in the destruction of countless precious souls, etc.
- D. Luke 9:18-22: Whom Say the People That I Am?
1. Verse 18: "And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?"
 - a. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (Matt. 16:13).
 - b. Boles: Both Matthew and Mark give more details of this scene than Luke does, both locating it on the "coasts" or "towns" of Caesarea Philippi. There was a Caesarea on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, but Caesarea Philippi was on the extreme northern boundary of the ancient land
-

of Israel, near the latitude of Tyre, and at the head of one of the principal tributaries of the Jordan. Jesus and his disciples had retired to this remote district of Galilee to evade and forestall the uprising of the people to "take him by force, to make him king." (John 6:15.) He had just performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand and was very popular with the people at this time.

- c. The Lord asked the apostles how the population viewed him: "Whom say the people that I am?"



2. Verse 19: "They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again."
- a. Coffman:
 - 1) Significantly, the multitudes were no longer suggesting that Jesus was the Christ, due to the vicious and unrelenting campaign of the religious hierarchy against the Lord. At the very beginning of his ministry, John the Baptist had announced Jesus as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and, at first, Jesus was widely hailed as the Messiah, as fully detailed in the early chapters of John.
 - 2) However, having determined that Jesus was not the type of Messiah they wanted, the priestly leaders of the people exhausted their resources of cunning and deceit in an all-out campaign to convince the people that Jesus was not the Christ
 - b. The disciples had only recently returned from their limited commission, and were in a position to give the Lord a fair statement of current thought concerning himself.
 - c. "The world's greatest question is the one here propounded, Who is Jesus? In answer to it the Nazarenes had said that he was only the son of the carpenter; yet they acknowledged that on this hypothesis they could not account for his wisdom and his mighty works. Throughout the other parts of Galilee it was admitted that he was something more, but what he was more than this was a matter of dispute then, and it has been ever since. Concerning Jesus alone, of all the men of history, has such a question existed" (McGarvey, p.143).
 - d. The different views that the people of the time had of him are accounted for by the circumstances of the individuals involved and the different aspects shown in his activities. "The opinion that he was John the Baptist raised from the dead, as we have already seen (14:2), arose from the superstition of the people, and was adopted by Herod, as a natural result of his guilty fears. Some thought that he was the prophet Elijah returned again to earth, because of the boldness with which he denounced the sins of the age; while this characteristic, combined with the sorrowful tone of his speech, suggested to others that he was Jeremiah. Others, unable to decide which prophet he most resembled, thought that he was 'one of the prophets.' None regarded him as less than a prophet, and therefore all were inexcusable for not accepting the account which he gave of himself" (McGarvey, *ibid.*).

- e. It is amazing that none of the popular beliefs at the time identified Jesus as the Messiah; they thought he might be any of the great prophets but did not think of him as the Promised One. “Many at first recognized him as the Messiah (John 1:41; 4:30); but Satan, in the manner of the parable, had come and stolen the truth out of their hearts....This belief (that he was the Messiah) no longer existed” (Coffman, p.245).
 - f. The people nevertheless held Jesus in high esteem, identifying him with some of the greatest men of their heritage. While Elijah, Jeremiah, and other prophets were truly great men, Jesus was much their superior.
3. Verse 20: “He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.”
- a. The Lord had reserved this question to the most timely moment. They had repeated the views of the multitudes; the time had come to elicit from them their views of him.
 - b. “Who do you say that I am?” This is a question which every one must answer, and do so correctly, if he is to have hope of glory. This is the real question of that discussion.
 - c. Matthew reports the full answer Peter gave: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (16:16). Peter, who was usually the spokesman for the twelve, gave answer to the question with boldness and accuracy. His response was not on the same basis as those reported from the multitudes: he did not say he **thought** Jesus was the Christ, but “Thou art!” Did he fully comprehend the implications of this confession? It is clear from his statements in the latter part of this chapter that he did not properly grasp the nature of the Lord’s coming kingdom, and from the upcoming transfiguration episode it appears that he did not grasp how all-encompassing was the authority of Jesus.
 - d. Peter affirmed that Jesus is the Christ. The term “Christ” means “the anointed one.” Prophets, priests, and kings received an anointing when they were installed into office. Christ is all of these at once, thus is the Anointed One of God. “Messiah” is the Hebrew term for the Greek “Christos” (Christ).
 - e. Peter affirmed that Jesus is the Son of the Living God. “The term ‘Son of God’ truly denotes the deity of Christ. It implies a unity of being and nature with the Father which none other has ever possessed. When the Hebrews writer argued for the superiority of Christ, he based one of his argument on the fact that Christ was/is superior to the angels. He sustained this fact by the following: ‘Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, **Thou are my Son**, and this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son?...But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever’ (Heb. 1:4,5,8a)” (*Spiritual Sword*, July, 1987), p.29). The name (Son of God) identifies Jesus with the Father. He is equal with God in all respects save that of authority (John 13:16; 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).
 - f. The term “Living God” speaks volumes regarding the unlimited, timeless, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent nature of the Almighty Father. He has ever been and will always be; he had no beginning and will have no end: “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Exodus 3:14).
 - g. This is the Good Confession. It is more than the acknowledgment that Jesus is the Messiah of the Hebrews. It also affirms that Jesus sustains to the Father the relationship of Son. This confession forms the solid ground upon which Christianity is based.
 - h. “His answer contains two propositions: first, that Jesus was the Christ; second, that Jesus was the Son of the living God. The former identified him as the long-expected deliverer of whom the prophets had written; and the latter declared him, what the Jews had not expected their Messiah to be, the Son of God. This was an intelligent confession of the whole truth concerning the personality of Jesus” (McGarvey, p.144).
 - i. Matthew also includes this: “And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not
-

prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (16:17-19).

- 1) But how had the Father shown this to Peter? Jesus did not specifically say how. "The great truth that Jesus is God's Son is not taught by human wisdom but in that wisdom which is from above. To the contrary, human wisdom is ever active and diligent to blur and erase that truth from men's minds and hearts" (ALC, 1984, p.247). God had revealed it through the words and works of Jesus, as well as by his own voice from heaven in Matthew 3:17: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased." The proposition of his Divine Sonship is declared by what Jesus did in his public ministry: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). Peter and the other apostles, having been with the Lord for perhaps three years, witnessing his works and hearing his words, could properly draw the conclusion expressed in Peter's confession.
 - 2) How is Christ the "son" of God, since he is Deity, an eternal being? (Micah 5:2; Heb. 1:1-8). The Second Person of the Godhead (Christ) is spoken of as the "Son of God," but this does not imply that there was a time when Christ did not exist. If that were the case, he could not be deity; a divine person has no beginning or end. In what sense is Christ the "Son" of God?
 - 3) In the sense that the Father has greater authority, as is also the case between an earthly father and his son. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him" (John 13:16). God sent Christ into the world (John 6:44); Christ sent the Holy Spirit (John 15:26). The only distinction between the members of the Godhead is in the realm of authority.
 - 4) In the sense that he brought him forth into the world as a member of the human family. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, **this day have I begotten thee?** And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" (Heb. 1:5). God audibly declared him to be his beloved Son on two great occasions: at his baptism (Matt. 3:15-17) and as the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-5).
 - 5) In the sense that he raised him up from the dead.
 - a) Psalms 2:7: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; **this day have I begotten thee.**"
 - b) Acts 13:33: "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, **this day have I begotten thee.**"
4. Verses 21-22: "And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing; Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."
- a. Jesus cautions them not to tell men that he is the Christ. The people were not ready yet to receive this truth and the apostles themselves were not sufficiently taught to be qualified to speak on the subject. It was necessary for Jesus to die and be raised from the dead to establish for all time proof of his identity. "And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).
 - b. "Though the disciples believed Jesus to be the Christ, they had as yet but a very inadequate conception of what it was to be the Christ, and were not yet qualified to proclaim it aright. It was important that no misconception should now go abroad from their lips which would have to be repealed at a future day; hence the restriction..." (McGarvey, p.147).
 - c. If it were openly and aggressively announced that Jesus is the Christ, the long-promised Messiah, the crowds could only grow larger, hindering his movements, and the authorities would prematurely make extraordinary efforts to confront him. It was inevitable for him to suffer many awful things at the hand
-

of his hateful enemies, but he had much more work and teaching to do before that time was right. The coming of Christ into the world was perfectly timed (Gal. 4:4); the timing of his arrest, trials, and death was likewise properly scheduled.

- d. Matthew 16:21: "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."
 - 1) This is the Lord's first plain statement to his apostles about his coming death; scholars say this was about six months before his crucifixion. He had begun early in his ministry to make obscure references to it but they did not apprehend his meaning (cf. John 2:19-22; 3:14; Matt. 12:38-40). "He had wisely postponed a plain declaration on the subject until the faith of the disciples had taken the definite shape just indicated by Peter's confession (verse 16), and had acquired sufficient strength to endure the shock which this announcement gave" (McGarvey, p.147).
 - 2) John 2:19-22: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."
 - 3) Matthew 12:38-40: "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."
- e. His "ministry of sorrow" began after Peter's good confession and his promise to build his church. He knew full well what he was to encounter and be called on to endure in the near future. Following this passage is the account of the transfiguration scene in which Moses and Elijah appeared. Luke 9:31 shows that the subject of their conversation was "his decease...at Jerusalem."
- f. Who but the Lord could have known what was to befall him and thus predict his death in such detail? "This marvelous prophecy of his own death and resurrection is without parallel in human history....For Christ did not merely say, 'I will rise from the dead.' His graphic description of what would occur included these points: His death would occur at Jerusalem. The scribes, chief priests, and elders would have a part in it. He would suffer 'many things' at their hands. He would not merely die, but 'be killed,' a far different thing. The resurrection would occur 'the third day.' Proof that this prophecy of Christ was known throughout Palestine before the events took place is manifest in the sealed tomb and posted watch to guard his body and prevent any rumors that such a glorious thing actually occurred" (Coffman, p.255f).

E. Luke 9:23-27: Instructions About Following Christ.

1. Verse 23: "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - a. In serving God, a willingness to endure hardship and even death is required. This is not because God is one who delights in human suffering; rather, such is needed in order for us to be shaped and prepared to stand in his presence. Sin is so awful that God cannot countenance it (Isa. 59:1-2; Rev. 21:25; 1 Per. 1:15-16; Matt. 5:9; Heb. 12:14). Tribulations and hardships are designed to purify us as the furnace is intended to purify the gold ore by burning off the dross. "But he knoweth the way that I take: *when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*" (Job 23:10).
 - b. "To deny oneself is to avoid ease or indulgence; to take up the cross is to endure reproach or dishonor in the eyes of the world. The latter expression came into use from the fact that criminals who were to be crucified carried their own crosses to the place of execution. Peter had objected, as recorded in the preceding paragraph, to the contemplated death of Jesus, and now he and his fellows are taught that

- not only must this be endured, but they must themselves take up the cross and follow his example; and so must all who would be his followers" (McGarvey, p.148).
- c. Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
 - 1) Paul died to the law, and he also died to himself. He was still alive physically, but he no longer was the master of his own life. Christ, who was now his Master, lived within him, directing the course of his existence.
 - 2) Ephesians 3:17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." Christ dwelt within Paul, but not in a literal or personal way. As he believed, obeyed and loved the Lord, Christ was in him. When Paul believed and obeyed the gospel, he committed himself to following Christ regardless of the consequences.
 2. Verse 24: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."
 - a. "Man possesses a body, but he is a soul. A soul is of more value than the whole world, as Jesus said. The truth of this appears through the application of any of the common criteria for determining value: Cost: It cost the blood of Christ to redeem one soul. Permanence: A soul will exist till the worlds have passed away. Affection: God loved the soul enough to reclaim it. Uniqueness: No two souls are identical." (Coffman, p.259).
 - b. "The solemn truth here declared was most appropriate in this connection, because Peter's opposition to his Lord's death was inspired chiefly by his expectation that the latter would establish an earthly kingdom and conquer the whole world. He is taught that something far more valuable than the whole world is to be gained by following Christ, even though it should involve the loss of life" (McGarvey, p.148).
 - c. "In John 11:25,26 Jesus teaches a similar truth with respect to living and dying. The loss of the present life is temporal death; the loss of the future life is death eternal" (Boles, p.351). "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:25-26).
 3. Verse 25: "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"
 - a. What Matthew calls "his soul" Luke calls "himself." The soul is the real individual; one does not have a soul, rather he is a soul.
 - b. "The solemn truth here declared was most appropriate in this connection, because Peter's opposition to his Lord's death was inspired chiefly by his expectation that the latter would establish an earthly kingdom and conquer the whole world. He is taught that something far more valuable than the whole world is to be gained by following Christ, even though it should involve the loss of life" (*ibid.*).
 - c. "In John 11:25,26 Jesus teaches a similar truth with respect to living and dying. The loss of the present life is temporal death; the loss of the future life is death eternal" (Boles, p.351).
 4. Verse 26: "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."
 - a. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38).
 - b. "The fact here declared furnishes proof of the preceding remarks concerning the loss and gain of life. If men are to be finally rewarded according to their works, all the preceding remarks must be true. That the final coming of Christ is the coming here mentioned is evident from the three facts, that it is a coming 'in the glory of his Father;' it is to be 'with his holy angels;' and he is then to 'reward every man according to his works'" (McGarvey, p.148).
 - 1) No mere man could have accurately made the statement of the text. This is a prophecy encompassing his coming, the general resurrection of the dead, and the final Judgment.
-

- 2) The basis of the Judgment will be the word of Christ (John 12:48) and the works of men. Our lives will be measured by the inspired word of the Lord (Rev. 20:12).
- c. We are not told how many angels will accompany him when he comes again, but Jude says he will come with "ten thousands of his saints" (holy ones—ASV), apparently referring to angels, not men. This number could be a "perfect number" signifying an infinitely greater number (Coffman). Matthew 25:31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory..." The "glory of his Father" is called Christ's glory in Matthew 25:31.
5. Verse 27: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."
 - a. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1).
 - b. "The coming to judge the world naturally suggested the mention of another coming which was nearer at hand, and which also had an important connection with the preceding conversation. If he were destined to die at the hands of his enemies, as stated in the preceding paragraph, it would appear to his disciples that he must fail to establish the expected kingdom; but he assures them that notwithstanding his contemplated death, some of the present company would not taste of death till they would see him coming in his kingdom. The expression 'coming in his kingdom' means entering formally upon his reign as a king, which occurred when his exaltation to the right hand of God was proclaimed on the day of Pentecost, and which they then saw by the eye of faith ... None but himself and Judas were to die previous to that time]; but he intended to be indefinite about the time, and hence the very vague expression..." (McGarvey, pp.148f).
 - c. John, Jesus, the twelve, and the seventy had all announced that the kingdom was "at hand." To reassure the disciples that this promise was still valid, the Lord made this promise that some of those present would still be alive when the kingdom indeed came. Even though he would suffer and die, he would be raised up from the dead and most assuredly establish his kingdom as promised. Remember that in the same setting he promised that the "gates of hades shall not prevail against it," the setting up of the church which is the kingdom.
 - d. The Holy Spirit gave power to the apostles on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2. Since the power came on this great day, then the kingdom was established on the same occasion!
 - 1) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - 2) Acts 2:29-36: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, a knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 4:20: "For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power." The kingdom of God does not rest on words only, but on miraculous power! The miracles that were wrought in the first century proved that point. It came in close connection with supernatural demonstrations, proving

to those who witnessed them (and to those today who read of them) that the kingdom of God is now with men.

F. Luke 9:28-36: The Transfiguration Scene.

1. Verse 28: "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray."
 - a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Matthew 17:1-8: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."
 - 2) Mark 9:2-8: "And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves."
 - b. "The transfiguration of Christ is not to be regarded as a detached and isolated event in his earthly experience, but rather as a specific part of those demonstrations which were designed to show the divine plan in sending him to the earth" (ALC, 1959, p.162).
 - 1) Peter had made the confession of Jesus' identity; the Lord had revealed plainly to the apostles that he was destined to die at Jerusalem; he showed them that they must be willing to suffer for him; he spoke of the final judgment, and restated the promise that he was going to establish his kingdom during the lifetime of that generation.
 - 2) About a week later this tremendous event in the Lord's ministry occurred which made a profound and lasting impression on the minds and hearts of the apostles.
 - c. Matthew states that the following event took place about six days after the preceding episode. Luke says it was about eight days later. The Jews' method of counting included the first and last days. According to Matthew, this occasion was after the former. Thus, no friction exists between the two accounts. Today, we would say, "six or eight days."
 - d. He took with him the "inner circle" of the disciples: Peter, James and John. These three were with him at the raising of Jairus' daughter and when he prayed in the garden (cf. Mark 5:37; Mt. 26:37). "Matthew was omitted from that inner circle of three disciples who witnessed the marvel here related, and one can find only amazement at the complete detachment and objectivity of his narrative...Peter would take the lead in establishing the church; James would be the first martyr; and John would receive the final revelation. The experience on the mount of transfiguration would better equip them for future duties and responsibilities. The Saviour's prophecy of his approaching death and humiliation had doubtless imparted some measure of shock and disappointment to the Twelve, and that event was possibly designed to lift their spirits, strengthen their faith, and lead them into an acceptance of the approaching passion of our Lord" (Coffman, Matthew, p.261).

- e. We are not told the location of the impending event, only that it was "up into an high mountain apart." "The scene of the transfiguration was formerly supposed to be Mt. Tabor, a very beautiful conical mountain west of the lake of Galilee; but as Jesus was on his tour to Caesarea Philippi, which town was situated at the base of Mt. Hermon, it is now generally believed that the latter is the mountain mentioned in the text" (McGarvey, p.149). When the accounts take up the story following this episode, the setting is in the vicinity of Hermon. The top of Mt. Hermon is 9200 feet above sea level.
 - f. Jamieson: Now, since all the three Evangelists so definitely connect the Transfiguration with this announcement of His Death—so unexpected by the Twelve and so depressing—there can be no doubt that the primary intention of it was to manifest the glory of that Death in the view of Heaven, to irradiate the Redeemer's sufferings, to transfigure the Cross. It will appear, by and by, that the scene took place at night. He took Peter and John and James—partners before in secular business, now selected, as a kind of sacred triumvirate, to be sole witnesses, first, of the resurrection of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:37), next, of the Transfiguration, and finally, of the Agony in the garden (Mark 14:33).
2. Verses 29-30: "And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias."
 - a. NKJ: 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. 29 As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening. 30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 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. 33 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. 34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" 36 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.
 - b. Luke reports that the fashion of his countenance was altered. "*Transfigured* means *changed in form*, yet the description indicates only a change in the appearance of his person. Though 'his face did shine as the sun,' we suppose that the features maintained their natural form; and though 'his raiment was white as light'— that is, light reflected from some polished surface—we suppose it was unchanged in other particulars. It is impossible for us to realize his appearance until we shall be like him and see him as he is. (1 John 3:2)" (McGarvey, p.150). The same word is used in Romans 12:2 to describe the change which is effected in Christians as they imbibe the principles of the gospel.
 - c. Mark 9:3 says, "And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." "This glorious manifestation would serve to impress the disciples with the unmistakable divinity of his nature; with the illustrious majesty of the celestial world; and would give some idea of the change which will be wrought in the saved in the resurrection. See Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2" (ALC, 1959, p.163).
 - d. "Jesus made this change of his human body visible to these three disciples; this was done to teach them the mystery of his nature (John 1:14), which he should assume after his suffering; again it would show these disciples the cessation of the authority of the law and the prophets. Such earthly splendor and glory as they beheld him suggested the supernal and eternal glory with which he was clothed before the world was, and which should be his habiliments after his ascension to the Father" (Boles, p.354)
 - e. We are not told how the disciples were able to recognize these two Old Testament worthies, but some commentators suppose that it was by virtue of the ensuing conversation. "It is noticeable that there had been for many centuries a mystery connected with the end of Moses and Elijah. Moses in the full vigor of his strength, was summoned to the top of Mount Nebo, where he died; no human hands buried him
-

- or knew where he was buried. (Deut. 34:6.) The Jews had a tradition that his body was buried by angels, and that evil spirits contended for it. (See Jude 9.) He was the great prophet of the law; a type of the Mediator, the one on whose name and authority the Jews especially depended. Elijah 'went up by a whirlwind into heaven.' (2 Kings 2:11-16.) The Jews supposed that he was translated to paradise. He is a representative of the prophets. These two, Moses and Elijah, the representative of the law, and the representative of the prophets, appeared with Jesus and yielded their positions to him" (Boles, p.355).
- f. Boles: We need not ask how Peter, James, and John knew Moses and Elijah; the records do not inform us. There were many ways by which they could have had this knowledge. Jesus could have saluted them by their names, or conversation may have indicated it, or they may have known them through the Holy Spirit. Moses had died more than fourteen hundred years before this on Mount Nebo and Jehovah "buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Bethpeor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." (Deut. 34:6.) Elijah had been translated nine hundred years before this event. (2 Kings 2:11.)
3. Verse 31: "Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."
 - a. Coffman: Elijah as a representative of the prophets, and Moses as the great lawgiver of Israel both appeared before the Son of God in this event and, in a sense, laid their authority at the Master's feet, resigning their commission in the presence of Christ. The theological implications of this are profound. When the bright cloud, symbolical of the presence of God himself, caught away the great prophet and the great lawgiver, leaving only Jesus visible, it was God's way of saying, "There is only one authority now, and that is Christ!" "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him!"
 - b. Our inspired writer affirms that the whiteness of the Lord's appearance was far beyond the white produced by anything the professional "fullers" could produce. "Exceeding white; so as no fuller on earth can whiten them." This figure is taken from natural things. The first idea of 'fuller' from the Latin *fullo*, is that of one who cleanses by 'stamping with the feet.' His business is to restore the soiled cloth to its natural whiteness. The evangelist uses an earthly thing to represent the heavenly. The heavenly Fuller gives a purity and a brightness infinitely exceeding the power of any 'fuller on earth'" [Pulpit Commentary].
 - c. Barnes: The word translated here "decease" — that is, exit, or "going out" — is elsewhere used to denote death. See 2 Peter 1:15. Death is a departure or going out from this life. In "this" word there may be an allusion to the "departure" of the children of Israel from Egypt. As that was going out from "bondage," pain, and humiliation, so death, to a saint, is but going forth from a land of captivity and thralldom to one of plenty and freedom; to the land of promise, the Canaan in the skies.
 - d. His decease he would accomplish at Jerusalem. It was not the case that his death just happened to him; it was something which he accomplished!
 - 1) John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
 - 2) The Jewish enemies of our Lord thought that his being put to death was an operation which they designed and concluded. It would have been an easy thing for him to be removed from the wicked intentions of these evil men: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).
 - 3) Matthew 26:52-53: "Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"
 - e. God's eternal plan was hidden from the knowledge of men and angels during all the time when He kept it as a mystery (1 Pet. 1:10-12; Eph. 3:1-11). But both Moses and Elijah knew somewhat about the death Christ would accomplish at Jerusalem in the near future. Did our Lord give them some bit of
-

- knowledge about it? The two were able to talk about this grand event to some degree; of course Jesus was fully apprised of it fully.
4. Verse 32: “But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.”
 - a. If we try to put ourselves in the place of Peter, we can almost see why he blurted out his notion; he and the others had been in a deep sleep, when suddenly awaking, they were in the very bright light of the transfiguration scene. Taking place at night, the brilliance of the light would have overwhelmed their minds. They could see their Lord and the two Old Testament worthies.
 - b. Luke indicates that this event took place at night for the disciples were heavy with sleep, and verse 37 says that it was the next day when they came down from the mountain. Here, Peter makes the ill-advised suggestion that three tabernacles be built for these three in the scene.
 - c. Both Mark and Luke say that Peter blurted this out for he did not know what else to say. The tabernacles (or tents) were booths such as the Jews dwelled in during the feast of tabernacles. (See Lev. 23:34). "He was proposing some kind of equality for Jesus to share with Moses and Elijah. Christ did not rebuke Peter, but what followed exposed his error in the most astonishing manner" (Coffman, p.264). He may have been suggesting the tents as a place where these three could be honored and worshiped as glorified beings.
 - d. "There was a divine attraction in the scene, a foretaste of heaven's own glory, and no wonder that Peter exclaimed, 'It is good for us to be here'....It shows that men in the flesh are not prepared to judge of the fitness of things in the spiritual world. In all probability many of our most cherished conceptions of that world are as incongruous as that of the frightened Peter" (McGarvey, p.150).
 5. Verse 33: “And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.”
 - a. It may have been only for a short time that the scene lasted. But it was long enough to have a long and profound impression on these three apostles. Peter was later to write of this event: “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount” (2 Pet. 1:16-18).
 - b. This majestic scene was witnessed by Peter, James, and John. The reliability of their testimony is strengthened and verified by the fact that they were willing to die rather than recant. The same is true with regard to their testimony about his resurrection. Many credible eyewitnesses beheld the Lord following his resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8). 3)
 - c. The testimony of witnesses in a court of law is accepted; many suspects have been found guilty and condemned to prison or to death, based on that testimony. The written record of their testimony is kept on file; it is accepted by others who read that record years later. So it is with the record of the eyewitness of the Lord’s transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension. The testimony of these witnesses was under the divine control of inspiration. Truly, we do not follow cunningly devised fables, but rather the inspired word of Almighty God!
 - d. The apostle directly connects his statements here with the transfiguration. It was on that occasion that God’s voice sounded forth from on high, acknowledging Jesus as his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased. Verse eighteen pinpoints the location of this event as being on the holy mount. This shows that the reference was not to the baptismal scene, when God also spoke from Heaven. [We have no reason to believe that Peter was present on that occasion; also, no mount is indicated at the place the Lord was baptized—Matthew 3:13-17].
 - e. Christ made his entrance into the world by a wondrous process—the Virgin Birth. He made his exit from the tomb in which his body had been placed at death by a marvellous means—the resurrection
-

- from the dead. He made his departure from the earth back into Heaven by a spectacular operation—the Ascension. At the Transfiguration scene, he was manifested in his eternal glory, in a demonstration that was forevermore engraved on the minds of the three apostles who saw it.
- f. The glory was given in the transformation he underwent when his face shone above the brightness of the sun. The same word is used in Romans 12:2, being translated as transformed: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2).
6. Verses 34-35: “While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.”
 - a. "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).
 - 1) "The brightness described in verse two belongs to Jesus alone, but this brightness of the cloud overshadowed all of them" (Boles, p.356). In verse 8 the two other individuals are gone. Their disappearance and the proclamation of the Father show that God, who spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets and Moses, now speaks to mankind only through his Son (cf. Heb. 1:1-2). The message of the Transfiguration is the same as that of the book of Hebrews: the passing away of the old order and the bringing in of the new.
 - 2) There are three clauses in God's statement: (1) This (Jesus) is my beloved Son; (2) In him I am well pleased; and (3) He is to be heard.
 - b. "This entire transaction, as we may safely infer from Luke's narrative, occurred in the night. (Notice, that Jesus had been praying until the disciples here 'heavy with sleep;' and that they came down from the mountain 'on the next day.' (Luke 9:28,32,37.) Out of the womb of darkness had suddenly appeared the three glowing forms of Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, and now, while the disciples were trembling at that sight, there floats near to them out of the same darkness a cloud all radiant with light like that which shone from the face of Jesus, and as it begins to overhang them, they hear that voice which has never yet been heard by mortals except with fear and trembling. It came just as Peter's incongruous proposal had escaped his lips, and it is no wonder that the three fishermen 'fell on their faces and were sore afraid'" (McGarvey, p.150).
 - c. "'Hear him.' This command contains the chief significance of the entire scene. Uttered in the presence of Moses the lawgiver, and of Elijah the prophet, it meant that Jesus should be heard in preference to the law and the prophets. In the exalted pre-eminence thus bestowed on Jesus, accompanied by a change of his appearance harmonious with the glory of his position, his divine majesty was displayed in a manner never witnessed on earth before or since" (McGarvey, p.151).
 - d. Consider these passages:
 - 1) John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
 - 3) Hebrews 1:1-4: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”
-

7. Verse 36: "And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen."
- a. "And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mark 9:9-10).
 - b. Jesus charged the three when they descended the mountain to tell no man about what they had seen and heard. More harm than good would have been done if they had broadcast this information for they were poorly equipped to preach it since their faith in Christ was not yet perfected; and the people would not have been as receptive as they would later be. "But to lock up the secret in the breasts of these three was to cause them to reflect on it much and to converse with one another about it often. Furthermore, the more intensely and the longer it burned within them as a secret, the more joyously would they speak of it when the proper time arrived, and their own miraculous powers rendered credible all that they said of it. That they told it then is evident not only from Peter's words above quoted, but from its being recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, none of whom were witnesses of the event, and all of whom wrote before the publication of Peter's epistle" (McGarvey, p.151).
 - c. When the sound of voice of the Almighty faded from their ears, only Jesus was to be seen; Moses and Elijah were not there. "And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves" (Mark 9:8).
 - d. "And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid" (Matt. 17:6-7).
 - e. "The disciples were dismayed by the Majestic Voice, and were dazzled by the glory of the cloud. Their reaction to these miraculous events and visions reminds us of the similar experiences of Daniel and Saul of Tarsus. See Dan. 8:17; Acts 9:1-4" (ALC, 1959, p.164). In the Lord's personal ministry, this was but the second time God had spoken directly—Matthew 3:15-17 was the first. John 12:28-30 reports the third occasion.
 - f. Put yourself in the place of the disciples: you had heard the Lord say he must suffer many things at the hands of his enemies at Jerusalem, be put to death and be raised the third day; you had heard him speak with Moses and Elijah about this same death; then this marvelous scene unfolds before your eyes, followed closely by the awesome voice of the Almighty. This was sure to send one to his knees in the deepest kind of dread and fear. Compare: "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last" (Rev. 1:17).
 - g. Then came the reassuring touch and voice of the gentle Master. We cannot today hear the Lord's voice with out physical ears, nor feel his touch in that same direct way in which he comforted the disciples, but through his inspired word he gives comfort and assurance (1 John 5:3; 4:17-18; Heb. 13:5-6; 1 Pet. 5:6-7).
 - 1) Hebrews 13:5-6: "*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.*"
 - 2) 1 Peter 5:6-7: "*Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*"
 - 3) 1 John 4:17-18: "*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*"
 - 4) 1 John 5:3: "*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*"

G. Luke 9:37-50: A Demon Cast Out of a Young Man and the Results.

1. Verses 37-40: "And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth

him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.”

- a. NKJ: Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. 38 Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. 39 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. 40 So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not."
- b. Parallel accounts:
 - 1) Mark 9:14-29 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”
 - 2) Matthew 17:14-21: “And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.”
- c. The Lord and the three apostles who had been with him on the mountain approached the nine apostles who had not been present at the Transfiguration episode. These nine were surrounded by a great multitude, and the scribes were questioning his disciples. This was the day following the events of the previous night on Mount Hermon. In the Lord’s absence, the scribes had cornered the nine, asking them certain questions, which are not identified. They may not have at the time been equipped to handle the scribes, who were professional teachers of the law.
- d. “And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not” (Mark 9:16-18).

- 1) Christ asked the scribes about their questioning the nine disciples. Before they could reply, a man from among the crowd interrupted with the matter of his son being afflicted by an evil spirit. The effects of the demon's presence in the boy had caused grievous trouble for him. The young man was torn by the demon, was made to foam (at the mouth), gnash with his teeth, and to pine away.
 - 2) The father had asked the nine disciples to cast out the demon, but they could not. Could this be at the heart of the scribes' contention with the disciples? Most likely it was, as Johnson suggests:
 - a) The answer came from the most interested, and the one who had the best right to tell the story: One of the multitude. Matthew says that he "came kneeling," and Luke that he "cried out" with his request. I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit, i.e., a spirit that makes its victim dumb; so in Matt, 9:32, and 12:22. When Jesus addressed the spirit (verse 25), he spoke to it as dumb and deaf, perhaps because of what he had observed in addition to what the father told him
 - b) More particularly, when the demon seized the boy he tore or convulsed him, or, as some explain it, threw him to the ground; and then he foamed and gnashed his teeth, and the consequence was that he pined away or was steadily wasting The word "lunatic," or "moonstruck," is applied to the victim in this case, as often, probably because the attacks were associated with the recurrence of the full moon.
 - e. The problem the boy had was not a simple case of a common human affliction. The sorrowful symptoms were directly caused by the presence in his body of the evil demon. Compare this case with the two demon-possessed men who lived in tombs (Mark 5:1-20). These men were given tremendous strength by the demons which inhabited them.
 2. Verse 41: "And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither."
 - a. Boles: "This was in the presence of the scribes and the multitude and his disciples. It showed his nine disciples up in a bad light. However, Jesus rebuked the faithless and perverse generation. The rebuke must be applied to the multitude as well as to the scribes; it applies also to his disciples, though perhaps with not the same force as to the scribes. Jesus asked how long he should be with them and bear with them. Here the two questions of Mark 9:19 (only one in Matt. 17:17) are combined in one sentence. After asking the question Jesus commanded the father and his friends to bring his son to him."
 - b. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) These followers, trying to imitate their Master in his wonder-works, but failing because, after all, their faith in him wavered. The father of the child, confessing his unbelief, but utterly wretched at the sight of the suffering of his boy. The ghastly spectacle of the ... boy writhing and foaming on the ground, and then lying all bruised and dishevelled, with the pallor of death on the poor, pain-wrung face, and this sorely afflicted one a child, one of those little ones whom Jesus loved so well What a contrast for the Lord between the heavenly hours he had just been spending on the mount, and this sad sight of pain and suffering, of jealousy and wrangling, of doubts and indecision, in the midst of which he now stood! ") faithless and perverse," cried the pitiful Lord with a burst of intense sorrow, "how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?"
 - 2) One word, he knew, and for him all this might be exchanged for the scenes of heaven, for the company of angels and of blessed spirits, for the old home of grandeur and of peace; only it was just to heal this bitter curse that he had left his heaven-home. But the contrast between the glory of the Transfiguration mount and the memories which they evoked, and the present scene of pain and woe unutterable, of human passions and weakness, called forth from the Lord this bitter, sorrowful expression.
 - c. "And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us" (Mark 9:21-22).
-

- 1) The young man had been afflicted by the demon since he was a child [from childhood]. We are not able to know just how old this boy was at the time he was healed. Clearly, a period of years is suggested.
- 2) We are given other aspects of the afflictions caused by the demon: The boy was cast into the fire and into waters—in efforts to destroy him. It appears that the evil spirit was unconcerned about finding another body to inhabit.
3. Verse 42: “And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.”
 - a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. “Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:23-24).
 - 1) Coffman:
 - 2) These words must be understood as Jesus' rebuke of the father's lack of faith, and so the father accepted them. It is as if Jesus had said, "Look, any man who has faith will not set any limit on what the Lord is able to do." As Cranfield observed: "The father, instead of doubting the power of Jesus to help him, ought to have had a faith like that of the leper in Mark 1:40."
 - 3) Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. Who is he who cannot identify with this distraught parent in his experience of faith with an admixture of doubt? Unbelief is never very far away from faith; and their name is legion who, like Peter of old, walk over tempestuous waves one moment and sink into faithless despair the next. This doubting believer properly appealed to the Lord as the only source of strengthening his faith.
 - c. His tears expressed his anxiety for his son, and his words declared the weakness of the faith on which the cure was now to depend. The contradictory answer, “I believe; help thou my unbelief,” can have sprung only from a heart distracted between a burning desire and a weak faith. It can not have been invented by Mark. Having said, “I believe,” he feared that he had gone too far; he calls his weak faith unbelief and begs Jesus to help it. How different this from the conduct of the scribes who were resisting the force of evidence and struggling to maintain a stubborn unbelief! [See McGarvey].
 - d. *All things are possible to him that believeth.* There are those who take this statement as a literal truth—that if one can generate sufficient faith, anything under the sun is possible. This is an extreme view. There are some things which even God cannot do.
 - 1) He cannot make a square circle; he could turn a cube into a hoop, but a hoop cannot at the same time be a cube. There is no such thing as a married bachelor. A man can be one or the other, but he cannot be both at the same time. God could not turn him into being both at the same time.
 - 2) The context of the statement is that in which Jesus was about to heal the man's demon-possessed son. In this case, the father must have faith before the miracle was to be done. When the disciples tried to cast out the demon, they did not possess enough faith to get the job done. The Lord later told them that faith and fasting were required; by fasting [which would include meditation] their faith could have been strengthened.
 - 3) The crippled man in Acts 3 had no faith in the two apostles to heal his infirmity. Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up. His feet and ankle bones received strength—immediately! The beggar had no faith in Jesus; he had no anticipation of being healed, so no requirement of faith on his part was necessary. This miracle was not done to test the lame man's faith, but to demonstrate to the people who would shortly learn of it that the power of God was in the apostles.
4. Verse 43-45: “And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.”

- a. Compare: "When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose" (Mark 9:25-27).
 - 1) ASV: "And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him." The foul spirit in the KJV is unclean spirit in the ASV. Either word speaks of this demon as being morally and spiritually corrupted.
 - 2) The Lord rebuked this unclean spirit to come out of the boy; he did this as the multitude came rushing up. They would know the miracle had been done, that the boy was now free from the demon's power, and that it was Jesus who had done it. Notice that Christ commanded the spirit to depart and never to re-enter him.
 - 3) Also notice that the demon in the boy had caused him to be both mute and deaf. One who can not hear cannot learn to enunciate words. They can perhaps learn to read lips. If such a person can learn to read and write, communication is still possible, although at a slower rate.
- b. The demon was so spiteful toward the Lord, and so full of hatred, he wracked the boy's body in one final stroke intending to damage him or even kill him. Through the boy's mouth, the demon cried out. We are not told whether he cried out in words or just gave vent to his fate in a loud sound.
 - 1) So violent was the strike that the boy fell down as though dead. Some of the bystanders believed that he was indeed dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up. Quickly the lad was on his feet again, completely separated from the demon's influence.
 - 2) "Nothing but the amazing cruelty and effrontery of the demon can account for the convulsion into which he threw the young man as he left him. The outcry was not an articulate sound, but one of those fearful shrieks which are sometimes heard from the deaf and dumb, while the shock given to the nervous system of the young man left him pulseless and apparently dead. Such torture wantonly inflicted by a demon, gives an awful conception of the state of society which must prevail among these God-forsaken spirits. While the by-standers were saying that the youth was dead, the touch of Jesus, who alone can deliver us from the power of the devil, brought instant restoration to him, and joy to the heart of his kind father. [McGarvey].
- c. NKJ: 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.
- d. Boles:
 - 1) This verse shows a poor division in verse division; the division should have been at the end of the sentence with the words "majesty of God." The latter part of verse 43 has nothing to do with the first part of the verse. Mark 9:30 relates that they now departed from the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi and passed through Galilee; Matt. 17:22 speaks of Jesus abiding in Galilee; and from John 7:1-9 we may infer that Jesus, during this whole period, rather sought retirement.
 - 2) While the multitude was wondering Jesus spoke to his disciples and said: "Let these words sink into your ears." It is probable that his disciples were nearest to him and that he could give them special instruction. The words which he was about to speak he wanted to lodge permanently in the minds and hearts of the twelve apostles.
 - 3) Again he announced that he should be "delivered up into the hands of men." He should be betrayed by Judas and given up by the Father to men in order that he may suffer and die. (Acts 2:23.) The divine plan of his sufferings and death had formed the topic of discourse on the mount of transfiguration, and now it is the topic of his nearest circle of disciples.
 - 4) But they understood not this saying,—They did not understand what Jesus meant. The original Greek may be translated "it was concealed from them"; this may relieve in part the disciples to

- some extent of the full responsibility for their ignorance about the death of Jesus. They were afraid to ask Jesus about what he meant. It may be that they were not allowed to understand, but that they would more fully understand later.
- 5) After the resurrection and ascension they saw the truth very clearly; the Holy Spirit guided and enlightened their minds, and wrought a great change in their perception of Christ's teaching. There is a natural diffidence in speaking to a person regarding near approaching death. And this diffidence was increased to fear by the all-inspiring presence and power of Jesus. It may be that the personal dignity precluded questions.
5. Verses 46-47: "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him."
- a. Mark (9:33-37) also shows that the twelve had been disputing which of them would be the greatest in the kingdom, and that the Lord had inquired what their dispute was about. They were demonstrating pride, a characteristic which is foreign to Christianity.
- b. Matthew 18:2-3: "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
- 1) Keeping in mind that these remarks were addressed to the twelve, the conversion was that of these apostles. Conversion means to be changed from one form to another, to be turned from one course of life to another. Since these men were children of God by virtue of their birth (they were all Jews), and were already followers of Christ, the conversion meant was from their selfish ambition and worldly outlook. If they expected to enter the coming kingdom, and if they wished to be invited into the eternal abode of heaven, they must make this change and become as a little child.
- 2) There are certain characteristics of children which are to be cultivated by Christians. The trait primarily enjoined here is that of humility. Children generally are willing to accept instruction; they recognize that their parent or teacher is more knowledgeable than they; they can be molded and shaped; they are docile, and free from ambitious aims. What children are by nature, Christians are to become by design.
- c. The humility the Lord required of the twelve is likewise required of any who wish to be translated into the kingdom and eventually to be invited into heaven.
- d. The one who would be great, in the Lord's system, is one who is servant to the others. He does not point to some exalted title or position as the proof of greatness. The means of obtaining greatness in God's sight lies in the humble service which one does in behalf of one's fellowman. The way to greatness is in humility. No wonder Christ has forbidden the exalted titles (Matt. 23:1 ff) which men are wont to wear!
- 1) "There are different works to be done, but still there is no rank. Even the idea of authority, as it most certainly resides in the office of elders (Heb. 13:17), still does not carry with it the picture of a military-type rank and command function. We would all do well to remember that, as just a Christian with no assigned functions, or teachers, or deacons, or preachers or elders, all are to be SERVANTS! Servants, first, last and always!" (Bill Jackson, *Book of Matthew*, p.530).
- 2) The Lord had just previously told them about his soon-to-come arrest, condemnation and crucifixion. But the apostles were looking to an appointment to some high office in his kingdom! Their knowledge was certainly deficient! And their priorities were guided by folly rather than by wisdom.
- e. The Lord is not promoting a contest among his apostles to see who could out-do the others to see which could be the humblest. That of itself could be a show of pride: "I'm just so proud to be so humble!"
6. Verse 48: "And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."
-

- a. Johnson:
 - 1) Simply because the desire to be first, self-seeking, is exactly opposite to the spirit which is the law of Christ's kingdom, the spirit of love, of self-denial, of helpfulness of others, of humility. Therefore the more any one has of the desire to be first, the less he has of Christ's kingdom. So that the very desire to be first makes him last by the very nature of things. And servant of all.
 - 2) Despotism, self-seeking, ambition, ever make a man a slave. No one is so much a slave as he who desires to be first of all. He is a slave to his ambition, to the whims and opinions of other people, to circumstances. But voluntary service in the kingdom of love, and under the impulse of humility and self-denial, makes a man a spiritual power, gives him an unconscious and blessed greatness. To be truly great one must (1) forget himself in his work, (2) be humble instead of conceited, and (3) be a helper of his race, or the servant of all.
 - b. "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me" (Mark 9:36-37).
 - c. "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me" (Matt. 18:1-5).
 - d. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:4). This verse shows that it is the humility of children that is being emphasized. It is the one who is humble that is considered by the Lord to be the greatest in the kingdom. This answers their question of verse one. The greatest is the one who is the humblest and least ambitious.
 - 1) Psalm 131: "LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 14:20: "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."
7. Verses 49-50: "And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us." No miraculously empowered man would work against the Messiah.
- a. Boles:
 - 1) And John answered and said,—There is some difficulty in locating the order of events here. Some place these events later in the ministry of Jesus as occurring on the way to the feast of tabernacles. (John 7:2-10.)
 - 2) There were persons among the Jews who attempted to exorcize demons by various methods, and some, like this person and the sons of Sceva in Acts 19:13, 14, did it by using the name of Jesus. It is probable that John introduced this at this time because he wanted to change the subject after the embarrassment of the rebuke for their dispute concerning greatness. John addressed Jesus as "Master"; Luke has already recorded this address four times. (Luke 5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33.)
 - 3) The disciples of Jesus were intolerant; they had a zeal for Jesus which was narrow and biased. Joshua forbade Eldad and Medad to prophesy because he was jealous for Moses. (Num. 11:27-29.) Moses and Jesus were more tolerant than their followers. They forbade this man because he would not follow this special group of disciples of Jesus.
 - b. Jamieson: For (1) There is no man which shall do a miracle in My name that can lightly [soon] speak evil of Me' [Mr 9:39]. And (2) If such a person cannot be supposed to be 'against us,' you are to consider him 'for us.'" Two principles of immense importance. Christ does not say this man should not
-

have followed "with them," but simply teaches how he was to be regarded though he did not—as a reverer of His name and a promoter of His cause.

- c. In Luke 10, the Lord sent out seventy other disciples, empowering them with miraculous abilities. Could it not also have been the case that Christ had do so with certain others? The man, John says that the man was casting out demons in the name of Jesus.
- d. The sons of Sceva: “Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified” (Acts 19:13-17). These men were frauds.

H. Luke 9:51-56: Christ Did Not Come to Destroy but to Save.

1. Verse 51: “And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.”
 - a. Christ now set his plans to go to Jerusalem, thus to enter into the final segment of his public work. When these latter developed to their conclusion, his arrest, trials, crucifixion, resurrection and return to Heaven were all in the offing.
 - b. Pulpit Commentary: “Luke now enters upon his narrative of the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem at the close of His earthly career, and transfers to this journey all that follows as far as Luke 18:30.[120] Not until Luke 18:15 does he again go parallel with Matthew and Mark. The journey is not direct, for in that case only three days would have been needed for it, but it is to be conceived of as a slow circuit whose final goal, however, is Jerusalem and the final development there. The direct journey towards Jerusalem does not begin till the departure from Jericho, Luke 18:35. Jesus, with His face towards Jerusalem, wishes to pass through Samaria (Luke 9:52-53); but being rejected, He turns again towards Galilee, and does not appear again on the borders of Samaria till Luke 17:11....”
 - c. Of interest to scholars: Lit., in the fulfilling of the days. This means when the days were being fulfilled; not when they were fulfilled: when the time was drawing near. Rev., were well-nigh come. Luke is speaking of a period beginning with the first announcement of his sufferings, and extending to the time of his being received up. That he should be received up (της ἀναλήμψεως αὐτοῦ). Lit., the days of his being taken up: his ascension into heaven. Ἀνάληψις, occurs nowhere else in the New Testament; but the kindred verb, ἀναλαμβάνω, is the usual word for being received into heaven. See Acts 1:2, Acts 1:11, Acts 1:22; 1 Timothy 3:16. [Vincent].
2. Verses 52-53: “And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.”
 - a. NKJ: “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” (9:51-53).
 - b. We are not told the name or location of this Samaritan village. It would not have been the one of John chapter four; at that place, it appears, he would have been happily welcomed. But the hospitality of this present town was not offered to the Lord.
 - c. The reason offered for the rejection was “because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.” The root cause may have been the age-old enmity between the Samaritans and the Jews. If his request for food and lodging was only in view of his destination, they would not comply.
3. Verse 54: “And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?”

- a. Compare Mark 3:17: “And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder.” The report by Luke in our text provides the reason why James and John were described as “the sons of thunder.”
 - b. The case of Elijah: “And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty” (2 Kings 1:10-12).
 - c. At this stage in their development, James and John were willing to ask God to send down fire upon this inhospitable little village, if the Lord would permit it. Violently salving their wounded pride meant more to them than the lives of these Samaritans!
 - d. Elijah did not act out of spite or in a fit of personal revenge; what happened in that case was God’s means of punishing wicked king Ahaziah, who reigned over the Northern Kingdom of Israel, from the city of Samaria.
 - 1) The captain found Elijah sitting on top of a hill. He ordered the prophet to come down. It is clear that an implied threat to come get him was involved in the order, if Elijah did not comply. Elijah stated that if he were a true prophet, a fire would come from heaven and consume the captain and his men. This miraculous event quickly came to pass.
 - 2) The action taken was not done by Elijah’s strength; he had no more power to cause such an event than any other man. The fire was of divine origin; it was not sent on the whim of the prophet, but as a sober act of punishment on the culprits. God had used fire from heaven to punish other miscreants in the past (Genesis 19:24; Leviticus 10:1-2; Numbers 16:35).
 4. Verses 55-56: “But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.”
 - a. The word “spirit” in the verse does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but to the disposition or attitude they should have developed.
 - b. Properly, our Lord severely rebuked James and John. They had not learned the lessons Jesus had taught the apostles and all the people of Israel. Surely they had heard the truths presented in Matthew 5:3-12 and elsewhere.
 - c. Barnes: Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of—You suppose that you are actuated by a proper love for me; but you know not yourselves. It is rather a love of revenge; rather revengeful feelings toward the "Samaritans" than proper feelings toward "me." We learn here: That "apparent" zeal for God may be only improper opposition toward our fellow-men.
 - d. Compare: “Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:2-5).
 - e. Rather than harshly punish this village, the Lord led his company to another village.
 - I. Luke 9:57-62: Do Not Look Back.
 1. Verses 57-62: “And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”
 - a. Compare: “And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matt. 8:19-20).
 - b. The Lord was dependent on others for the provision of day-to-day needs of food and shelter. We frequently find Christ eating and sleeping in the houses of various people. But was he worried about
-

- the future? Should we be? "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).
- c. The scribe is not identified, but his claim is commendable. "This is a claim of very strong dedication to the following of Jesus. He seemed to be saying, 'No matter what the cost, I will follow you where you lead.' As is the case with every person, Jesus wanted the man truly to understand what was involved in such following. Jesus made clear to the man that following him offered no material advantages....Jesus was saying, in effect, 'Even after you truly understand what is involved in following me, will you still hold to your decision to follow me wherever I go?'" (ALC, 1973, p.50). We are not told whether this scribe fulfilled his aim.
2. Verses 59-60: "And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."
 - a. Compare: "And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:21-22).
 - b. There are two possibilities: that the disciple's father had just died and the disciple was requesting permission for a delay before joining Jesus in his work; or that the father was not yet dead and that the disciple was asking for an indefinite stay before assisting the Lord in the work. In either case, the reason for the Lord's strong reply is obvious. If the father was not yet dead, why should the disciple delay doing the will of Christ? If the father had just died, there were others who would be able to attend to those final arrangements. Jesus was to leave for Eastern Palestine in just moments and there was no time for him to delay starting his journey since the multitudes were pressing him so. He either had to go with the Lord now or forget about the whole venture. Christ was not being callous or harsh, but realistic.
 - c. There is a play used on the word "dead." He is saying, "Let those who are dead in the spiritual sense take care of burying your physically dead father. Let those who are more concerned with worldly things take care of the funeral: you follow me."
 - d. Coffman: He would follow the Lord, but of course, not during the lifetime of his father; after his father's death, and the estate had been settled, then he would be glad to follow. If his father was already dead, the man would have been occupied already with the funeral. Jesus' rejoinder stated the claim of highest priority for the affairs of his kingdom.
 - e. "There can be no higher priority than one's duty to the Lord Jesus Christ. Earthly rulers had long been accustomed to claiming of their subjects an allegiance that set aside all other duties; and the Lord, by such a statement as this, demanded for his own holy purposes an allegiance even greater and more binding than that given to generals and kings of the earth" (*ibid.*).
 3. Verses 61-62: "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."
 - a. Coffman:
 - 1) This was prospect number three; and what he requested might have seemed reasonable enough; but Jesus knew of the pressures the man would encounter at home and the persuasions that would thwart discipleship; and he promptly replied with the metaphor of a man plowing a straight furrow. This is an agricultural figure. Jesus was quite familiar with all of the little details that marked life in such a rural community as Nazareth, and some of his most wonderful teachings are founded upon such things. It was the divine genius of our Lord which saw in such things as sowing, reaping, casting fish nets, making bread, carving yokes, etc., the symbolism of eternal truths....
 - 2) One who plows must look before him so as not to plow a crooked and bad furrow. So also he who desires to be a member of Christ's kingdom should never allow other matters to distract his
-

attention. It should be noted that Jesus himself honored the priorities which he here prescribed for others. He subordinated all earthly considerations, even the tender ties of his mother and brethren, to the all-important purpose of his mission of redemption.

- b. As ploughing requires an eye intent on the furrow to be made, and is marred the instant one turns about, so will they come short of salvation who prosecute the work of God with a distracted attention, a divided heart. Though the reference seems chiefly to ministers, the application is general. The expression "looking back" has a manifest reference to "Lot's wife" (Ge 19:26; and see on [1621]Lu 17:32). It is not actual return to the world, but a reluctance to break with it. [Jamieson].
-

Luke Chapter 10

A. Luke 10:1-11: The Seventy Disciples Sent Forth to Preach the Coming Kingdom.

1. Verses 1-2: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."
 - a. These thirty-five teams of two disciples would in effect prepare for the work which Jesus would continue when he got to those several places.
 - b. At this time, the people of Israel were ready to be taught. John had done his work well, in teaching to vast crowds the necessity for repentance and baptism, since the kingdom was soon to appear.
 - c. There always seems to be a shortage of workers. In a time when the pure gospel is unpopular, there is a need for many others to spread the truth; honest and sincere students are not as easy to find today.
 - d. Barnes:
 - 1) The seventy were sent out to preach immediately, and chiefly where he himself was about to come. They were appointed for a temporary object. They were to go into the villages and towns, and prepare the way for his coming. The number "seventy" was a favorite number among the Jews. Thus, the family of Jacob that came into Egypt consisted of seventy, Gen 46:27. The number of elders that Moses appointed to aid him was the same, Num 11:16,25. The number which composed the great Sanhedrin, or council of the nation. was the same. It is not improbable that our Saviour appointed this number with reference to the fact that it so often occurred among the Jews, or after the example of Moses, who appointed seventy to aid him in his work; but it is evident that the office was "temporary"—that it had a specific design—and of course that it would be improper to attempt to find now a "continuation" of it, or a parallel to it, in the Christian ministry.
 - 2) [Two and two] There was much wisdom in sending them in this manner. It was done, doubtless, that they might aid one another by mutual counsel, and that they might sustain and comfort one another in their persecutions and trials.
 - e. Coffman:
 - 1) Both Matthew and Mark record this preaching mission of the Twelve (Matthew 10:5ff; Mark 6:7ff); and despite the fact of Luke's narrative partially following Mark's order, it actually is unlike both the others, indicating the independence of the sacred authors. There is more than a mere possibility that Jesus sent forth the Twelve twice, this possibility resting upon the fact that Matthew records such a mission BEFORE the deputation of John the Baptist came to Jesus, and Luke recorded it substantially AFTER that event.
 - 2) It seems to this student that it is arbitrary to conclude that there was only one "sending forth" of the Twelve, and that this or that Gospel erred in the placement of it in the holy record. In keeping with Luke's style of relating TWO of many typical acts of Jesus, rather than merely one, it would not be exceptional if he did the same thing here.
 - 3) In the very nature of training Jesus gave the Twelve in preparation for their worldwide mission, a training that extended over a period of about four years, it appears that there easily could have been two, or even more, occasions when the Twelve were sent out to preach.
2. Verses 3-4: "Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way."
 - a. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).
 - 1) The Lord was sending them forth as sheep into a cruel and evil world. One wolf amid a flock of sheep can result in slaughter and carnage. A few sheep in the midst of many wolves would be worse. Sheep are characterized as innocent and harmless. But the innocence of the sheep is no

- protection from wolves; even so with the apostles in preaching to a hostile, cold, and uncaring world.
- 2) Therefore, they were to be as wise as serpents. "The serpent was considered a symbol of wisdom among the ancients, especially the python. The maid at Philippi who followed Paul and Silas was said to have had a 'spirit of divination' (Acts 16:16), but the Greek word denotes that she had a *python!*" (Coffman, p.139).
 - 3) "The Egyptians used the serpent in their hieroglyphics as a symbol of wisdom. Probably the thing in which Christ directed his followers to imitate the serpent was in its caution in avoiding danger. No animal equals them in the rapidity and skill which they evince in escaping danger" (Barnes, p.111).
 - 4) "Under these circumstances they were to be as wise as serpents, whose only wisdom is displayed in escaping from danger..." (McGarvey, p.91).
- b. The dove is a symbol of innocence and purity. The disciples were to be as harmless and innocent as sheep and doves, but not "stupid and silly as those animals" (Boles, p.227). People who would foolishly destroy a helpful snake would not harm a dove.
 - c. The description of things which begins here has primary application to the Great Commission (cf. vs. 18). The Lord would be well aware of the dangers and ill-treatment his apostles would suffer, especially in the universal mission on which they were later to go. He did not conceal from them beforehand the dangers and hardships they were to face; rather, he graphically described what was in store for them.
 - d. "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat" (Matt. 10:9-10).
 - 1) They were forbidden to take gold, silver or brass along for money. Brass coins were the lesser pieces of money; our pennies are made of copper; the greater coins were made of more expensive metal, just as in more modern times.
 - 2) "The prohibition is against procuring the articles mentioned before starting, and at their own expense. They were to thus procure neither money to pay expenses; nor script (provision bag) which would enable them to carry cold provision..." (McGarvey, p.89).
 - 3) These prohibitions made it necessary for them to place their trust in God to provide their necessities. This mission was a proving and training experience for their later and greater mission of taking the gospel to the entire race. Without learning to trust God, they could not perform their mission. And neither can we!
 - 4) They were not to take an extra coat, extra shoes (sandals), or a second staff. (Note: a stave is a staff; cf. Matt. 26:47). Mark's account tells them to take a staff; Luke's appears to tell them to take no staff at all; Matthew's account resolves the "problem" by saying they were not to take an extra staff.
 - e. Why did the Lord tell them not to salute any man as they traveled? Their mission was too important to waste time in common conversation.
 - 1) Compare: "Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child" (2 Kings 4:29).
 - 2) In organizing door-knocking campaigns, we tell the workers that they are bound to meet lonely people, who would take too much of their time. Although we naturally want to make friends and talk with others, yet we must not lose sight of the primary purpose.
3. Verses 5-7: "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house."
-

- a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Compare: "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you."
 - 1) When they entered a city, they were to inquire for a "worthy" family with which to stay. They were to make this house the center of their work in that city. "An unnecessary change of one's lodging-place, while temporarily laboring in a town or city, is attended with many slight disadvantages, as every experienced evangelist can testify, and the Savior exhibited a wise foresight in forbidding it during this hurried mission of the twelve" (McGarvey, p.90). They were not to be shifting from house to house; this would imply that they were not satisfied with the hospitality given, or were looking for an improved situation. This would detract from the power of their message.
 - 2) A worthy family was one possessed of a good and spiritual character; one which would be a ready audience to the message they were to deliver. Through the influence of such a family, others could be drawn in to hear this message; and through the efforts of such people, the message could be insured of a wider audience after the messengers departed to another locale. When Paul, in his travels, came to a strange city, his practice was to go to the synagogue, for there he would expect to find kindred souls, who already believed in God, knew the Old Testament to some degree, and who knew about the coming Messiah. This kind of people frequently made an ideal audience for the gospel.
 - c. When they entered the house, they were to salute it; actually, the "salute" would be directed toward the inhabitants of the house, the family dwelling there. They were to search out "who" was worthy, not which edifice was worthy (cf. John 4:53; Matthew 12:25). If the house (family) was worthy, they were to let their peace come upon it. By saluting the family, they "were to pronounce a benediction or blessing upon the homes they entered, or at least make some expression of good will on behalf of every member of the home into which they came" (Coffman, Matthew, p.138).
 - d. When they found such a home, they were to make that their center of operation, and not move from one house to another. Whether that household was poor or rich, their time and influence would be better if they stayed at that first place. When they had done their work in that village, then they were to move to another place and follow the same approach as before.
4. Verses 8-9: "And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
 - a. These disciples were to be gracious to their hosts. Accept the food prepared for them gladly, and of course, be grateful.
 - b. The focal point of their message was to announce the nearness of the coming kingdom.
 - 1) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
 - 2) Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 3) Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - c. These men had been given power to heal the sick. If there was anyone sick in the house where they were staying, healing was to be done to them. This would help the person who was ill, but more important, that miracle would confirm the message they presented.
 5. Verses 10-11: "But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
-

- a. But what were they to do in case the city they entered did not welcome them? That would have serious consequences to the people of that city! They were rejecting the servants of God.
- b. They were to go into the city streets and announce that they were ridding themselves of the dust of that place, and remind them what they had refused: They had rejected the kingdom of God.
- c. When a congregation thrusts a faithful gospel preacher from their employ, they have not merely shown despite the preacher, they were likewise showing that very attitude to God. When we teach the truth to people out of the church (or in the church) and it is rejected, think of what that means. The verses which follow emphasizes the awesome results of that rejection!

B. Luke 10:12-16: Woe is Pronounced Upon Unbelieving Cities.

1. Verse 12: "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city."
 - a. The people of Sodom acted out of ignorance; their sinful practice was nevertheless responsible for their destruction. Their wickedness was horribly punished: "And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. 19:28).
 - b. Their souls would be lost, but the Lord stated that in the Judgment, it would be more tolerable for those of Sodom that it would be for the citizens of city which refused his disciples who came to teach them the truth! The people of Sodom operated out of ignorance; those in the Jewish cities had much greater information.
 - c. Luke 12:47-48: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."
 2. Verses 13-14: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you."
 - a. Compare: "Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Matt. 10:15).
 - b. Men are judged according to their opportunities. The wicked people of Sodom, though they were exceedingly evil, did not have the opportunity those Jews under consideration had; hence, the judgment on the Sodomites would be more tolerable (more easily borne) than that judgment to be experienced by these Jews. "Though the sin of these Jews in rejecting the apostles was not of so gross a character as the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, it was more inexcusable on account of their superior opportunities" (McGarvey, p.90).
 - c. Matthew 11:20-24: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."
 3. Verses 15-16: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - a. "Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the fact that one's responsibility before God will be determined, to a large extent, in the light of his opportunities..." (ALC, 1959, p.124). Cf. Luke 12:47-48; Matthew 25:14-30. We should not evade responsibility on the basis of the belief that we only have limited abilities (Matt. 13:12; 17:7). Some of the greatest preachers became such in spite of limited
-

- opportunity and ability. Such worthies as David Lipscomb and Benjamin Franklin were not given much hope of being successful preachers at the beginning of their work.
- b. Jesus upbraided the cities. To upbraid means to accuse, reprove, to blame, to denounce the conduct of someone. The reason for this strong reproof was on account of their unwillingness to repent. All the information and confirmation necessary were given, but despite that, these people for the most part did not repent. The hardest command of God is repentance: the will power of the human heart is addressed. Few are willing to look honestly into their own heart in the light of the Bible. It is impossible to repent without doing so. If a heart remains stubborn, it cannot be forced to repent.
- 1) The mighty works attributed to the Lord are those powerful, supernatural works he produced. Those who saw them could not logically deny that they were miraculous feats. A mighty work was a great confirming factor (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:1-4).
 - 2) Most of his mighty works are said to have been wrought in the cities indicated. "The NT records only a few of the mighty works done in Capernaum and only one at Bethsaida Julius, where the five thousand were fed. The wonder of why those cities did not repent remains and can be explained only upon the basis that the majority of mankind are not disposed to repentance, even if the Christ himself should be their instructor" (Coffman, p.159).
- c. Compare: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:23-24).
- 1) "Jesus, near the beginning of his public ministry, left his home in Nazareth and 'came and dwelt in Capernaum.' (Matt. 4:13.) This accounts for the figure of Capernaum's being exalted unto heaven, that is, the city's opportunities were greater because of the presence and miracles of Jesus. But the exaltation, if it is disregarded, must have a corresponding degradation, hence, 'thou shalt go down unto Hades.' This, of course, is also a figurative expression, used to indicate the plight of lost opportunities. The city has long since been in a state of complete ruins" (ALC, 1959, p.126).
 - 2) McGarvey's comment agrees with the above statement: "The expressions, 'exalted to heaven,' and 'brought down to hades,' are both used figuratively; the former to denote the high privileges which Capernaum had enjoyed, and the latter, the ruin which awaited her. The prediction has long since been fulfilled, and the traveler now searches among the rank weeds on the lake shore to find, in the fragments of stone which lie there, uncertain vestiges of the once populous and well built city" (p.101). The exaltation to heaven here does not refer to their salvation, and being brought down to hades does not speak of eternal condemnation (although they all are lost if they did not repent); rather they would lose the privileges and blessings they had been given.
 - 3) Again, the Lord brings up wicked Old Testament people, and states that if those people back then had had the opportunities and privileges the citizenry of Capernaum had been given, they would have repented, and their city (Sodom) would have continued in history. God is under no obligation to sinful man to give him any chance whatsoever to rectify his wicked conduct. Condemnation is the proper penalty, and physical death could be immediately dispensed and God would be just in so doing. But in his love for fallen man, God is often longsuffering (Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).
 - 4) The Lord knew full well what the reaction of Sodom would have been if it had been given the opportunity to receive the truth. Why did not God send them a warning? He was not obligated to do so: they had more than earned their punishment. Further, the rest of mankind needed a demonstration of God's wrath against sin to encourage righteousness in the future. It is not our privilege to know all the deep things of God. "The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are* revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29).
- d. "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Matt. 10:40).
-

- 1) That the mission they were about to undertake was important is underscored by the fact that those who rejected them were rejecting both Christ and the Father, and those who received them were likewise receiving Christ and the Father.
 - 2) Those today who will receive or reject us (in our teaching of the gospel) are doing the same toward Christ and his Father. Our mission is of the greatest importance. It is through the word delivered through the apostles that all the benefits of the Lord are acquired.
 - a) John 17:20: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."
 - b) 2 Peter 3:2: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (cf. 2 Pet. 1:3,19-21; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).
- e. Boles:
- 1) Bethsaida is supposed to be the name of two towns, one on the east and the other on the west of the Sea of Galilee. The name means "a house of fishing or fishery." The Bethsaida on the northeastern border of the lake may be referred to in Mark 6:32; 8:22; Luke 9:10. The one mentioned here was on the west side near Capernaum, the birthplace of Andrew, Peter, and Philip. (John 1:44; 12:21.)
 - 2) Tyre and Sidon were located on the Mediterranean coast. They were the two principal cities on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. "Sidon" means "fishery" and was one of the oldest cities of the world; it is thought to have been founded by Sidon, the oldest son of Cain. (Gen. 10:15; 49:13.) Tyre means "a rock" and was about twenty miles south of Sidon; it was not so old as Sidon, but grew in importance and became a greater city. They were the subjects of much prophecy and of divine judgments. (Isa. 23; Ezek. 26:1-21; 29:18.)
 - 3) These old heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon would have repented long ago had such works been done in them as have been done in Chorazin and Bethsaida. "Sackcloth and ashes" were symbols of penitence. "Sackcloth" was a coarsely woven cloth; it was made of goats' or camels' hair, and was a material similar to that which Paul used in making tents. It was used for rough garments of mourners (1 Kings 21:27; Esth. 4:1) in which the sackcloth was put next to the flesh in token of extreme sorrow. "Ashes" was a sign of mourning, and the defiling of oneself with dead things; sometimes this was done by using dirt.
 - 4) And thou, Capernaum,—Capernaum was situated on the northwestern coast of the Sea of Galilee. It had exalted privileges; Jesus had resided there for some time; its privileges and honors were great. (Matt. 9:1.) It was situated on the hill that rises from the plain of the sea; it could boast of being a great city. The prophecy of Christ is that it should be brought down "unto Hades." Hades is not the same as Gehenna; "Hades" was originally the name of the god who presided over the realm of the dead; hence the phrase, "house of Hades." "Sheol" has a similar meaning. The classical "Hades" embraced both good and bad men, though divided into "Elysium," the abode of the righteous, and "Tartarus," the abode of the wicked. In the New Testament, "Hades" is the realm of the dead; it is not merely the place for the wicked. Capernaum would be reduced from its high and exalted state to the lowest state.

C. Luke 10:17-20: The Seventy Returned Rejoicing in Their Success.

1. Verses 17-18: "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) They had been given power over demons; the demons were merely one sign of the conflict between Christ and Satan. The twelve had been endowed with this power when they were sent out (Luke 9:1), but the seventy were only told to heal the sick as stated by Luke in 10:9. Not only did they heal the sick which Jesus commanded them to do, but their faith was so active and strong that they cast out demons....

- 2) With a prophetic eye Jesus saw the downfall of Satan. The demons being subject to the seventy gave the occasion for Jesus to utter this prophecy. The fact that demons were subject to the disciples of Jesus indicated that Satan himself should be defeated by Christ. As a flash of lightning out of heaven, so quick and startling, so the victory of the seventy over the demons, the agent of Satan, forecast his downfall and Jesus in vision pictured it as a flash of lightning. Jesus now enlarged their authority over evil.
 - b. With each case of a demon being cast out of an unfortunate person, to that extent Satan lost a measure of his influence. God promised that the unclean spirits would cease to afflict humankind: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zech. 13:2).
2. Verse 19: "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you."
- a. Mark 16:17-20: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - b. The sole case of this in the New Testament is found in Acts 28:3-4: "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live."
 - 1) As Paul gathered a bundle of sticks to put on the fire, a poisonous viper came out of the bundle, and bit Paul on the hand. The islanders said among themselves that Paul must be a dangerous criminal (a murderer), so that even though he had escaped from the sea, Justice had seen to it that he was still punished by the snakebite. *Vengeance* (Justice—ASV) is personified. This term (*Dike*) denotes the goddess Justice or Nemesis (Vine, Vol. 2, p.284).
 - 2) "And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god" (Acts 28:5-6). [Shaking this poisonous serpent into the fire would have most likely killed it].
 - a) Paul shook the snake loose from his hand, and went about his activities with no bad effect. This is a case where the Lord's promise (Mark 16:18; Luke 10:19) was fulfilled. The word *beast* in the Greek means *venomous creature* (ASV).
 - b) Paul did not intend to be bitten by the snake. There is no indication that he knew about its presence until he was bitten. Neither this passage nor the others cited above gives any authority for "snake-handling" as a religious activity.
 - 3) The natives watched Paul closely, expecting his hand to swell, and then for him to fall dead suddenly. After a time, when it was obvious he was going to suffer no harm, they changed their assessment of the apostle, and considered him to be a god. This case was the reverse of what happened in Lystra (Acts 14). There the people first said Paul was a god, but later stoned him; here these people thought he was a criminal at first, then a god. This miraculous demonstration proved to the people that Paul was a very special person, one upon whom the living God had conferred certain powers.
 - 4) The apostle did not take up the snake as a "show" to the audience around the fire; it was a natural event that a viper could be hiding in the bundle of sticks and that it would bite the hand that disturbed it. Modern "snake-handlers" are a tiny cult which, as one preacher stated, are losing

members [cases have become public of these misguided folks being bitten and dying]. There is no authority in Mark 16:18 for this modern religious folly.

3. Verse 20: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."
 - a. The power to cast out demons was not something they naturally acquired or developed; it was a gift of a miraculous and temporary nature. When the last of the apostles of Christ died, and the last person upon whom an apostle had laid hands to confer a spiritual gift, died—every one of those supernatural gifts ceased to be exercised.
 - b. These spiritual gifts are named in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."
 - c. The spiritual gifts were provided, but only for a period of time. "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, **that which is in part shall be done away**" (1 Cor. 13:8-10, ASV).
 - d. Philippians 4:3: "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, **whose names are in the book of life.**" People spoken of are described as having their names recorded in the book of life. The Bible often speaks of this theme. These saints could know that their names were enrolled in the book because of Paul's inspired statement to that effect. When we meet the conditions shown in the gospel, we can know by that inspired revelation that our names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.
 - 1) Exodus 32:32-33: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."
 - 2) Psalms 69:28: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."
 - 3) Luke 10:20: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."
 - 4) Revelation 3:5: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."
 - 5) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - 6) Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
 - 7) Revelation 20:15: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

D. Luke 10:21-24: The Lord Prays and Instructs.

1. Verses 21-22: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."
 - a. Matthew 11:25-27: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and

- no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”
- b. "The object of his prayer was a thanksgiving because God had hidden 'these things from the wise and understanding,' and had revealed 'them unto babes.' Frequently what God permits to be done, it is said that he does, hence having permitted these things to be hidden to the wise, he now reveals them unto children in knowledge. (Ex. 7:3,4; 2 Sam. 12:11,12; Isa. 12:1; Rom. 6:17.) Jesus does not so much thank God for concealing the gospel truths from the worldly-minded, as for revealing them to simple believers; these words describe the wisdom of the world which 'is foolishness with God'" (Boles, p.253).
 - 1) The wise and prudent are those who trust in their own intelligence and knowledge. God had hidden the gospel truths from them only in the sense that the simplicity of the gospel was not appealing to them; it did not meet with their ideas and prejudices, hence was rejected by them.
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:21-24 is an excellent commentary on this: "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." Compare Acts 17:22-34; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; Col. 2:8.
 - c. The "babes" are those simple, honest, sincere souls who are willing to examine the truth of the gospel with open minds, and thus can be molded by the precepts of the gospel. They are babes in comparison with the so-called wise and understanding ones. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:27-31; cf. Mark 12:37; 1 Cor. 1:26; 2:1-8).
 - d. "It has never been the divine plan that men through their wisdom should arrive at a knowledge of God's will; that is possible only by inspired revelation. 'The preaching' in 1 Corinthians 1:21 means *inspired preaching*" (ALC, 1959, p.126). Today, we preach inspired lessons only in the sense that we preach the inspired word. This plan is the way God intended his system to be. This is necessary in order that men follow the Lord willingly and lovingly, on the terms God has set.
 - e. "There is positively no other way to know God except through Christ (John 14:6). Man's only hope of eternal life lies in a knowledge of God, and this is possible only through Jesus Christ. In a practical sense, this means that the NT is the only source of accurate knowledge of God in matters pertaining to salvation; for, of all books on earth, there is not another source, save only the New Testament, of the teachings of Christ. The positive, unqualified uniqueness of the New Testament is more and more apparent with the passing of each generation" (Coffman, p.162).
2. Verses 23-24: "And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) Jesus now turned and spoke "privately," or to his twelve disciples. It may have been on this same occasion or a little later. "Blessed" here introduces a beatitude, a beatitude of privilege. Their eyes were blessed because they saw; they understood in some degree what Jesus was saying. They were indeed blessed in contrast to the blinded scribes and Pharisees around them, who both hated and rejected the truth; these humble followers of Jesus, having teachable spirits, had beheld him as the Messiah, and had received from him lessons of heavenly wisdom.
-

- 2) The Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, and kings like David, Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah longed to see the fulfillment of the promise in the coming Messiah, and to hear the wonderful truths he would reveal, but did not see the one nor hear the other. They lived and died in the hope and faith that these things would be accomplished. We live in the full light of that kingdom already set up, and yet how little do we realize the force of these remarkable words of Jesus! (2 Sam. 23:5; Job 19:23, 24; Isa. 52:7; 1 Pet. 1:10.
- b. John 8:56: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”
 - 1) Jesus declared that Abraham rejoiced to the day when God’s Son would enter into his great earthly ministry, which would culminate in the salvation of countless souls. Abraham was long gone from the earth when the Lord came to fulfill his work. That great men, by faith saw his day, and was glad!
 - a) Genesis 15:4-6: “And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”
 - b) Genesis 22:16-18: “And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”
 - c) Genesis 12:1-3: “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”
 - d) Hebrews 11:10-13: “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. **These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them,** and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”
 - c. The apostles of Christ were especially privileged to learn things that had been formerly shrouded in mystery.
 - 1) Matthew 13:10-17: “And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

- 2) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

E. Luke 10:25-37: The Good Samaritan.

1. Verses 25-26: "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?"
 - a. ASV: "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and made trial of him, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?"
 - b. Notice that Christ referred to the Scriptures for the answer to the lawyer's question: What answer is found there?
 - c. "The Lord replied, perhaps pointing to one of the phylacteries which the lawyer wore on his forehead and wrist. These phylacteries were little leather boxes (the dimensions of these varied from the size of an ordinary hazelnut, to that of a large walnut, and even in some cases much larger). In these leather boxes were little parchment rolls containing certain texts from the Pentateuch. Certainly the first of the two great rules, that concerning God, was one of these texts (Deuteronomy 6:5); possibly, but not certainly, the second concerning the neighbour formed another text. Luke 10:26" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - d. We are told that this man was not serious in his question; he was putting the Lord to the test, in some way to create a problem for the Master. He reveals his real character when he quibbled about who is one's neighbor.
2. Verse 27: "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself."
 - a. Compare: "Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:35-40).
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) The rich young ruler had asked the same question and this lawyer was not as sincere as the ruler. Jesus gave an unexpected turn and said: "This do, and thou shalt live." The lawyer was not prepared for this answer of Jesus; he expected Jesus to give a different answer. He did not see that following the law in its deep significance would lead him to accept the Messiah; he did not see that every sacrifice offered unto the law pointed to Jesus as the great sacrifice for the sins of the world; he did not see that the law was tutor to bring one to Christ.
 - 2) The lawyer seeking to justify himself, asked: "Who is my neighbor?" The lawyer admitted that it was hard to keep this law fully, and that Jesus had answered him correctly. He was seeking a loophole by which he could escape. He had come to ensnare Jesus, but had been caught in his own trap; hence he sought to justify himself by asking a question which diverted the mind from the main question. The lawyer asked whom he was to love as himself. He was hoping, perhaps, that Jesus would limit the word neighbor to the Jews. (Matt. 5:43.)

- c. The Pharisees restricted the term so as to exclude not only Gentiles and Samaritans, but also publicans and those who shared not their own peculiar views. If Jesus should make a different application, the lawyer would have hope to refute Jesus. The word "neighbor" signified one living near, and was used in a limited sense to mean a friend; in its broader sense, Jesus shows that it meant a fellow man in need.
3. Verses 28-29: "And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" ASV: "And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?"
 - a. Matthew Henry:
 - 1) Christ gave an instance of a poor Jew in distress, relieved by a good Samaritan. This poor man fell among thieves, who left him about to die of his wounds. He was slighted by those who should have been his friends, and was cared for by a stranger, a Samaritan, of the nation which the Jews most despised and detested, and would have no dealings with. It is lamentable to observe how selfishness governs all ranks; how many excuses men will make to avoid trouble or expense in relieving others. But the true Christian has the law of love written in his heart
 - 2) The parable is a beautiful explanation of the law of loving our neighbour as ourselves, without regard to nation, party, or any other distinction. It also sets forth the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward sinful, miserable men. We were like this poor, distressed traveller. Satan, our enemy, has robbed us, and wounded us: such is the mischief sin has done us. The blessed Jesus had compassion on us. The believer considers that Jesus loved him, and gave his life for him, when an enemy and a rebel; and having shown him mercy, he bids him go and do likewise. It is the duty of us all, in our places, and according to our ability, to succour, help, and relieve all that are in distress and necessity.
 - b. "The self-righteous, but probably rigidly conscientious, Jewish scholar, looking into the clear, truthful eyes of the Galilaean Master he had been taught to hate as the enemy of his own narrow, lightless creed, was struck, perhaps for the first time, with the moral beauty of the words of his own Law.
 - 1) "Of the first part, his duty towards God, as far as his poor distorted mind could grasp the idea, he was at ease in his conscience. The tithe, down to the anise and cummin, had been scrupulously paid; his fasts had been rigidly observed, his feasts carefully kept, his prayer-formulas never neglected. Yes; as regards God, the Pharisee-lawyer's conscience was at ease!
 - 2) "But his neighbour? He thought of his conduct towards that simple, truthful-looking Galilaean Rabbi, Jesus, that very day; trying to trip him up in his words, longing to do him injury — injury to that worn-looking, loving Man who had never done him any harm, and who, report said, was only living to do others good. Was he, perchance, his neighbour?
 - 3) "So, vexed and uneasy —but it seems in perfect honesty now, and in good faith — he asks this further question, "Master, tell me, who do you teach should be included in the term 'neighbour'?" Luke 10:29. [Pulpit Commentary].
4. Verse 30: "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."
 - a. Benson: "Jericho was situated in a valley, hence the phrase of going down to it: and as the road to it from Jerusalem ... lay through desert and rocky places, so many robberies and murders were committed therein, that it was called, according to Jerome, the bloody way. This circumstance of the parable, therefore, is finely chosen."
 - b. McGarvey, in describing his trip from Jerusalem toward Jordan and the Dead Sea, gives this account:
 - 1) "About half way to Jericho the road crosses the saddle of a high ridge in passing from one wady to another, and here is the traditional site of the parable of the Good Samaritan...After crossing the ridge just mentioned the road descends more rapidly, but the hills descend more rapidly still. All is wild and desolate....Within about three miles of the Jordan Valley you see Wady Kelt, a deep,

wild gorge, a short distance to the left; and when within about a quarter of a mile of the valley you pass along the edge of the precipice which forms the southern side of the chasm. It is the darkest and most desolate looking gorge in all Palestine.

- 2) “On either side is a perpendicular wall of dark-brown rock, having a rotten and crumbling appearance, and the narrow bottom of the chasm lies more than 2000' below the road. A noisy stream dashes along its rock bed, distinctly heard on the road above, and narrow line of verdure marks its course.
- 3) “On one occasion the author entered this gorge at its mouth, where it breaks out into the plain, and ascended it about a mile, partly on horseback and partly on foot. It is scarcely possible to conceive the wild and desolate grandeur of the place. Its brown walls are only about 20 yards apart, and they rise so high and steep as to shut out all the sky, except a narrow strip overhead. There is no reason to doubt that it is the ‘brook Cherith,’ in which Elijah was hidden and fed by ravens until the brook ran dry. It is the only brook ‘before Jordan’ suitable for such concealment” (*Lands of the Bible*, pp.233f). [The place for Elijah was a fine place for being in seclusion, made an excellent ambush for robbers in a later time].



- c. The thieves took whatever money or other valuables he may have had, and also took his clothing. In the process, they left him seriously wounded and unclothed. A rich man’s wealth in ancient days consisted of money, property and clothes. Compare: “When I [Achan] saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it” (Josh. 7:21).

5. Verses 31-32: "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side."
 - a. The priest and the Levite shunned the injured man, passing him by on the side. It appears that they did not want to even get close to the helpless traveler.
 - b. The descendants of Levi were selected to be priests and other servants of the religious activities of the Mosaic system. All priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests.
 - c. "They were appointed to serve. They received no inheritance among the other tribes, but were given cities distributed among them for the service that they were to render for the people. They received the tithes of others for this service and a portion of the sacrifices they offered. They were required to have compassion on the people, Heb. 5:2. They both passed by on the other side. They both were either in too big a hurry, too proud, too selfish, or too indolent to stop and help. Man has no excuse for not showing kindness, Hos. 6:6" (Kinningham, pp.121f).
 - 1) Hebrews 5:2: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity."
 - 2) Hosea 6:6-8: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me. Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood."
6. Verses 33-35: "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."
 - a. In the absence of information to the contrary, we may assume that the wounded man was a Jew. The two Jews (the priest and the Levite) chose to ignore the man in distress. But the hated Samaritan had compassion on him. We remember that our Lord took great interest on the people of the Samaritan city of Sychar (John 4).
 - b. Johnson on John:
 - 1) The district of Samaria comprised the country formerly occupied by the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh. When the Ten Tribes were carried to Babylon the Assyrian king sent in other tribes to occupy the country. These, on account of calamities, and probably influenced by Israelites who had been left in the country, requested of the Assyrian king a Hebrew priest, and one was sent.
 - 2) Henceforth they had a religion partly Jewish and partly pagan. When the Jews returned from Captivity and began to rebuild the temple the Samaritans offered to aid them, but were sternly repulsed. Henceforth a bitter feeling existed between the two peoples. When Manasseh, a priest, was expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah, for an unlawful marriage, he fled to Samaria, took charge of their worship, and a temple was erected on Mt. Gerizim, in opposition to the one at Jerusalem.
 - 3) Henceforth the Samaritans, claiming to be the children of Israel (Jacob), insisted that Gerizim, the Mount of Blessing, was the place chosen by God for worship. As the later Jewish Scriptures recognized Jerusalem as the seat of divine worship, they were rejected by the Samaritans, who received the five books of Moses alone.
 - 4) Sychar. This place was the ancient Shechem, so famous in the early history. It was forty miles north of Jerusalem, and was situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, the Mounts of Blessing and Cursing (Joshua 8: 30-35).
 - 5) Here Jacob built his first altar (Gen. 33: 18); here Joseph was buried in the land given him by his father (Joshua 24:32); and here also the covenant of Israel was renewed with amens to the blessings and curses, after Joshua had conquered Canaan.

- 6) Few spots in all Israel had a more interesting history. The word *Sychar* signifies a drunkard and a liar, and was, doubtless, first applied by the Jews in derision. It was afterwards called Neapolis, and at present a village called Nablous exists with a population of two thousand, about two hundred of whom are Samaritans and preserve their ancient worship (p.67).
- c. This compassionate Samaritan had a genuine interest in the injured man. He treated the wounds with oil and wine, placed him on his own beast, and took him to an inn, and took care of him. When he had to leave the next day on his business, he gave money to the innkeeper to care for the man; he promised that when he returned, he would repay him for any additional funds that were spent on the traveler. Some of us have been benefitted by modern “Good Samaritans” in our time! Many of us have also aided others in ways akin to what the good man of the Lord’s story did.
7. Verses 36-37: “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.”
- a. The Lord asked the lawyer which of the three men, the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan, filled the role of neighbor to the injured man?
- b. The response to be made was obvious: “He that showed mercy to him.” This story is one of the many Bible reports which little children have learned. The truth it illustrates remains with them throughout their lives. Do you remember when you first learned this story? It is likely so attached to you mind that it is a part of your awareness!
- F. Luke 10:38-42: Mary and Martha.
1. Verse 38: “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.”
- a. Bethany was a village located about two miles east of Jerusalem, on the other side of the Mount of Olives. In this place lived Mary, Martha and their brother Lazarus. Obviously, this Lazarus was not the man of that same name of whom the Lord spoke in Luke 16. The man of that story was a beggar.
- 1) “Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house” (Luke 10:38). This statement indicates that Martha was the owner of the house, thus was likely older than Mary and Lazarus.
- 2) “It appears that the family was an affluent one by current standards; they lived in their own house, they owned a tomb in a garden and were able to supply an alabaster box of expensive ointment, ‘pure nard, very precious’ (John 12:3) to anoint the feet of Jesus. Mary, who did this, is not to be identified with the sinner of that name mentioned in Luke 7:36,37...” (Woods, p.227).
- b. On this earlier visit to Bethany, Luke reports that Martha invited him into her house. She had room for the Lord and his twelve disciples.
- c. Boles: Jesus was traveling toward Jerusalem; they came to "a certain village." We learn from John 11:1 that this was Bethany. The time is not definite; there is nothing in the language to indicate just when this event took place. As Jesus and the twelve were on their journey whither the seventy had already gone, they came to Bethany—Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. The characters of the two sisters as here presented agree with those described in John. Lazarus is not named here by Luke; it seems that Luke's design was merely to present these two sisters with their different traits and their relations to Jesus. Bethany was situated less than two miles from Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Jesus went into the house of these sisters.
2. Verses 39-40: “And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.”
- a. Henry:
- 1) “Martha was providing for the entertainment of Christ, and those that came with him. Here were respect to our Lord Jesus and right care of her household affairs. But there was something to be blamed. She was for much serving; plenty, variety, and exactness. Worldly business is a snare to us, when it hinders us from serving God, and getting good to our souls
-

- 2) “Though Martha was on this occasion faulty, yet she was a true believer, and in her general conduct did not neglect the one thing needful. The favour of God is needful to our happiness; the salvation of Christ is needful to our safety. Where this is attended to, all other things will be rightly pursued. Christ declared, Mary hath chosen the good part. For one thing is needful, this one thing that she has done, to give up herself to the guidance of Christ Men and devils cannot take it away from us, and God and Christ will not. Let us mind the one thing needful more diligently.”
- b. My precious wife, Marie, frequently used to observe that, if Mary had helped her sister, they both could have sat at the feet of Jesus.
- c. Martha was struggling with the many duties of being a hostess, preparing the food and arranging other matters to tend to the needs of her many guests; there were at least thirteen.
3. Verses 41-42: “And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) Martha was fretted with work, and Jesus kindly and calmly answered her outburst of feeling and said that she was "anxious and troubled about many things." The manifold cares in providing for his entertainment were not necessary. Jesus reproved her, not so much to the entertaining him as to her state of mind; not to the mere providing for the company, but to her needless solicitude and restless agitation of spirit which could well have been spared on that occasion. Martha was anxious about "many things," but Jesus informed her that only "one thing is needful."
 - 2) Here Jesus puts in contrast the "many things" with the "one thing"; that contrast is not only in regard to number, but also in regard to kind. Martha was absorbed with the physical and earthly. Jesus points her to the spiritual and heavenly. The one thing needful was a proper state of heart for receiving Jesus, and also the receiving of his truth.
 - 3) With proper attention to the one thing needful, Martha as well as Mary could have done well in attending to her household duties. Jesus commended Mary because she had "chosen the good part," and he adds that it should "not be taken away from her."
 - b. The parable of the "good Samaritan," that practical lesson of the love or charity the Master was alluding to, had just been spoken; it was still, we may reverently assume, fresh in the Divine Teacher's mind. And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. And Mary, his dear Bethany friend, had made her happy choice of the one thing, that love or charity which never fails the few things would then mean that faith, hope, and charity which abide both now and in the ages of ages yet to come! [Pulpit Commentary].

Luke Chapter 11

A. Luke 11:1-13: The Model Prayer.

1. Verse 1: And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”
 - a. Our Lord prayed to the Father on countless occasions. There were times when he spoke in prayer to God for hours.
 - b. In Luke's account of this, the inspired author quotes a request of the disciples to "teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1). Matthew simply begins with Jesus' announcement that their prayers should be ordered after the pattern he next presents.
 - c. In this present case, after he finished praying, one of the disciples asked the Lord to teach them how to pray. Christ gave them the Model Prayer. Many people today call this the Lord's Prayer, but it was provided as a model to follow. It was not intended to be repeated as a rote or memorized prayer.
 - d. First, this is evident in view of the differences between the accounts as given by Matthew and Luke. Second, there is no evidence that either he or any of his disciples ever repeated these words as a formal, rote prayer. In fact, the prayer cannot be uttered in the same words and with the same meaning today: we cannot today pray for the kingdom to come since it has already been established and is nearing 2000 years in age.
2. Verses 2-4: “And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”
 - a. Matthew's account: “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” (6:9-13).
 - b. *Our Father which art in heaven.* The Old Testament often emphasized the sovereignty and power of God; this the New Testament does also, but places emphasis also on his Fatherhood. We are still his servants (Rom. 6:6-18), but he is also a Father to us (John 3:3,5; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rom. 8:14-16; Matt. 7:7-11; Luke 11:9-13).
 - 1) “Since God is man's true and only spiritual Father, it is sinful and improper to refer this title, spiritually, to any man (Matt. 26:39)” (Coffman, Matthew, p.79).
 - 2) Heaven is a real place although not a physical location. We ought not to think of it being literally in some far distant part of the physical universe. The Bible consistently refers to it as being *up*. Heaven is the central aspect of Christianity: it is our ultimate abode; it is to be gained at all costs; nothing on earth is as important as heaven. Christ came from heaven, he often spoke of it, he opened the way into heaven, he returned to heaven, he will return to take his own into heaven, and heaven is the eternal home of the redeemed.
 - c. *Hallowed by thy name.* This denotes deep reverence for the Father (Eccl. 5:1-2). Vine says hallowed means "to make a person or thing the opposite of *koines*, common" (p.190).
 - 1) Psalms 33:6-9: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast."

- 2) Psalms 90:1-2: "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
 - 4) 1 John 1:5: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
 - 5) Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
- d. "Thy kingdom come."
- 1) Christ next taught his disciples to pray for the kingdom to come. Eighty-four preachers had by inspiration proclaimed the immediacy of the kingdom's establishment (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9). It came on the Pentecost day of Acts 2. Therefore, we would be foolish and in error to pray for something that has already been accomplished.
 - 2) One would be foolish indeed if he should pray for some specific need which he had already been given. Suppose a student should ardently ask God to help him pass the final test which was essential if he were to obtain a diploma, but he had already passed the test and had received the diploma!
 - 3) "The Britannica World language edition of Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary gives no less than nineteen meanings for the word 'come,' and the fifth of these is: 'to attain an end or a completion. Thy kingdom come'" (Coffman, p.81). However, it is obvious that the Lord was contemplating the then future establishment of the kingdom. This is the setting in which the model prayer rested. Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 2:2-4; Matthew 3:2; 4:17. If you had been among the disciples and heard the Lord speak these words, and with the background of Matthew 3:2 and 4:17 in mind, what would be your understanding of "thy kingdom come?"
- e. "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."
- 1) There is no rebellion countenanced in heaven; the angelic beings are perfectly in harmony with the will of God; and when we get there our obedience will be full and perfect. Our prayer is that God's will be fully observed on earth as in heaven. There will never be a time when humanity in the flesh will ever be perfectly obedient to God on earth (1 John 1:7-10; Matt. 26:41).
 - 2) The Lord is stressing the supreme importance of obeying God. We learn what the will of God is only by studying and learning the Bible. Divisions, strifes, heresies, disobedience, and sin occur when men claim to have special messages from God separate and apart from the Bible. If they did indeed have such messages, God would have to confirm it miraculously. But invariably these men assert their claim with no miraculous sign or with some "lying wonder." And their "message from God" contradicts God's word! Various ones who make this same claim, contradict each other.
 - 3) Since the earth and all things therein, along with the whole material universe, will be utterly destroyed at the second coming of Christ, there will never be a time when all men in this life will live in complete obedience to God. Christ indicated the possibility that the faith would not be in evidence on the earth at his return. "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).
 - 4) It is God's desire that all men obey him to the saving of their souls; but not all will do so, not even the majority (Matt. 7:13-14; Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4-5; Gal. 6:7-8; John 5:28-29; Acts 17:30ff).
 - 5) Revelation 12:7-9 speaks of a war in heaven.
 - a) A word of caution: "Let us settle firmly in our hearts, and stick to it consistently, that the Apocalypse is a book of spiritual cartoons, the pictures not in any case to be mistaken for the reality, no matter how vividly drawn. As already pointed out, the rest of this chapter, concerning

the Radiant Woman, the Red Dragon, and their adventures, is clearly seen by all interpreters to be symbolic, although they do not agree on what is symbolized. Is it not, then, to introduce confusion into the interpretation to suppose that the apostle suddenly shifts from symbolism to reality when he tells of the war in heaven?" (Albertus Pieters, quoted by Hailey, p.273).

- b) The context does not allow us to interpret this vision as descriptive of some literal war in heaven which resulted in the Devil and his angels being literally cast out of heaven. Rather, the war depicted is spiritual in nature, in keeping with the general theme of the book. Satan knew about God's plan to send the Messiah and tried continually to thwart that plan to keep it from fruition.
 - c) Revelation 1:1: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and **signified** it by his angel unto his servant John." Signified—expressed in signs and symbols.
- f. "Give us day by day our daily bread."
- 1) This is a reference to the various necessities for physical survival. Bread is the staff of life, and is representative of the things we need to live. The sentiment of this statement is lost on many modern folks. With a large bank account, and with more money coming in regularly, and with a great stockpile of food and clothing, and with luxuries and conveniences unknown even to Midas and Solomon, no wonder many are totally unconcerned with obeying the gospel.
 - 2) Living in the lap of luxury and convenience, with interests centered on material things and values, the gospel most often falls on deaf, unappreciative ears. Even many who know somewhat about the Bible, and with wonderful opportunities to learn more, often show little or no interest.
 - 3) Involved in this passage is an element of trust in God. It has been the usual case in times past, and in much of our present world, that men had only a day's supply of food at a time. There was the need to depend on God to provide them day-by-day such things as they must have.
 - 4) Many do not offer this petition meaningfully because they have such a great store of material goods already. It is difficult for such to learn to trust God. When one is in need of the very essentials of life, when he has no one to whom he may turn, then he may learn to trust God. This petition brings one back to the level of real, daily need. "Back of the loaf is the snowy flour; And back of the flour the mill; And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower; and the sun and the Father's will" (Coffman, p.83).
- g. "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."
- 1) Luke's account uses the word *sins* in place of *debts* in Matthew's account. "The Greek word translated 'forgive' is the same translated 'left' in Matthew 4:20,22, and 'left' in Matthew 13:36, and 'leaving' in Mark 4:36, and 'leave' in 1 Corinthians 7:11,12. It carries the idea of absolute putting away of sins" (Boles, p.161).
 - 2) It here implies that Christians do not live sinlessly perfect lives (1 John 1:8). The Lord did not imply that we are literally debtors to God, but he uses the term figuratively. There is a likeness between one who owes a debt and one who has sinned against God. The Lord is saying nothing here about literal debts; a Christian is not obligated to disregard any money owed him by another on the basis of this statement. It does not address that situation at all.
- h. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."
- 1) This indicates the danger in temptation and stresses man's weakness. "Think of all the holy names lost amid the storms of temptation, the hosts of the slain in the encounter with the Prince of Evil. Only a fool could face the subtle and invisible powers of evil with any feeling of superiority or overconfidence" (Coffman, p.83). 1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 13:28,19; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:3, 13-15; 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. The American Standard rendering of Matthew 6:13 ["And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"] sheds some light on the matter.

- a) 1 Thessalonians 3:5: “For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.”
 - b) Matthew 13:19: “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.”
 - c) 1 Peter 5:8-9: “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”
 - d) 2 Corinthians 11:3: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”
 - e) 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”
 - f) 1 Corinthians 10:12-13: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”
- 2) “This petition expresses our natural desire not to be thus led, and at the same time, by adding, ‘*deliver us from evil,*’ it indicates that we expect to be brought more or less into conflict with evil, notwithstanding our expressed desire to avoid it. The counterpart to the petition is found in Paul’s assurance that ‘God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able; but will, with the temptation, make a way to escape, that you maybe able to bear it’ (1 Cor. 10:13)” [J.W. McGarvey, *A Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p.64].
 - 3) The petition is a request for God not to lead us or bring us into temptation. God does not tempt man to sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (Jas. 1:13). *Temptation* is used in two senses in the Bible: to entice to sin (which God will not do) and to be tried by hardship (which God often does—Heb. 12). These two usages are found in James 1:1-12 and 1:13-14. The former refers to trials of hardship and persecution; the latter to enticements to sin.
 - 4) Guy N. Woods has a great comment on Matthew 6:13 [regarding being led into temptation]:
 - a) We have here an excellent example of Hebrew poetry which, unlike English versification of meter and rhyme, obtains its rhythmic cadence in repetition of thought and parallel lines. A glance into the poetic books of the Old Testament will provide hundreds of instances. “He will have pity on the poor and needy, and the souls of the needy he will save.” (Psalm 72:123.) “The evil bow down before the good; and the wicked, at the gates of the righteous.” (Proverbs 14:19.) “Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good.” (Job 9:25.)
 - b) It will be observed that the second clause repeats and is explanatory of the first and the movement is like the steady swing of a pendulum, or the unvarying tramp of soldiers marching in step. It is this which gives it exquisite beauty and intriguing loveliness. The depth of feeling, and the rich spiritual tone of David’s songs are without parallel in literature. Thus, Jehovah “leads us not into temptation,” by delivering us from “the evil one,” and this he does by providing us with a “way of escape” from temptation. (Matthew 4:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:13.) [*Questions and Answers*, Open Forum, Volume 2, p.178].
 - c) We are to pray that we enter not into temptation (Luke 22:40). When we follow Christ, we will not be led into enticements to sin, although we may be persecuted (2 Tim. 3:12).
3. Verses 5-8: “And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now

shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.”

- a. The Lord supposed the case of a man who was friend to another man; this second person went to the other’s house at midnight to request a loan of three loaves of bread; an unexpected guest had come and there was nothing in the house to feed him. The request was at an inopportune time for the first man; he and his children were in bed and it was not a good time.
 - b. However, Jesus said, because the friend was insistent, the first person would get up and bring forth the bread. The friend could be trusted to replace the three loaves. Importunity means persistence.
4. Verses 9-10: “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”
- a. We are told to ask, seek and knock to obtain those things which we need. That is what the friend of the preceding passage did. He had an important need, he knew the other man had the bread, and ordinarily would have quickly provided it. By persisting, the man in the house arose and tended to the need.
 - b. Christ is discussing our praying to the Father. We are to ask for what we need. If the matter is not resolved or provided at the first, then we are to continue to seek for it; indeed, we are to knock at the door—through righteous prayers. [Some think that the point here is desiring the blessings of the Gospel].
 - c. Consider Matthew 7:9-11: “Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”
5. Verses 11-13: “If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”
- a. Coffman:
 - 1) God still answers prayers: [See Coffman, p.93).
 - 2) Gradually (cf. Hawthorne's story of "The Great Stone Face").
 - 3) Literally.
 - 4) By denying the request.
 - 5) By sending something other than what we request.
 - 6) By giving something better than what we request.
 - 7) After a delay.
 - b. "Of all rash things, a rash prayer is the rashest. Rachel prayed, 'Give me children, or else I die' (Gen. 30:1). God gave her children, *and she died* (Gen. 35:18)" (Coffman, p.94).
 - c. We must follow the conditions for acceptable prayer.
 - 1) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*."
 - 2) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
 - 3) James 1:6-7: "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."
 - 4) James 4:3: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts."
 - 5) 1 John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."
-

- d. No good father would give to his son something that is useless or dangerous: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?" (Luke 11:11-12).
- e. A Comment from Foy E. Wallace on this Passage:
- 1) "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" This passage is in the context of Luke's record of the Sermon On The Mount. The parallel passage in Matthew's account reads: "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Here is an equation: the Holy Spirit in Luke is equated with good things in Matthew. It is another example of metonymy — the use of a term in the place of another: the Holy Spirit it put for the things of the Spirit, that which proceeds from the Spirit, and it means the spiritual teaching in the gospel.
 - 2) The teaching of Christ in all of these statements was dispensational, pointing to Pentecost and the beginning of the approaching gospel dispensation. The Holy Spirit does not enter any one through prayer, but through the teaching of the Spirit: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit"—1 Cor. 12:13. It is by the agency of the Spirit through teaching that we are baptized into one body, the church, where we drink into the Spirit by participating in its blessings. And the teaching of Christ from his baptism in the Jordan to his death on the cross pointed to the Holy Spirit's dispensation with all of its gospel blessings.
 - 3) The context of Luke 11:13 is connected with the immediate preceding verses: "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." These verses form the premises for the Lord's admonition concerning asking for the good things of the Holy Spirit which he had announced in the good glad news of the gospel, soon to be proclaimed in the approaching dispensation.
 - 4) In the grammar of the text the verb ask is the present imperative, which indicates continuing desire—it is not a reference to prayer or praying, but the desiring that becomes a part of the inner being.
 - 5) The corresponding text of Rom. 10:13-17 is a definition of what it means to ask, and knock and seek: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." These verses describe the sending of the apostles of Christ to preach the good things of salvation in the gospel. All who call, in this Roman passage, correspond to the ones who ask, in the Luke passage. But the calling on the name of the Lord in Rom. 10:13 is obeying the gospel of verse 16—and the asking of Luke 11:13 is the same thing as the calling in Rom. 10:13, and it has no reference to "praying for the personal Holy Spirit to enter into us." The comparisons are here made out: Asking is calling, and calling is hearing, believing and obeying.
 - 6) Asking does not refer to praying and pleading, and knocking at the door does not mean knocking the door down! The one who hears the gospel is the seeker; the one who believes the gospel is the knocker and the one who obeys the gospel is the finder—and the asker is all of them, and he receives that which he asked. It all points to Pentecost, where its connection with the gospel is the equivalence of the asking to the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer was that upon repentance and baptism for the remission of sins they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in all of the equivalent terms of salvation.
-

7) Therefore, the promise of the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:13 was dispensational and was equated with the good things of the Spirit in the blessings of the gospel. [*The Gospel For Today*, pp.655f].

B. Luke 11:14-26: Truths Concerning Casting out Demons.

1. Verses 14-15: "And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils."
 - a. Matthew's Account: "As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils" (9:32-34)
 - 1) Ordinarily, one who is deaf is also unable to speak (is dumb). This had nothing at all to do with one's intelligence. "The word for 'dumb' in the original also means 'deafness' (Matt. 11:5; Mark 7:32; Luke 7:22); it means 'dull' or 'blunted'; in the New Testament the word is used only of hearing and speaking, the meaning in each case being determined by the context" (Boles, Matt., p.216).
 - 2) But this man was also possessed by a demon. The demon probably caused his dumbness. Those who had been taken over by demons were afflicted in various ways. Some were deprived of their reason (cf. men in Gadara); in other cases one or more of the natural senses were affected; some were caused to go into convulsions, and tried to destroy themselves (cf. Mark 9:18; Luke 13:11,16).
 - b. But others asserted that Jesus cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub [Satan]. Our Lord turned this foolish argument against them with devastating effect.
2. Verses 16-17: "And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth."
 - a. One miraculous sign was not enough for those who opposed Christ; they frequently demanded another. These had just seen and heard what happened when he cast the demon from someone. One more miracle would have had no effect on their hard hearts.
 - b. The Lord destroyed their argument by stating the obvious truth that the devil would have been working against his own purposes. A nation or a house that attacks itself will assuredly fall.
3. Verses 18-19: "If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges."
 - a. Mark's report: "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (3:22-30).
 - b. "And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?" (Matt. 12:23).
 - 1) The effect of this miraculous demonstration on the multitude was electric. They began to ask, "Is this the son of David?" They knew somewhat of the Old Testament picture of the promised Messiah, and concluded rightfully that he who wrought such things as did Jesus must be the son of David [the Messiah].
 - 2) Notice the difference in the attitudes and conclusions of the multitude and the religious leaders. The common people were able to grasp the significance of the Lord's works and words; but the leaders knew their positions of power and influence would be destroyed if Jesus was successful.

- 3) Those who knew the Old Testament prophecies could see that Jesus was fulfilling those which pertained to the Messiah. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped" (Isa. 35:5).
 - c. The Lord's opponents could not deny the reality of the miracle. This they were often forced to admit (cf. Acts 4:13-17). They would have denied this miracle if they had been able to be convincing, but admitting the miracle, they tried to say its source was Satan. Beelzebub (or Beelzebul) was a corruption of Baalzebub (the god of the fly), a deity of the Ekronites (cf. 2 Kings 1:2). The term was used by the Jews as a reference to Satan. Some scholars say the meaning of the term is "the god of filth" or "the dung-hill god." It was the height of blasphemy to link the name of the Savior with Satan or some manmade god.
 - d. "There are only two possible methods of evading the logical force of a miracle: one is to deny the reality of the miracle; and the other, to refer the effect to some other cause than the power of God. The Pharisees, being unable to deny the reality of the miracle, and knowing that demons are under the command of Satan, resorted to their only alternative by affirming that the power was satanic.
 - 1) "They did not affirm this in regard to all of Christ's miracles; for it would have been absurd to represent Satan as a healer of diseases and a friend of man; but it was affirmed only of casting out demons....
 - 2) "It derived great plausibility from the consideration, that as there were at least two powers by which demons might be cast out, as both were invisible, it might appear impossible to decide whether it was the power of God or the power of Satan.
 - 3) "The Pharisees thought that they had advanced an explanation which, whether true or false, Jesus could not clearly disprove; and Jesus himself considered it worthy of the very thorough and exhaustive reply which follows" (McGarvey, p.107).
 - e. Christ asked his enemies if they could identify the power by which some of their disciples claimed to cast out demons! Some of the sons (disciples) of the Pharisees claimed to be able to cast out demons. The Pharisees accepted these exorcisms as genuine, and that the power to do so came from God. The Lord argues, therefore, that if these men cast out demons by the power of God (as the Pharisees believed), then how could they deny that God was the source of the power by which Jesus cast out demons!
 - f. "The truth of the charge that Jesus cast out demons by the power of Satan, depended on the assumption that he had access to no other power by which it could be done. But if this assumption were true, then it would affect the exorcists as well as himself. On the other hand, if they cast out demons by divine power, then the same might be true of him....[This argument] could be answered only by showing that the exorcists had some reason to claim favor with God, which Jesus had not; and this they dared not pretend" (McGarvey, p.108).
 - g. "Christ was not satisfied by showing them the intrinsic absurdity of their argument. He showed them that it might as well be applied to them as to him. Your disciples, taught by you and encouraged by you, pretend to cast out devils. If your argument be true that a man who casts out devils must be in league with the devil, then *your disciples* have made a covenant with him also. You must therefore either give up this argument, or admit that the working of miracles is proof of the assistance of God" (Barnes, p.131).
 - h. "Christ's argument was: You Pharisees accept so-called exorcisms by your disciples, in spite of all the 'mumbo-jumbo' and evident witchcraft connected with them, but you reject my miracles which are accomplished with only a word of authority. If the miracles of your disciples are acceptable, surely mine, the Christ's, should also be acceptable. Of course, Christ did not endorse the exorcisms of the Pharisees' disciples any more than he endorsed the Pharisees" (Coffman, p.175).
4. Verses 20-22: "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he
-

shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.”

- a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. Boles: *But if I by the finger of God* —If he, by "the finger of God," or power of God, or Holy Spirit, cast out demons, then the kingdom of God had come unawares upon them. On the phrase, "finger of God," compare the expression of the magicians to Pharaoh—"this is the finger of God." (Ex. 8:19.) The "kingdom of God," not kingdom of heaven, is the uniform phrase used by Luke. It will be noticed here that Satan is represented as a real personal being, not a mere principle of evil.
 - c. Compare: "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house" (Matt. 12:29).
 - 1) In some real sense Satan was "bound." Though evil abounds, it could and has been much worse (cf. Gen. 6). Satan cannot tempt a saint more than is possible to bear, and could not enter swine without the Lord's permission, had to have special approval to harass Job, could sift Peter only with Lord's permission, had to sow his tares while men slept, his angels are bound in chains of darkness, and he snatches the gospel from men's hearts but only if they allow their hearts to become hardened (cf. Coffman, p.174). God does not share control of the universe with the devil. Whatever he may do, it is always under God's permissive will.
 - 2) In the figure of the verse, Satan is the strong man; Christ is the invader; before he could spoil the strong man's goods he must first bind him. In casting out demons, Christ showed he had bound Satan. "Great must have been the surprise of the Pharisees when they heard the reply. An explanation by which they thought they had both refuted the argument drawn from his miracle, and turned the force of the miracle against him, has only furnished him with an occasion to show the absurdity of their explanation and their logical inconsistency in propounding it; to prove, more clearly than ever, that he acted by divine authority; and to demonstrate the fact that he was making successful warfare against the dominion of Satan" (McGarvey, p.109).
 - d. "A man could not break into the house of a strong man and take his property unless he had rendered the man himself helpless. If he had taken his goods, it would therefore be sufficient proof that he had bound the man. So I, says he, have taken this property—this possessed person—from the dominion of Satan. It is clear proof that I have subdued *Satan himself*..." (Barnes p.121). His mastery of Satan at this point was prospective in the main, for it was after his resurrection that the ultimate demolition of his evil power was assured (Heb. 2:14-15).
 - e. Boles:
 - 1) "They ought to have rejoiced in the signs of this conquest of good over evil; they should have prepared their hearts to receive a kingdom which had power to perform such works of mercy. But truly they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil (John 3:19)...If the kingdom of the Messiah has not come near them in the person of Jesus, how can this power be granted unto Jesus? Jesus now pushed them to extremity.
 - 2) "They knew that no prophet had ever claimed such power; they knew that the prophets had foretold that this power would belong to the Messiah. (Isa. 49:25; 53:12.) Therefore if Jesus is not the Messiah, this power to cast out demons, as he had done, would be impossible according to their own prophets; but if it was possible and the Messiah should have such power, it was manifested in him and they should accept him as the Messiah.
 - 3) "He had entered the strong man's house and had cast out a demon, thus manifesting his power to bind the strong man. The argument was unanswerable; but their perverse hearts were invincible" (Boles, Matt., p.268).
-

- f. When the Lord entered the hadean realm at his death, Satan thought he had won the ultimate triumph. But on the third morning Christ burst the bonds [gates] of Hades and came forth; it was not possible that he should be held continually by it. His resurrection was the crowning blow to Satan, a defeat which cost the devil the war.
- 1) Acts 2:23-24: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."
 - 2) Romans 1:4: "And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
- g. This verse contains the final argument in the series the Lord used. "Jesus had entered [the strong man's] house and robbed him of his goods; and this proves that, instead of being in league with Satan, he had overpowered him" (McGarvey, p.109).
5. Verses 23-24: "He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out."
- a. Compare: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30).
 - b. There can be but one master over our lives: God or Satan (cf. Matt. 6:24). The individual must make the choice which. "This remark was intended, I think, for bystanders. It was important for them to see that there was no middle ground—that those who were not with him and helping him to gather, were with the Pharisees, and helping them to scatter abroad. In the figure of gathering and scattering, the people are compared to a flock of sheep, which Jesus was endeavoring to gather into the fold, while his enemies were trying to scatter them abroad" (McGarvey, p.109).
 - c. "In the great conflict between life and darkness, good and evil, the kingdom of God and of Satan, there is no middle ground; there is no neutral position; there is no third power to which these miracles can be attributed. These Pharisees were obligated either to join with Christ or be against him; they had to become allies with God or coworkers with Satan; there was no other alternative....The teachings of Jesus with his unanswerable arguments forced the conclusion upon these Pharisees, and they must now take sides with Jesus or join issue with him; the choice is theirs; sufficient instruction, evidence, and light have been given them for the choice; hence the responsibility of the choice rests upon them" (Boles, pp.268f).
 - d. "Mark 9:40 reverses these words and says 'for he that is not against us is for us'; but his meaning is entirely different. Jesus here speaks of the war on Satan's kingdom, but in Mark he speaks of the charity which his disciples were to show to such as use his name while they were too timid to follow him. The maxim taught by Jesus here is true in every age; people must be for Christ or against him; they are scattering, opposing him, or they are gathering with him" (Boles, pp.268f).
6. Verses 25-26: "And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."
- a. Compare: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation" (Matt. 12:43-45).
-

- b. "The demon, driven by divine power from the hearts of men, is pictured by Jesus as going about searching for a fit abode and restless because no human heart is found for residence" (Boles, p.279). The house was the man's body he had been forced to leave.
- c. Compare: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. 2:20-22).
- d. "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." "These words show Jesus' application of the parable; we can now say so it *was* with that generation. The account given by Josephus of the last years of Jerusalem present a picture of infatuation, demoniac madness and crime such as the world has never elsewhere beheld...This principle applies to men now. If we know the truth, and fail to practice and obey it, the heart is hardened. We are the worse for having known it. The gospel is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death" (Boles, Matt., pp.280f).

C. Luke 11:27-28: Misguided Praise of Mary.

- 1. Verse 27: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked."
 - a. The unnamed woman in the audience was no doubt sincere in thus speaking of the mother of Jesus. But our Lord did not derive any moral or spiritual strength through her. He was as human as Mary was but he was far more—indeed, he was deity in a physical body.
 - 1) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - 2) Matthew 1:22-23: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."
 - b. "A certain woman" was impressed with the wisdom and moral grandeur of Jesus as a great Teacher, and in true womanly ways cried out aloud in the multitude and gave expression to her praise The woman's expressions indicate that she was a mother, as she voices motherly instincts and feelings" [Boles].
 - c. Pulpit Commentary: "This woman seems to have expressed the popular feeling. The crowds who had seen the great miracle, had listened to the cavilling suspicions, and then heard the Master's wise and skillful reply, were evidently impressed with the wisdom as with the power of the famous but hated Teacher, for they no doubt echoed the lofty and sublime blessing of the woman here."
 - d. We have noted earlier in this material, the Bible gives not authority at all for exalting Mary to a female deity. By inspiration, she was led to express her own need for a Savior, thus she made no claim to sinlessness. That she was an outstanding example of righteous womanhood, is not to be denied. That she was anywhere near the status of the Son of God is to be utterly rejected.
 - 2. Verse 28: "But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
 - a. Jesus tells of those who are greater than Mary in her bearing and nursing the infant Jesus. Those who hear the word of God and obey it, are in that blessed state, greater than Mary's motherhood of Jesus.
 - b. "The woman's sentiment was a true expression of her heart, but Jesus showed who should receive the richest blessings. She was blessing Jesus through his mother, but Jesus in contrast turns attention to others and gives them a beatitude. Jesus gives praise to his mother, but he never intended that she be worshiped; he does not deny the woman's words, but points out who, rather than his natural mother, are to be counted as blessed, even those who hear and keep the word, the whole counsel, commands, and will of God. Hearing is not enough; one must hear and do or 'keep' the commandments of God" (Boles).
-

- c. Barnes: "Jesus admits that she was happy — it was an honour to be his mother, but he says that the chief happiness, the highest honour, was to obey the word of God. Compared with this, all earthly distinctions and honours are as nothing. Man's greatest dignity is in keeping the holy commandments of God, and in being prepared for heaven."

D. Luke 11:29-36: Old Testament Illustrations.

1. Verses 29-30: "And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation."
 - a. Matthew's report: "But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (12:39-42).
 - 1) "This remark shows that the very singular incident of being swallowed by a great fish and thrown up on dry land after three days, occurred to the prophet as a type of Christ. This was a sign from heaven because it was wrought by God without human instrumentality" (McGarvey, p.111).
 - 2) "An evil and adulterous generation: he is not accusing them of physical immorality but spiritual unfaithfulness to God. The relation of the Jews to God was often represented as a marriage contract — God as the husband, and the Jewish people as the wife. Hence, their apostasy and idolatry are often represented as adultery" (Barnes, p.134). The church is the Lord's bride (cf. Ephesians 5).
 - a) Isaiah 57:3: "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore."
 - b) Ezekiel 16:15: "But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was."
 - c) Hosea 3:1: "Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine."
 - b. "As Jesus was buried late Friday afternoon, and arose before sunrise Sunday morning, he was in the tomb only an hour or two on Friday, all of Saturday, and between eleven and twelve hours of Sunday, counting the day, according to Jewish custom, as beginning at sunset.... We inquire how the statement of the text can be true, and, in order to an intelligent answer, we note the following facts and considerations.
 - 1) "The time between his death and his resurrection is expressed in three different forms. Most frequently it is said that he would rise again *on the third day* (16:21; 17:23.) Once it is said that he would rise *after three days* (Mark 8:31); and once, in our text, that he would be in the heart of the earth *three days and three nights*.
 - 2) "The Jews, in all periods of Bible history, used the expressions *after three days* and *on the third day*, as equivalents. Thus Moses says that Joseph put his brethren into prison *three days*; yet in the next sentence he represents him as releasing them 'on the third day.' (Gen. 42:17,18.) When the people petitioned Rehoboam to lighten their burden, he said, 'Depart ye for three days, then come again to me.' They departed, and 'came again the *third day*, as the king had appointed.' (1 Ki. 12:5,12.) When Esther was about to venture into the king's presence, she instructed the Jews in Shushan to fast *three days, night and day* yet she went in *on the third day*. (Es. 4:16; 5:1.)
 - 3) "Still more in point, when the Pharisees petitioned Pilate for a guard, they said to him, 'This deceiver said while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulcher be made sure *until the third day*.' (27:63,64.) Now with us, if he were going to rise after

three days, it would be necessary to guard the sepulchre until within the *fourth* day....It is the peculiar and inaccurate usage of the Jews which makes the difference; and that the New Testament writers continued this established usage is proved by the fact, that when Matthew and Mark report the same words of Jesus, one of them uses the expression 'on the third day,' and the other, 'after three days.' (16:21; Mark 8:31.)

- 4) "...Those enemies themselves, as we have seen, understood and employed the usage as he did, and it appears that all parties among the Jews understood these expressions as equivalents. There is no contradiction, then, between this and other passages on the subject, but the appearance of contradiction arises entirely from a peculiar Jewish usage.
- 5) "It may be well to remark at this point, that the above mentioned facts refute the hypothesis of some, that Jesus was buried on the afternoon of Thursday. If he had been buried on Thursday, and had risen Sunday morning, he would have been in the grave three nights, but he would have also been there parts of *four days*, and the Jewish expression would have been, he will arise the *fourth day*, or, *after four days*. As proof of this, if we count the time from the appearance of the angel to Cornelius (Acts 10) till the arrival of Peter at the house of Cornelius, we find that it is precisely three days, according to our mode of counting; but it includes three nights and parts of four days, and hence Cornelius says to Peter, 'Four days ago I was fasting until this hour.' etc. (Acts 10:30.)" (McGarvey, pp.111-113).
- c. "Whale" is from a Greek word meaning "huge fish or sea-monster" (Vine). Jonah 1:17 states that God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. God also prepared a gourd (4:6), a worm (4:7), and an east wind (4:8). None of these was a new creation; each had predecessors from the beginning (Gen. 1).
- d. The very fact that Jesus alluded to the story of Jonah as a historical fact places the divine stamp of authenticity on the whole story. As Jonah was three days and nights in the great fish, so Christ's body would be in the earth for three days and nights. This was the only "sign" the Lord intended to give these obstinate unbelievers. Later, after Christ's resurrection, they could look back to his statement here and see in it definite and undeniable proof of his identity.
- e. Verse 31: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."
 - 1) The queen of the south (the queen of Sheba) traveled many miles to see the wisdom and riches of Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-13). That she made such a journey to see Solomon indites the Jews of Jesus' day since they would not heed the teachings of Jesus, who was vastly superior to Solomon.
 - 2) "...Solomon offered at the dedication of the temple 'twenty-two thousand oxen, and a hundred twenty thousand sheep' (2 Chron. 7:5). Christ offered his own blood within the holiest place of all for the sins of all men (Heb. 9:14)" (Coffman, p.183)
2. Verse 32: "The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."
 - a. The fact that the people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah was a condemnation of the impenitent and unbelieving Jews who had the greater honor of being in the presence of the Son of God! The Ninevites repented even though they had a lesser personage issuing a message which was inferior to the message of the Master Teacher who was now among them. Jonah's message had a greater effect on the Ninevites than the message of Christ had on these Jews; this was so because of the differences in the hearts of the audiences.
 - b. In debate, false teachers often appealed to this statement to counter the truth as stated in Acts 2:38 regarding the purpose of baptism. The Bible teaches that baptism is for (unto; into; in order to: Greek *eis*) the remission of sins. Baptist doctrine denies this truth, and asserts that "for" (*eis*) means "because of." Thus, they argue that "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38 means "because you have received the remission of sins." It forces an impossible interpretation on the verse by having Peter command them to repent because they had already been forgiven! But to try to justify their contention, they

- appeal to Matthew 12:41 where *eis* is translated "at" [the same word is used in Luke 11:32]. They argue here that the Ninevites repented "because of" the preaching of Jonah, thus (they assert) *eis* in Acts 2:38 means "because of."
- c. "The preposition here rendered 'at' is 'eis', which usually means 'into.' Some writers have contended that it here means 'because of,' or 'in consequence of,' a meaning quite foreign to the word. It is true, as a matter of fact, that the Ninevites repented in consequence of the preaching of Jonah; but if it had been the purpose of the writer to express this thought, he would have used the preposition 'dia' instead of 'eis.'
- 1) "The thought of the passage is quite distinct from this. They repented 'into' the preaching of Jonah. This is not idiomatic English, but it conveys the exact thought which a Greek would derive from the original. The term 'preaching' is put for the course of life required by the preaching, and it is asserted that they repented 'into' this. Their repentance, in other words, brought them into the course of life which the preaching required.
 - 2) "If Jesus had merely said that they repented 'in consequence of' Jonah's preaching, he would have stopped short with the internal change which they underwent; but he chooses to go further, and indicate the terminus of their repentance, that it brought them into the condition which the preaching demanded. The rendering, 'at the preaching,' does not bring out the idea in full, but it would be difficult to translate the passage any more accurately without adopting an awkward circumlocution" (McGarvey, p.113).
3. Verses 33-34: "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness."
- a. Mark's report: "And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear" (4:21-23). [Compare: The purpose of Jonah's preaching was to bring the Ninevites into obedience to God; the purpose of the lighted candle was to furnish illumination to the people in a dark room].
 - b. The purpose of a candle is to give light to a room. As the Lord here stated, we do not put a lighted candle under a basket or under a bed. It would serve no purpose, and indeed might be dangerous.
 - c. Matthew 5:14-16: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - d. Ephesians 3:4-5: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."
 - 1) Verse three affirms the fact that God's eternal plan, which was kept secret through the centuries, had been revealed to him. It was essential that this fact be stated, but inspiration couched it in such a way that the glory was given to God and not to Paul.
 - 2) The Greek term from which *mystery* is translated [from *musterion*] which denotes information which cannot be known unless it is revealed by the originator. In this case, God had a plan which he kept secret for a long time, reserving its full revelation until the coming of the New Covenant.
 - 3) Paul had already given this information to them concerning the revelation of the mystery (Eph. 1:9-10). Other key passages in which God's secret plan is discussed include the following:
 - a) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets,

- according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
- b) 1 Corinthians 2:7: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."
 - c) Ephesians 3:9: "And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."
 - d) Colossians 1:26: "*Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."
 - e) 1 Peter 1:10-12: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto them-selves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."
- 4) In verse four, Paul showed that the revelation he received of God's plan has been set forth in the written word; when they read it, they would have the same knowledge of the plan that the apostle had. Since that is so, then the mystery was no longer a mystery! "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, ASV).
- 5) In previous ages of time, men did not know what the plan of God was. He had developed the plan in eternity, and after mankind fell into sin, he began piecemeal to give faint hints and indications of the plan he had in mind. Various promises and prophetic pictures were given during the Old Testament ages, but the wisest of ancient sages, and even the angels of heaven, did not know the plan. [See 1 Peter 1:10-12]. Catholic authorities assert that even now the common man cannot understand the revelation. God used the apostles of Christ and the New Testament prophets to reveal the details of his plan. They were able to learn it only through the work of the Holy Spirit who revealed it. Paul told the Ephesian brethren that they could understand it when they read it.
4. Verses 35-36: "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.
- a. Compare: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!" (Matt. 6:22-23). This passage connects directly to the preceding verses, and emphasizes the great importance of having our full trust in the Lord, and putting the full force of our souls behind our obedience to his will.
 - b. "All the light and vision of the body come through the eye; the eye supplies for the whole body the benefits of light and vision. 'If therefore thine eye be single' means that the eye does not see double or does not look at two objects at the same time....For the eye to be evil is for it to be in a diseased condition so that light and vision are blurred or obscured; in a spiritual sense if the eye be evil the power of distinct and clear vision of spiritual things is lost and the whole body in a spiritual sense is full of darkness....This figure used by Jesus has direct reference to laying up treasures; he who lays up treasures upon earth has an evil eye, but he who lays up treasures in heaven has a clear vision and the whole body is full of light" (Boles, Matt., p.165f).
 - c. Boles: If the only source of light be darkness, great indeed is the darkness. The eye gives expression and radiance to the face and person; when the eye is dark the whole person is gloomy and sad. The eye has been called "the window of the soul"; hence through the eyes the different moods of the soul are expressed. Disputing and questioning the work and authority of Jesus as these Pharisees and others
-

were doing, and demanding unreasonable signs, and disbelieving the signs which he had already given them, was like having an eye that is dark; the whole spiritual man is soon filled with evil, with deep spiritual darkness. (John 3:19; 2 Cor. 4:4.)

E. Luke 11:37-44: The Shallow Pharisees.

1. Verses 37-39: "And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness."
 - a. NKJ: And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. So He went in and sat down to eat. 38 When the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. 39 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."
 - b. Boles: This Pharisee was not a disciple of Jesus. Jesus accepted the invitation. The original shows that it was an early meal, perhaps "breakfast." It was less formal than a dinner. Who the Pharisee was, or why he asked Jesus, we are not informed; some think that he invited him to criticize his teachings and his life.
 - c. The host quickly took note of the fact that Jesus did not wash before the meal. We are not told if he said anything, or merely observed this in his mind. Our Lord was fully aware of his attitude, whether it was spoken or not. The expression on his face would have revealed his inner thoughts.
 - d. Jesus stated to his host that the Pharisees were sure to clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but that their inner parts were impure. They cleaned the outside but ignored the inside—of their souls and hearts.
2. Verses 40-42: "Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."
 - a. NKJ: "Foolish ones! Did not He who made the outside make the inside also? 41 But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you. Verse 42: "But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."
 - b. Matthew 23:23-24: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."
 - 1) The Lord shows their hypocrisy and inconsistency by pointing out their exaltation of small things over weightier matters of the Law of Moses.
 - 2) "The articles here mentioned, mint, anise, and cummin, were garden herbs grown in small quantities and used chiefly for flavoring. To pay tithes of these was to be scrupulous to the last farthing, for the tithe was scarcely worth the trouble of removing it from the garden" (McGarvey, p.199). Mint was the herb known to us by the same name. Anise is commonly known to us as dill. Cummin is a plant similar to what we call fennel. They were of little value.
 - 3) A tithe was the tenth part. They were required to pay a tenth part of their property for the support of the system. This went especially to the priests and Levites (Num. 18:20-24). If a Jew lived a great distance from Jerusalem he was allowed to convert the property to money and give it in that form (Deut. 14:24-29). The Lord did not forbid their giving tithes of these small, insignificant herbs.
 - c. His criticism of them was in their omission of weightier matters—Judgment and the Love of God.
 - 1) Judgment—treating their fellowman with justice. This was required of the Israelites (Ps. 82:3; Mic. 6:8). They perverted justice to their own ends, as they were about to do in the case of Jesus.

- 2) Luke names the love of God as the second item.
 - a) "These wicked religionists would ignore a sick person, a leper, an outcast; but they were very diligent in taking a tithe of their garden herbs and walking away with a mark of piety and self-satisfaction on their hypocritical faces" (Smith, *Book of Matthew*, pp.592f). (Cf. Matt. 5:7; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12).
 - b) Our love of God is demonstrated as we obey him. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). We show our love for God by keeping his commandments. The tense of the verb *keep* [present active subjunctive] means to "keep on keeping." It is not enough that one is obedient on one occasion; he must remain obedient. This is the real test of our love for God.
 - c) Deuteronomy 6:5: "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
 - d) Leviticus 19:18: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."
- 3) Matthew lists a third weighty matter—faith. Faith is both the belief of the truth and the habitual manifestation of that belief in the life of the individual (McGarvey). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). It was not wrong for them to pay tithes of these three common herbs, but they ought to have given greater priority to justice, mercy, and faith.
3. Verse 43: "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets."
 - a. NKJ: "Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces."
 - b. Compare: "And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi" (Matt. 23:5-6).
 - c. The whole life of these men centered upon themselves, having their own vanity "stroked." Their vanity is exemplified by the case of the prayer of the Pharisee in Luke 18:10-14: "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:10-14).
 - d. They love the uppermost seats at feasts—*reclining places*. "But all their works they do to be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called of men, Rabbi" (Matt. 23:5-7, ASV).
 - 1) "Long couches were provided in their dining-halls, on each of which three persons would usually recline. The first, reclining on his left side, rested his left elbow on a cushion at the end of the couch, his feet thrown back toward the rear so as to allow another to recline just below and in front of him. The third was an equal distance below the second, the head of each being far enough below his neighbor above to keep from interfering with the free use of his hands in eating. The middle position was the position of honor, here called the uppermost room, and the Pharisees are charged with loving to secure it" (McGarvey, p.196).
 - 2) "To recline near to one in this manner denoted intimacy, and was what was meant by lying *in the bosom* of another, Jn. 13:23; Lu. 16:22,23. As the feet were extended *from* the table, and as they reclined instead of sitting, it was easy to approach the feet behind and even unperceived. Thus, in Lu. 7:37,38, while Jesus reclined in this manner, a woman that had been a sinner came to his feet

behind him, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head" (Barnes, p.241).

- e. They love the chief seats in the synagogues. These were the places which were considered as most prominent and conspicuous. "At the end of the synagogue building, opposite to the entrance, was the chest or ark containing the books of the law, and the seats near that end were the 'chief seats in the synagogue'" (McGarvey, p.196).
 - f. They love the greetings addressed to them in the marketplaces. There were open places in the city which were frequented by those who had something to sell or buy; all kinds of business transactions, judicial proceedings, and social conversations took place here. The marketplace was called the "agora" by the Greeks, and the "forum" by the Romans. There was such a place in every city.
 - 1) "The Pharisees delighted in the formal greetings and salutations which were here lavished on men of distinction by the fawning multitude" (ibid., p.197).
 - 2) "They were little men, puffed up with their supposed learning, parading like peacocks before the admiring eyes of their followers, and inwardly gloating over titles of honor and deference. Such empty superficiality blinded the Pharisees and will also blind all others in all places in all times who become infected with the deadly virus of human pride" (Coffman, p.363).
4. Verse 44: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."
- a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:27-28).
 - 1) "Jesus still has his eye on the wickedness of their hearts, but he now contrasts it, not with their care about tithing, nor with their legal cleanliness, but with their pretense of righteousness. While they maintained such outward conduct as gave them great credit with the people, like the beautifully whited sepulchres which were 'full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness,' they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (McGarvey, p.200).
 - 2) "It was a custom there to whitewash the sepulchres, which would be noticed by all; it is like our modern custom of keeping flowers or grass on the graves of loved ones. The graves are beautifully kept and adorned with costly monuments, but within they contain the decomposed bodies and foul odors arising from the decomposition. A sepulchre, or a corpse, was considered by the Jews unclean. (Num. 19:16.) The Pharisees went so far as to mark with lime or chalk the ground under which the sepulchral cave extended. How awful a figure to show the condition of these hypocrites" (Boles, p.452).
 - c. "The implications in such a comparison by the Lord are profound. The Pharisees, with all their pomp and glamour, earthly glory and prestige, outward beauty and ostentation, were, for all that, actually dead in the eyes of Jesus. They were dead spiritually and morally. Although their inward decay was concealed with an attractive veneer of political and social respectability, it was not hidden from the penetrating knowledge and vision of the Son of God, who knew their hearts" (Coffman, p.372).
 - d. Some early writers suggested that graves were whitewashed so that people might be able to see them and avoid coming into contact with them, thus to remain ceremonially clean (Num. 19:16). Others say that they whitewashed the tombs of important people.
 - e. Boles: "They were like graves or tombs that are hidden from view by age or the growth of grass or weeds and men passing over them are defiled. So people were spiritually defiled by these hypocrites, whose pretended righteousness hid from view their depraved character. These hidden graves would give ceremonial defilement for seven days. (Num. 19:16).

F. Luke 11:45-54: Woes Pronounced on the Lawyers.

1. Verses 45-46: "Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also. And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."
 - a. ASV: "And one of the lawyers answering saith unto him, Teacher, in saying this thou reproachest us also. And he said, Woe unto you lawyers also! for ye load men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."
 - b. Compare: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers" (Matt. 23:1-4).
 - c. The Lord was still at the temple, and apparently this whole exchange, recorded in Matthew 21:23 through the present chapter, took place in the same location. The Lord has addressed some pointed remarks toward his enemies and has answered their devious questions. He was able to utterly silence them with his incisive arguments and truth.
 - d. In the passage, Jesus speaks to his disciples and the great multitude assembled there, and in the presence of the scribes and Pharisees, for in Matthew 23:13, he addresses them with a series of severe rebukes. The Lord affirmed that the scribes and Pharisees "sit in Moses' seat." The scribes were those men who made copies of the Old Testament, and because they were well acquainted with its contents, also served as teachers of the Law. As the leading sect among the Jews, the Pharisees occupied positions of authority.
 - e. As Moses was the recognized teacher in his day, so the scribes and Pharisees served the nation as the acknowledged teachers of the Law at that present time. They were the prime source of education and information in Moses' Law. They had the authority to teach the Law; they did not have authority to add any man-made commands to the Law.
 - f. With the foregoing limitation in mind, the people are to give heed to do those things which were taught from the Law by the scribes and Pharisees. As long as they taught only those things which were taught in the Law, without perversion, addition or deletion, they were properly proclaiming God's truth, and the people were to observe and do. But these men were not content to stay with the truth; the Lord accused them time and again of perverting the law by their traditions (Matt. 15:1-14). And the example of these teachers is sadly lacking! They teach but they do not personally follow what they teach.
 - g. "The Pharisees did not practice what they taught, but their failure was no excuse for disobedience by those who knew God's will. The authority of God's word does not derive from the righteous life of the teacher but from the prior authority of God himself; although, of course, the righteous life of the teacher is always a strong encouragement to obedience. The evil and inconsistent life of the scribes and Pharisees was a strong deterrent to the acceptance of God's will in that day; and similar evil on the part of Christian teachers in all ages has the same hindering results" (Coffman, Matthew, p.361).
 - h. The binding of heavy burdens is a figure taken from the practice of binding the burdens to be carried, and putting them on an animal. The scribes and Pharisees often bound "grievous" burdens and required that they be borne by the Jews, while they would not attempt to bear the same onerous loads.
 - i. These "heavy burdens" were the traditions which they had added to the Law, for "although the law itself was a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear (Acts 15:10), it could not be said of the law that it was a burden which the *scribes* bound and laid on men's shoulders. They avoided the task of bearing these burdens themselves, not moving them with one of their fingers, by introducing a class of subtle distinctions like that of the *corban* (15:4-6), and those in reference to oaths (verses 16-22)" (McGarvey, pp.195f).
 2. Verses 47-48: "Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres."
-

- a. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets” (Matt. 23:29-31).
 - b. The woe was appropriate for these corrupt men; their ancestors had slain God’s prophets, but these evil ones provided “the tombstone.” They thought to exalt themselves above the wickedness of their fathers. The Lord is showing that if these men had been present during those ancient days, they also would have slain God’s prophets.
 - c. NKJ: “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’” [Luke 11:47-49].
3. Verse 49: “Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute.”
- a. Matthew’s account: “Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (23:34-39).
 - b. These men are the apostles and other inspired servants of the New Testament system (Eph. 3:5). He used titles and descriptions familiar to his Jewish auditors.
 - c. Many of the Jews heard the gospel beginning on Pentecost day, and became followers of Christ. But many, if not all of the evil men described in the chapter, would remain arrogantly opposed to Jesus. Here the Lord predicts their actions against these new prophets and their co-laborers.
 - d. Some of them they would kill and crucify; some would be scourged in their synagogues; and they would be persecuted from city to city. Acts tells of the death of Stephen and James; the Bible does not tell of any who were crucified. The Book of Acts and the Epistles relate various persecutions suffered by the apostles and other saints. Saul of Tarsus persecuted the saints from city to city, and received the same treatment from unbelievers after he himself became a Christian and an apostle.
 - e. "The wisdom of God" as used here does not refer to any book of the Old Testament; it has reference to Jesus as Paul says in 1 Cor. 1:30. Possibly it may mean that God in his wisdom said what Jesus now states; hence there is no reference to a previous revealed ‘saying.’ This wisdom of God now announced that God would send his prophets and apostles to them and that they would persecute and kill them” [Boles].
4. Verses 50-51: “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 unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.”
- a. Boles:
 - 1) This wisdom of God now announced that God would send his prophets and apostles to them and that they would persecute and kill them. The generation to which Jesus was speaking was no better than the generation that killed the prophets of God; the present generation was seeking to do even a greater crime than their fathers had done; hence, the condemnation that fell upon their fathers would come with greater force upon them.
 - 2) The sins of the fathers should be visited upon the children (Ex. 20:5), especially of that generation which sanctioned the sins of the past, and even went beyond them. Abel, the second son of Adam,
-

- was the righteous martyr, and the first recorded in the Bible, and Zachariah, the son of Jehoiada, is the last one recorded, according to the Jewish arrangement of the Old Testament. (2 Chron. 24:20-22.)
- b. "It shall be required of this generation." Consider what the Lord said about the destruction of Jerusalem:
 - 1) Matthew 24:15-21: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
 - 2) Matthew 24:33-35: "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 5. Verse 52: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."
 - a. Matthew records this statement also: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 12:13).
 - b. "The kingdom of God was preached in its preparatory stage; it had been presented in promise and prophecy, and now it was presented in its preparatory state, and these scribes and Pharisees, the religious guides of the people, were doing all that they could to keep the people from accepting him as the Messiah" (Boles, p.446).
 - c. Luke 11:52 gives a different figure, that of a key. There the Lord accused his enemies with having taken away the key of knowledge; they had not entered themselves and hindered (forbade) those who wanted to enter.
 - d. These men should have been among the first to accept the truth preached by Jesus, and thus could have encouraged a great many others to believe on him. Instead, they were the cause of many rejecting Christ, a consequence they will have an eternity to sorely regret.
 6. Verses 53-54: "And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "And when he was come out from thence, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press upon him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things; laying wait for him, to catch something out of his mouth."
 - 2) NKJ: "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."
 - b. Compare: "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk" (Matt. 22:15).
 - 1) The Pharisees connived together how they might entrap Jesus by getting him to say the wrong thing. They doubtless thought that their devious conference would not be known, but little did they know that it would be reported in God's word, to be read and discussed by multiplied millions unto the very end of time! All things are naked and opened to the eyes of heaven (Heb. 4:13).
 - 2) They were deliberately planning a scheme by which they could "entangle him in his talk." To "ensnare" (entangle) is a term used to describe the method by which a wild animal or bird was caught.
-

- 3) "Far from being humbled and reproved by those wonderful parables in which the Lord had held up, as in a mirror, the truth concerning themselves that they might see it and repent, the Pharisees were all the more ready to destroy him. Their first maneuver was to confront Christ with some questions from which, if they could, they would obtain words from the Master which they would twist or misquote, thus giving them some pretext for condemning him to death. They thought to do this through intermediaries while they remained in the background" (Coffman, Matt., p.350).
 - c. A crowd of angry men, composed of scribes and lawyers and friends of the Pharisee party, appear to have followed the Galilaean Teacher, whose words just spoken had publicly shown the estimation in which he held the great schools of religious thought which then in great measure guided public Jewish opinion. From henceforth there could be only one end to the unequal combat. The bold outspoken Teacher must, at all hazards, be put out of the way. [Pulpit Commentary].
-

Luke Chapter 12

A. Luke 12:1-12: Great Principles of the Gospel System:

1. Verse 1: “In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.”
 - b. Cambridge: “*When there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people.* Rather,—when the myriads of the multitude had suddenly assembled. It is evident that the noise of this disgraceful attack on our Lord had been heard. This scene was as it were the watershed of our Lord’s ministry in Galilee. At this period He had excited intense opposition among the religious authorities, but was still beloved and revered by the people. They therefore flocked together ... and their arrival hushed the unseemly and hostile vehemence of the Pharisees.”
 - c. Here is another reason why the Lord tried to avoid generating great multitudes of people. Luke tells us they *trode* upon each other. A large crowd can become unruly, especially those who have an excitable nature; deaths sometimes occur in such a case. We remember the great crowds which welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem but who a few days later were demanding his crucifixion!
 - d. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees; the Lord made other such statements:
 - 1) Matthew 16:6: “Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”
 - 2) Matthew 16:11-12: “How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?”
 - 3) Matthew 16:12: “Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”
 - 4) Mark 8:15: “And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.”
 - e. In our present verse, we are told that the leaven of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. Brother Coffman shows that the chapter is a well-organized sermon in which warnings are given:
 - 1) Warning against the leaven of the Pharisees (Luke 12:1-7).
 - 2) Warning against the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Luke 12:8-12).
 - 3) Warning against covetousness (Luke 12:13-21).
 - 4) Warning against anxieties (Luke 12:22-34).
 - 5) Warning against failure to "watch" (Luke 12:35-40).
 - 6) Warning against unfaithfulness (Luke 12:41-48).
 - 7) Warning against divisions due to God's word (Luke 12:49-53).
 - 8) Warning against ignoring the signs of the time (Luke 12:54-56).
 - 9) Warning against failure to make peace with God now (Luke 12:57-59).
2. Verse 2: “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”
 - a. Having mentioned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, our Lord stated that everything that is covered will be revealed. This is directed toward the teachings and practices of these evil men. Their outward show of piety and spirituality was merely a sham. He had described them as being similar to tombs which had been painted to look good, but the contents of the sepulchre was of a different nature entirely!
 - b. Boles: We have a parallel of this in Matt. 10:26-33. Jesus had warned them against the "leaven" or the hypocritical influence of these Pharisees; he now tells them that there is nothing covered up, whether false or true, that shall not be revealed. Jesus used here a proverbial saying which meant that hypocrisy would be unmasked, truth would be displayed and vindicated. The secret designs of his enemies would be made known, exposed to the light of truth, and condemned at the judgment. (1 Cor. 4:5; Eph. 5:13).

3. Verse 3: “Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.”
 - a. Boles: “Wherefore whatsoever ye have said—The thought in the preceding words is expanded here and applied to the words of the apostles. Whatever may be spoken privately, secretly, as in the darkness of night, or whispered as it were in the retired chambers, shall be made public. The roofs of their houses were flat and the people were accustomed to sitting on them in the evening and talking to each other in neighborly conversation. Hence whatever might be spoken in secret should be proclaimed from the housetop; this means that whatever may be told to them in secret or in the secret room should be proclaimed in public conversation on the top of their houses.
 - b. “The day would come when his estimate of this now popular teaching of the Pharisees would be found to have been correct. Its real nature, now hid, would be revealed and fully known and discredited; while, on the other hand, the words and teaching of his disciples, now listened to but by few, and those of seemingly little account, would become widely and generally known and listened to. Upon the housetops. These were flat, terrace-like roofs, and, the houses generally being low, one who spoke from them would easily be heard in the street beneath. ‘These words have a strong Syrian colouring. The Syrian house-top (in Matthew 10:27 and here) presents an image which has no sense in Asia Minor, or Greece, or Italy, or even at Antioch. The flat roofs cease at the mouth of the Orontes; Antioch itself has sloping roofs’ (Renan, ‘Les Evangiles,’ p. 262, note 1)” [Pulpit Commentary].
 - c. The foregoing quotations seem clear and accurate. Evil things said or done in private would be exposed before all—in the Judgment. But godly things said and done out of public view, will likewise be shown to everyone. The things which the Lord had taught the apostles privately, they would at the proper time proclaim for all to hear, learn, believe and obey. [Acts 2:1-47; Romans 10:13-18).
 - d. Compare: "Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops" (Matt. 10:26-27).
4. Verses 4-5: “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.”
 - a. NKJ: "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!"
 - b. The first thing listed in the seven graces of 2 Peter 1:5-7 is virtue (courage, manliness). If the apostles feared their opponents, the great message they had would not be proclaimed as the Lord intended. It was his will that everything he had taught them and those other truths which he would later reveal to them should be preached far and wide. But there were those who did not want the truth to be preached (Acts 4:13-18). If it was preached anyway, there were bitter consequences to face (Acts 5:17-18, 25-28,33,40-42). The apostles did not quail before the enemy.
 - 1) Acts 4:19-20: “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”
 - 2) Acts 5:29-32: “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”
 - c. All the things which the Lord had taught them privately were intended to be proclaimed publicly. The time was coming when the whole counsel of God, the fullness of the mystery of God's eternal plan, was to be reported boldly to all. The apostles were to have boldness in the face of opposition so that

- all those things they had heard from the Lord were disclosed fully. "They were not to allow persecution to suppress the word, but they were to carry it forth from privacy to publicity" (*ibid.*).
- d. "...The enemy will not punish men as good men, but will attempt to make it appear that they are bad and deserve punishment; this requires that the reputation be blackened by falsehood; hence, Jesus admonishes that his disciples fear not their calumny, for it shall all be revealed or made clear; the truth will surely come to light, and your commission is to reveal truth" (Boles, p.231).
 - e. The point of these verses is not that God will bring to light in the Judgment all things men did on earth. God will surely do that as the Bible elsewhere teaches, but this is not the present point. The Lord is simply saying that the time was at hand for the whole world to learn of God's wonderful plan of the gospel. It had been hidden through the centuries in the inscrutable counsel of the Almighty, but it was their great pleasure to present the fullness of that plan to the world (Eph. 3:1-11).
 - 1) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:9-12: "Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."
 - f. Even persecution was not to hinder the spread of this holy message. Persecution had the positive effect of (1) intensifying the zeal of the apostles, (2) arousing sympathy for them, and (3) spreading the saints abroad to many places where the message was even more broadly disseminated. But before this could be done, the apostles had to endure faithfully the opposition they faced.
 - g. The Greek word translated "hell" is Gehenna—the place of eternal punishment. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). Coffman: "After he hath killed ... Do these words then have reference to God's KILLING? In a sense, they do. "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Hebrews 9:27); and that appointment is surely of God. It is a failure to see this which leads some to see Satan as the one to be feared; but the whole thesis of the Bible is 'Fear God!'"
 - h. "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; literally, into Gehenna. This is simply Gee-hinnom, 'valley of Hinnom,' translated into Greek letters: This valley was situated in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and originally was noted for the infamous rites practiced there in the worship of Moloch, in the times of the idolatrous kings of Judah. King Josiah, to mark his abhorrence of the idol-rites, defiled it with corpses; fires were subsequently kindled to consume the putrefying matter and prevent pestilence. The once fair valley, thus successively defiled with hideous corrupting rites, by putrefying corpses, and then with blazing fires lit to consume what would otherwise have occasioned pestilence, was taken by rabbinical writers as a symbol for the place of torment, and is used not unfrequently as a synonym for 'hell.' The translators of the Authorized Version have done so here. The reminder is, after all, we need not fear men. When they have done their worst, they have only injured or tortured the perishable body. The One whom all have good reason to fear is God, whose power is not limited to this life, but extends through and beyond death" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - i. Matthew's parallel passage: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (10:28).
 - 1) The apostles were not to fear men but they must fear God. The worst that men can do is kill the body; God can "destroy" both body and soul in "Gehenna." There is a natural fear that Christians
-

- have of unbelievers. There was a greater danger posed by unbelievers of that day than that which is posed by unbelievers of our day. But great as that danger might have been (or be), the danger of not going is far greater: men can only kill the body, but God can punish disobedience in unquenchable, unending fire.
- 2) "Let the danger, then, of going be as great as it might be, the danger of refusing to go, or of turning back, is still greater. As a mere choice of evils, the most cruel persecution is to be patiently endured in preference to neglect of duty to God" (McGarvey, p.93).
 - 3) "Materialists are wont to catch at the word *destroy* in this place, as proof that the soul can be annihilated. But in doing so they ascribe to the term *destroy* a sense which it does not bear, and they overlook the fact that this passage utterly refutes the doctrine that the soul dies with the body. Jesus says, 'Fear not them who kill the body, but *can not kill the soul,*' but if the soul dies with the body, then he who kills the body kills the soul too, and can not avoid killing it. To destroy, is not to annihilate, but to bring to ruin; and the soul and body are brought to ruin when they are cast into hell" (*ibid.*).
 - 4) Destroy (*apollumi*): "a strengthened form of *ollumi*, signifies to destroy utterly; in Middle Voice, to perish. The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being" (Vine, p.302). This definition is born out by its usage in the New Testament.
 - a) Matthew 10:6: "But go rather to the **lost** sheep of the house of Israel."
 - b) Luke 5:37: "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall **perish.**"
 - c) Luke 15:4,6: "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he **lose** one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is **lost**, until he find it?...And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was **lost.**"
 - d) Luke 15:24: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was **lost**, and is found. And they began to be merry."
 - e) John 6:27: "Labour not for the meat which **perisheth**, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."
 - f) 1 Peter 1:7: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that **perisheth**, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."
 - 5) "As the body and soul both are to be destroyed in hell, hell (gehenna) can not belong to the intermediate state, but to that state which follows the reunion of body and soul at the resurrection. Hell, then, lies beyond the final judgment' (McGarvey p.93). "...Gehenna, or the Valley of Hinnon, was used by Christ to describe the place of eternal punishment of the wicked. Whatever metaphor was employed, Christ left no doubt of the reality and dreadful nature of that punishment" (Coffman, p.144). "Gehenna" is used 12 times in the New Testament; Christ uses it 11 times; it is also used in James 3:6.
 - 6) "Here we have a recognition of the natural immortality of the soul, which cannot be killed by men; and of the mortality of the body which may be killed: whence we learn that the resurrection of the dead is a resurrection of the flesh; for, unless it were raised again, it would be impossible for the flesh to be 'killed in hell'" (Coffman, pp.143f).
5. Verses 6-7: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."
- a. NKJ: "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."
-

- b. Compare: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:29-1).
 - c. There is no discrepancy in the prices of the sparrows. At one place or time, five of these birds could be bought for two copper coins; at another place or time, the price of two sparrows sold for on coin. Sixty years ago, one could buy sparrows on the Italian marketplaces for a small price; these birds were to be cooked [some way] and served between to pieces of bread.
 - d. Sparrows were plentiful in Palestine, as they are in our part of the world. They were common and thus cheap in price. But the Lord stated that even one of these "insignificant" birds were noticed by their Maker when they fell to the ground. His people are of vastly greater worth to the Father.
 - e. Can anyone with a full head of hair literally count the individual strands? The best that one could do would be to estimate their number. Do we notice when a single hair falls? The statement of the verse indicates that God can know how many hairs we have! His interest in us includes even this minute item. "The proof that God does actually watch over the tiniest citizens in his universe is seen in the fact that the sparrows one sees now are the descendants of sparrows which have lived upon earth for uncounted thousands of years....Reference to numbering the hairs of the head suggests the infinite detail and solicitude of that loving care lavished by the Father upon his human creation" (Coffman, p.144).
6. Verses 8-9: "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."
- a. Compare: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).
 - b. As Heaven knows all about the sparrows and the hairs of our head, our inner purity and godliness are fully known also. Why should a faithful Christian live in terror of even powerful men?
 - c. Here is a further reason the Lord gives for being fearless before enemies of the faith: Christ will confess before the Father those who fearlessly confess him before men, and will deny before the Father those who fearfully deny him before men. "To confess Jesus is to make him the object of our faith and life; it is to own him as a Savior; it is to honor him in the life; it is to espouse his cause and to face opposition and reproach for his sake. Those who do this he will honor as his friends before the Father" (Boles, p.233).
 - d. Confession is a basic part of the plan of salvation:
 - 1) Romans 10:10: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
 - 2) Acts 8:36-38: "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 - e. When one concludes his primary obedience to the gospel, it is then that his name is inscribed in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 20:15; 21:27; Phil. 4:3). It is called the "good confession" (1 Tim. 6:12-13), and for good reason:
 - 1) Christ made it; it led him to the cross:
 - a) Mark 14:62: "And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."
 - b) John 19:7: "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God."
-

- 2) God made it audibly from heaven:
 - a) Matthew 3:17: "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - b) Matthew 17:5: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."
 - c) John 12:27-30: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."
 - 3) All men will eventually make it: "And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11).
 - 4) Peter made it and was blessed: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:16-18).
 - 5) Matthew 10:33 is the negative of the preceding verse. "...It is not likely that denial of Christ is limited to any formal, blasphemous remark but pertains to all godless words (Titus 1:16)" (Coffman, p.146). Although Peter confessed the great truth about Jesus' true identity and nature (Matt. 16:16), yet he denied the Lord three times following the Lord's arrest (Matt. 26:69-75). We are to confess Christ when we obey the gospel, and continue to confess him in our words and deeds while we live for him.
 - f. John 12:42-43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."
 7. Verse 10: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven."
 - a. Compare:
 - 1) "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).
 - 2) "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: **Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit**" (Mark 3:22-30).
 - b. The Lord's enemies could not deny that he had cast out demons. The miracles he had just done were obvious to the vast audience, and they would have been foolish to deny their reality. But how could the enemies counteract his expelling the demons from those who were thus afflicted? They may have thought that their argument of this verse would suffice, but Christ was able to turn it to their own dismay!
-

- 1) The scribes who made this faulty argument had come from Jerusalem. "Matthew gives the fullest report of this discussion, but Mark here furnishes an item which Matthew omits. It was not some of the enemies of Jesus in Galilee, but shrewd and cultivated scribes from Jerusalem, who suggested that he cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub" (McGarvey).
 - 2) Neither God nor Satan can logically work at cross purposes in their very distinct operations. God does not do so and the devil also knows not to do so. The best these enemies of truth could offer was mere sophistry.
 - 3) Christ came to strip Satan of his power, including the power to afflict humanity with his demons (Matt. 12:29; Luke 11:20-33; Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:25-26). He was successful!
 - 4) With the end of the age of miracles, demon-possession and the power to expel demons ended. There is no proof of demons taking over anyone today. The burden of proof is on one who claims that the problem still exists in the world. Zechariah (13:2) connected the end of unclean spirits with the opening of the fountain (verse 1) and the ending of prophets; since both of these others have occurred, the unclean spirits have been taken away.
- c. The Lord is saying in effect that there is a limit to divine mercy. There are some things [conditions] which are unforgivable.
- 1) Hebrews 6:4-6: "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame."
 - 2) 2 Peter 2:20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
 - 3) 1 John 5:16: "If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."
- d. What does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit? To blaspheme means to offer injurious speech against someone or some thing. "Rail at or revile" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.131). It is used of those who railed at Christ (Matt. 27:39; Mark 15:29; Luke 22:65); of those who speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things (Matt. 9:3; Mark 3:26; Rom. 2:24). To blaspheme the Holy Spirit is thus to speak evil against him, to offer contemptuous words toward him.
- 1) Why is it said to be more severe to blaspheme the Holy Spirit than to thus speak against the Father or the Son? It is not because he is more important, more powerful, or more holy than they are. They are equal in all things except authority (John 10:30).
 - 2) Each member of the Godhead is referred to in the Scriptures as "God" (Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 1:8).
 - 3) In authority, the Father reigns supreme for he who sends is greater than he who is sent (cf. Jn. 13:16). The Father sent Christ (John 3:17-18); Christ sent the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26).
 - 4) Christ plainly stated that the Father is greater than he (John 14:28). Since they are equal in all things (except authority), it is not more sinful to *speak* against the Spirit than against the Father or the Son. To *blaspheme* the Spirit must involve something else.
- e. Salvation was not limited to only a few, but was intended for all. Christ shed his blood for all men:
- 1) Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
 - 2) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
-

- 3) 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."
 - 4) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 2:4-5: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
- f. But God's patience has a limit:
- 1) 2 Peter 3:8-10: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, 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 the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
 - 2) Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."
 - 3) Jeremiah 7:16: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee."
 - 4) Hosea 4:17: "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."
 - 5) Romans 1:28: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."
- g. Man can grow so hard that God's truth, and thus his grace, will have no proper effect on him:
- 1) Romans 5:21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might **grace reign through righteousness** unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and **worketh righteousness**, is accepted with him."
 - 3) Psalm 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."
 - 4) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: **he that doeth righteousness is righteous**, even as he is righteous."
 - 5) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - 6) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - 7) Ephesians 4:18-19: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling **have given themselves over unto lasciviousness**, to work all uncleanness with greediness."
 - 8) 1 Timothy 4:2: "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their **conscience seared with a hot iron.**"
- h. To blaspheme means to speak impiously, irreverently and reproachfully against; the Pharisees did this. "But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Matt. 12:24). They were blaspheming Christ as much as they were the Spirit (cf. 12:28). They were primarily rejecting what Christ taught: his miracles proved his message, and they rejected this miracle as coming from God. When one rejects what Christ taught, he is rejecting Christ and the Father who sent him (Luke 10:16). The message Christ taught originated with God, and was conveyed without error to men beginning at Pentecost by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; 14:37). The Holy Spirit caused that same message to be recorded by inspiration as the New Testament.
- 1) When one denies, rejects, treats with contempt, that Spirit-given message, he is blaspheming the Holy Spirit who gave that message. There will be no hope for such a one who remains in that condition of heart, for he has shunned the final offer of salvation available to mankind (Jude 3; Heb. 10:23-31; Acts 4:11-12). This is the only offer being extended today, and after it there will be no other.

- 2) Illustration: A man fell into a river which was rushing toward a great waterfall. Someone threw him a rope in order for him to grasp and be drawn to safety; he refused the offer. Farther downstream, another person cast him another rope which he likewise ignored. As he drew nearer the cataract, a third man threw him another rope, the last one to be offered. If he refuses this rope, there is no hope of escape.
- 3) God, through the centuries pleaded with mankind by the prophets, a plea that was mostly ignored. During his personal ministry, Christ pleaded with the Jews; his pleas were shunned by the majority. Finally, the Holy Spirit revealed (by the edict and power of God) the gospel (John 16:12-14; 8:32; Acts 2:1ff; 1 Cor. 2:9-14; Jude 3). Those who accept the offer will be saved; those who reject it have forfeited their only hope. But can one, who at one time utterly shunned the message of the Spirit, later change his mind and receive salvation? Yes, if he is willing and able to meet the gospel conditions.
 - i. The sin of blaspheming the Spirit is not a single act but a sin of disposition. It is developed gradually. One grieves the Spirit (Eph. 4:30) by not living right. One resists the Spirit (Acts 7:51) when he resists the word and refuses to believe it. One quenches the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19; cf. Heb. 10:29) when he disputes, denies, opposes, rejects, hates, perverts, and refuses to obey the word of God. The result is a hard heart on which the Spirit-given word has no effect since the individual has rejected that word.
 - 1) John 12:39-40: "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."
 - 2) Hebrews 6:4-6: "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:26-29: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"
 - 4) One can get himself into such a state of hardheartedness that he will not and cannot accept the gospel; but if he can muster a change in his attitude of heart, he could receive salvation. Many get themselves into such a deep state of rebellion and hardness that they cannot or will not obey the gospel. This is the type of person the Lord describes as a blasphemer of the Holy Spirit.
 - j. Examples of blaspheming the Holy spirit are given in the New Testament:
 - 1) Acts 13:44-46: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
 - 2) Acts 28:24-28: "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it."

- 3) Compare these verses with Proverbs 1:24-28: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."
 - 4) We can know if we have committed this sin. If we hate the truth, reject it and refuse to believe and obey it, we are guilty. If we are concerned about whether we have committed this sin, that is a sure sign we have not!
8. Verses 11-12: "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."
- a. Compare: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11).
 - 1) *Take no thought beforehand*. This phrase "denotes more than 'to be anxious'—it is in the Greek, *melancholy*, and refers to a state of despondence, which reflects on the providence of God....It exhorts the disciples to that which would pacify their minds in the midst of a world of uncertainties, and any forebodings that would divert this singleness of mind is the forbidden anxiety" (Wallace, p.73). When the KJV was made, "thought" was the proper word, as is indicated by various English writers of the time.
 - 2) McGarvey gives the following quotes (p.67): "Harris, an alderman in London, was put in trouble and died with *thought* and anxiety before his business came to an end" (Bacon). 'In five hundred years only two queens have died in childbirth. Queen Catherine Parr died rather of *thought*' (Sommers Tracts). 'These examples illustrate the expression as used by our translators who were contemporaries of Shakespeare. It expresses, not the mental act of thinking, but the state of feeling which results from a despondent view of the future.'
 - b. When the apostles were arrested and brought before religious or civil authorities on account of what they had preached, they were told not to be anxious or fearful; the Holy Spirit would provide them with the proper response to the charges brought against them. A study of the Book of Acts reveals several such instances, including these three cases:
 - 1) Acts 4:5-12: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 2) Acts 5:25-32: "Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our

fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

- 3) Acts 23:1-10: “And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.”

B. Luke 12:13-21: Beware of Covetousness.

1. Verses 13-14: “And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?”
 - a. “This man wanted a decision from Jesus against his brother. The law of Moses (Deut. 21:17) divided the estate, giving the elder brother two-thirds and the younger one-third. Some think that this was the younger brother who was complaining; others think that it was the older brother who had not received his two-thirds according to the law. The man probably had a just claim, or he would not have appealed to one so well known to oppose injustice as Jesus” (Boles).
 - b. Jesus possessed no civil legal authority to make decision about such matters. No one had made him a civil judge. His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). Where Christians live, they are under the local, state, or federal laws; these are the proper authorities for make such rulings.
 - c. In a local church, being served by an eldership, there are some situations which deal with problems between certain members, in which these men can offer solutions: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican: (Matt. 18:15-17).
 - 1) If he does not repent even after these two efforts, tell it to the church. These words were spoken prior to the establishment of the Lord's church, but it was given with the coming of the church in mind. It was prospective in nature, and would have its main fulfillment only after the church came into actual being. "The rule of procedure is given only for cases of personal offense, where one individual has sinned against another. We are to learn from other portions of the New Testament how to deal with offenses of other kinds" (McGarvey, p.159).
 - 2) The purpose of these procedures is to save an erring saint. It is not for the purpose of punishing him or in exacting vengeance. If he still refuses to repent, let him be to you as the heathen and publicans were to the Jews: "He is to be avoided; yet he is entitled to the earnest good will, and all the offices of humanity; the faithful disciples of Christ are to have no religious communion with him until he repents. (1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Cor. 2:6,7; 2 Thess. 3:14,15)" (Boles, p.377).

- 3) "When one feels wronged by another in the church, the temptation is for him to seek out some personal friend or confidant, and to elaborate the real or fancied wrong by embellishing it with every possible coloring and emphasis, thus spreading hate against the offending party. Telling the elders, the deacons, or the preacher, or anyone else, of the evil detected in another is wrong (till after the first admonition); and even after the first admonition, the greatest number to be acquainted with it is two others (see verse 16). *Go to the offender first!* That is God's commandment! Those who depart from it, preferring some other way, do so at their eternal peril" (Coffman p.283).
- d. Paul addresses the matter of civil suits between brethren in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."
- 1) Other versions on verse 4:
- a) "If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?" (ASV).
 - b) "If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?" (NKJ).
- 2) The ASV renders this verse in the form of a question: "If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?" This may be intended as a reproach to the members who sought to resolve their problems before heathen tribunals. That is the point of the context. Paul is not telling them to seek out the least qualified among their number to settle their differences, for in the next verse he tells them to find a wise man from their ranks to solve the problems.
- 3) The brethren could have asked those who possessed a pertinent spiritual gift to exercise his special power to decided the issue; some of those gifts would have enabled the individual to reach the proper decision: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:8-10).
- 4) They were boastful over their superior knowledge and attainments and spiritual gifts; could they not find at least one man with sufficient wisdom to settle their inner conflicts? The question implies an affirmative answer. Paul shames them for their unholy practice of exposing the Lord's cause to the contempt of the unbelievers.
- 5) Their disputes may have concerned such things as an inheritance, property lines, or negligent injuries. Whatever the nature of the strife, the scriptural method of handling the problem is to settle it among saints. What is wrong with going before civil authorities with a problem between brethren? The fact that the church's trouble is unveiled in public, which would cause the gospel to be denigrated. Lying behind that is the breakdown of brotherly love to the point where the difficulty cannot be solved within the church or between the individuals.
2. Verse 15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
- a. Notice what listed in this passage: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye,
-

- blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23). Covetousness is named along with these other atrocious sins.
- b. Covetousness:
 - 1) Ephesians 5:3: “But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.”
 - 2) Colossians 3:5: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”
 - 3) Henry: “*pleonexiai*—immoderate desires of more of the wealth of the world, and the gratifications of sense, and still more, still crying, Give, give. Hence we read of a heart exercised with covetous practices, 2 Peter 2:14.
 - 4) Compare: “Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: **an heart they have exercised with covetous practices**; cursed children” (2 Pet. 2:14).
 - 5) Vine: *pleonexia* (NT:4124), "covetousness," lit., "a desire to have more" (*pleon*, "more," **echo**, "to have"), always in a bad sense, is used in a general way in Mark 7:22 (plural, lit., "covetings," I. e., various ways in which "covetousness" shows itself); Rom 1:29; Eph 5:3; 1 Thess 2:5. Elsewhere it is used, (a) of material possessions, Luke 12:15; 2 Peter 2:3; 2 Cor 9:5 (RV, "extortion"), lit., "as (a matter of) extortion" I. e., a gift which betrays the giver's unwillingness to bestow what is due; (b) of sensuality, Eph 4:19, "greediness"; Col 3:5 (where it is called "idolatry"); 2 Peter 2:14 (KJV, "covetous practices").
 - 6) 1 Timothy 6:17-18: “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.”
 - c. Pulpit Commentary: The older authorities read, "beware of every kind of covetousness." No vice is more terribly illustrated in the Old Testament story than this. Prominent illustrations of ruin overtaking the covetous man, even in this life, are Balaam, Achan, and Gehazi. Has not this ever been one of the besetting sins of the chosen race, then as now, now as then? Jesus, as the Reader of hearts, saw what was at the bottom of the question: greed, rather than a fiery indignation at a wrong endured. "A man's life." His true life, would be a fair paraphrase of the Greek word used here. The Master's own life, landless, homeless, penniless, illustrated nobly these words. That life, as far as earth was concerned, was his deliberate choice. The world, Christian as well as pagan, in each succeeding age, with a remarkable agreement, utterly declines to recognize the great Teacher's view of life here. To make his meaning perfectly clear, the Lord told them the following parable-story, which reads like an experience or memory of something which had actually happened.
 - d. Boles: “This gave Jesus an occasion to give a warning against the sin of covetousness; the eager request of the man is made the occasion for this warning. ‘Covetousness’ means greedy and unlawful desire for anything; Jesus warns against ‘all covetousness,’ against all kinds and degrees of greediness or grasping for gain; covetousness is greedily keeping one's own as well as desiring and grasping for the things of others. It takes the affections and the heart which belong to God (Col. 3:5), and unites with it trust in uncertain riches (1 Tim. 6:17.)
3. Verses 16-19: “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”
 - a. The parable the Lord next relates illustrates the danger of being covetous. It caused the rich man of the story to lose his soul!
 - b. This rich farmer’s land brought forth plentifully; he had too little space in which to store his harvests. He thought it necessary to tear down his present storage places and build greater barns. In an ordinary case, this could be excellent planning, but not in the case at hand.
-

- c. He looked on the great productions of his land and decided to place his sudden bounty in these new, nicer barns, and to say to himself: "Soul, thou hast much good laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."
4. Verses 20-21: "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."
 - a. The Lord described this man and others like him as having laid up treasures for himself, but it not rich toward God.
 - 1) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - 2) Treasures in heaven are safe. These are spiritual in nature and eternal in scope; they are **reserved** in heaven. "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:3-5).
 - b. "The security of such treasures against the moth and the rust and the thieves which threaten earthly possessions is presented as a motive to obedience. The contrast is very striking. No man who pauses a single moment for reflection can fail to realize it" (McGarvey, p.66).
 - c. These heavenly treasures are for the individual, not for someone else; they are yours and no one can deprive you of them without your cooperation. "All that one gives or does for the kingdom of God will accrue to his eternal credit. Not even a cup of cold water will lose its reward (Matt. 10:42)" (Coffman, p.86).
- C. Luke 12:22-30: Christ Teaches Against Anxiety.
 1. Verses 22-23: "And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment."
 - a. "A better rendering for 'Take no thought' is 'Be not anxious about.' This, too, suggests a more practical lesson. 'What ye shall eat.' How repeatedly in the Master's sermons do we find the reminder against the being careful about eating! We know from pagan writers in this age how gluttony, in its coarser and more refined forms, was among the more notorious evils of Roman society in Italy and in the provinces. This passion for the table more or less affected all classes in the empire" [Pulpit Commentary].
 - b. The Lord is not forbidding foresight and prudence.
 - 1) 2 Thessalonians 3:10: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
 - c. *What shall we eat or drink, or what shall we put on?* The greatest needs of the body are food, clothing, and shelter. The provision of these is a great concern of mankind. There are many *spongers* and sluggards who apparently have no concern about these; but their lives have no trust in the Lord to provide them. This kind is not ashamed to ask and even demand from you these essentials; many of them have the notion that you owe it to them. A faithful Christian has no logical reason to be anxious over the basic essentials, as the Lord concludes at the end of Matthew six.
 - d. The first argument he offers why we should not be anxious is given in the truth he states: life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. The life God gave us is far more important than meat (a general name for food when the KJV was made), and clothing. "Jesus' argument is that God who

- made man and gave him life will also provide him with the means to sustain it, reinforcing his argument by the fact that God does this very thing for the lower creation" (Coffman, p.88). God cannot be accused of caring for the birds and neglecting his children. God who gave the greater gifts (life and body) will also provide the lesser gifts (food and clothing).
2. Verse 24: "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?"
 - a. "The mystery of *how* God cares for the myriads of his creatures both great and small is an unfailing marvel. Anyone familiar with wild life is aware of the remarkable continuation of every species from age to age....The weight of our Lord's argument here is overwhelming when it is recalled that of all God's creatures, from insects to the great animals of the forest, man alone is constantly anxious about his survival on the planet. What a glimpse this gives of the ruin and wretchedness that have resulted from man's sin and rebellion against his Maker. Anxiety, that sure corollary of sin committed, has invaded man's every thought, destroyed his serenity, and sent him scurrying in all directions; and, most significantly, anxiety only makes things worse" (Coffman, p.88). Some unknown author said, "The worst misfortunes are those that never arrive."
 - b. The birds do not sow, reap or store; they merely gather what God has provided. Yet there is no suggestion of anxiety on their part about their future provisions. God gave them certain natural functions to fulfill; they perfectly accomplish these duties and do so without worry. God provided the means, but they must do the gathering.
 - c. Man alone has the ability and knowledge to sow, reap, and store; he has been given certain functions to perform for his Creator and fellowman. But he often causes pain to himself unnecessarily by being anxious about whether he will have sufficient to survive. In God's general providence exercised through the laws of nature, he takes proper care of the lower creatures. In his special providence he promises to take full and proper care of his own people (Ps. 55:22; 37:25; Ps. 23; Heb. 13:5-6).
 - d. Therefore, why should a faithful child of God be filled with anxiety? We are of much greater importance than the birds. Luke 12:22-30; Mark 10:29-30; Matthew 10:29-31.
 3. Verses 25-26: "And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?"
 - a. This is the third reason why a faithful saint should not worry. What good can worry accomplish? By being anxious, can you make yourself taller?
 - b. Worry deprives us of needed strength with which we could act to solve the problem about which we are concerned. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7, ASV).
 4. Verses 27:28: "Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?"
 - a. The lilies do not toil or spin in order to produce their marvelous attire. God placed in the earth the ingredients necessary and provided the sunshine and rain; the lilies are incapable of worry over whether there will be sufficient of either of these. Solomon was the most glamorous of Israel's kings because of his immense treasures (cf. 1 Kings 10). Yet the Lord, who saw Solomon in all his splendor, and was a perfect judge of such matters, declared that the glorious beauty of the lilies of the field exceeded that of Solomon. The strength of the argument is obvious.
 - b. Vine says there are 90 genera and 243 species of grass in Palestine or Syria (p.172). The timber had long since been used up in the land, so the Jews resorted to burning grass (including the flowering kinds) in their ovens. Barnes reports that the most common ovens, "the one here probably referred to, was made by excavating the earth 2½ feet in diameter, and from 5 to 6 feet deep. This kind of oven still exists in Persia. The bottom was paved with stones. It was heated by putting wood or dry grass
-

into the oven, and, when heated, the ashes were removed and the bread was placed on the heated stones" (p.73). [Barnes lived from 1798-1870].

- c. The lilies lived and added their beauty to the earth only for a season, and they were destined to be burned in the ovens in many cases; yet God saw fit to clothe them with splendor for that brief span. Since he thus clothed them with such beauty and otherwise cared for their needs, shall he not also provide for his own children? Who would contend to the contrary! One who can observe God's providential provision for the lower creation and still is anxious and despondent over his future needs, is showing distrust (lack of faith) in God.
5. Verses 29-30: "And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things."
- a. The fifth and sixth statements are given in this passage. In view of the foregoing information, Christ admonishes us to be not anxious concerning our food, drink, and clothing.
 - b. The Gentiles (all those who are not a part of the nation of Israel) were wont to be anxious over these things. But the Father of the faithful knows what all the needs of his people are. Thus, he implies he will provide those needs.

B. Luke 12:31-40: Seek the Kingdom and Spiritual Treasures.

1. Verses 31-32: "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."
 - a. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Notice that Matthew also adds the "righteousness of God."
 - b. This is the key verse in the context. If one wants to have the essentials just named, let him meet the requirements of this verse. *Seek* denotes an active, diligent search and inquiry, required of both alien and saint, and which characterized our Lord.
 - 1) Luke 13:24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
 - 2) John 9:4: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - 4) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - 5) Philippians 2:12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
 - 6) 2 Timothy 2:3-4: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."
 - 7) Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - c. Matthew's account uses the word *first*, which gives the order of our diligent search. Above all things, that which Christ here identifies are to be preeminent in our activities of life. Nothing is to equal or to surpass in importance the items he names; these are to be first in importance and in the order of our searching.
 - d. The kingdom of God is the church of Christ (Matt. 16;16-19; Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:2-3; 1 Tim. 3:15; Acts 2; Col. 1:13-14; Eph. 1:3; Eph. 5). The common notion of modern religious men is that the church is

- unimportant. They fail to see that the church and the kingdom are one and the same. If they could learn this truth, then the Lord's statement would become as meaningful to them as it is to us. It is of such great importance that it must be placed first in our priorities. If one puts the church first, will he stay away from the assemblies? Will he refuse to give? Will he work for it?
- e. God's righteousness is placed on the same plane as the kingdom. They are joined by the conjunction *and*. It is in the church that we are able to work righteousness and be fully obedient to the will of God. If we do thus, then all these things (food, clothing, etc.) will be thrown in as an added blessing. The primary blessings are spiritual; these material essentials are given *to boot* [as per older generations].
 - f. *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* "Jesus here uses a term of endearment; and speaks words of love and tenderness to them. They are called 'little flock'; that is, my sheep and my lambs; they are encouraged not to fear. Jesus is a Good Shepherd, and will take care of his flock. It is his delight to 'give you the kingdom.' Disciple are not to worry about their spiritual food and support; they are a little flock, helpless in a great world; yet how assuring when Jesus says to them 'fear not'! The kingdom had not at this time been established; hence, he could speak of it in the future; that it would be given to them. He means his church with its privileges and blessings; they are encouraged to seek his kingdom, and now he promises that it shall be given to them. The apostles became the charter members of that kingdom" (Boles).
2. Verses 33-34: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - a. Coffman: There is no suggestion here that heaven can be purchased; but benevolence is laid down as a prime characteristic of all who would enter heaven. Not even fear of poverty should prevent almsgiving. One is almost compelled to seek a relative meaning here. There have appeared, historically, some extremely literal interpretations of this place; and they have usually taken one or another of two forms: asceticism, or so-called Christian communism; but both of these systems are unadaptable to human nature....This is a direction not given to all the multitude; and much less is it a standing rule for all Christians, neither to the apostles; for they had nothing to sell, having left it all before.
 - b. Boles: "The disciples of Christ should not hoard their riches but should distribute to those who have need. Christians of the early church sold their possessions and gave to such as had need; earthly provision bags or purses, like the possessions, become old and worthless; the bags would decay with the wealth that it contained. Christians should regard that which they hold as God's, not their own; they are only stewards for God. This does not mean that a Christian should give up everything that he has to those who are not trying to serve God; neither does it mean that a Christian should give up what he has to those who are living a life of idleness and wickedness. Lazy, useless, trifling beggars are not to be supported by Christians giving up what they have to them; Christians must use what they have to the glory of God, which means that it must be used to accomplish the greatest good. Instead of laying up treasures on earth, Christians are to lay them up in heaven. Treasures on earth contained all kinds of material possessions; thieves then as now would break through and steal; moths would consume and destroy some of the wealth."
 - c. Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 3. Verses 35-36: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately."
 - a. NKJ: "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 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. 37 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. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 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. 40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”
- b. Matthew’s account of the Ten Virgins [25:1-13] gives the full story of this passage. The picture has to do with the friends of the bridegroom who wait for his appearance.
 - 1) The kingdom of heaven is compared with the ancient marriage customs. "According to Jewish custom the bridegroom went to the house of his father-in-law to receive his bride, leaving at his own house a company of virgins, who were to come out with lanterns or torches to meet him on his arrival, and to escort him into the house. The ten virgins of this parable were to perform this pleasant service" (McGarvey, p.215).
 - 2) “The Jewish marriages and feasts which followed them were celebrated at night; the newly married couple went from the house of the bride in procession after nightfall accompanied by attendants bearing torches to light the way; another party went forth to meet them with torches and accompanied them to the house of the bridegroom where a feast was prepared. 'Lamps' were made then like torches; they were made by wrapping up a roll of linen and inserting it in a mould of copper or earthenware fixed to a handle of wood. It contained very little oil, and the linen from time to time had to be supplied with fresh oil from another vessel which was carried in the other hand" (Boles, p.477). The virgins of the waiting party must have an extra supply of oil in case the bridegroom was long in coming.
 - c. The comparison between the kingdom and this custom lies in the waiting of the virgins for the return of the bridegroom (one who has newly taken a wife). In other settings the church is said to be the bride of Christ, but in this present instance, nothing is said of the bride; the emphasis is on the virgins who were waiting for the return of the bridegroom. These ten virgins represent members of the Lord's kingdom.
 - d. Christ in our text admonishes his disciples to be dressed and to have their lights burning, alert and ready for the coming of the bridegroom. In the parable of Matthew’s account, five of the virgins were prepared, and the other five were not.
4. Verses 37-38: “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.”
- a. Coffman:
 - 1) This parable forms a beautiful emphasis upon the warning against unreadiness and was apparently invented by the Saviour for the sermon of this occasion. If, at the Second Coming, the Lord's disciples should be found unprepared, their discomfiture would be complete. Just as the servants should gird themselves and remain watchful and busy until the lord returned, even if it was very late, in the same manner, Christians should remain busy and watchful throughout the time preceding the Second Coming
 - 2) Significantly, the absence of Jesus during the present dispensation is a time of joy for the Lord, "comparable to the festal delights of a wedding." [39] Furthermore, we need not be troubled by the allegations of some that "the disciples had little foundation for the idea at that time," [40] and their refusal for that reason to see the Second Advent in this parable. As Barclay stated quite flatly, "In its narrower sense, it refers to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ." [41]
 - 3) Indeed, there is hardly anything else to which it could refer. It is quite true, of course, that Jesus gave many teachings, the true meaning of which was not clear to the apostles until after the resurrection of Christ. Loins girded about ... is a reference to the loose, flowing garments, referred
-

to by Plummer as a fatal hindrance to activity. "Therefore, the command to be girded about means that believers should be ready to serve, ready for unhindered action in Christ's service." [42].

b. Boles:

- 1) Jesus encourages watchfulness by describing the happy condition of those servants who shall be thus found at his coming. Jesus uses very emphatic language in expressing these important truths. By their fidelity the servants become guests, waited upon by the lord himself. The condescension is great here; first the lord girds himself; next he causes them to recline at the table; then he comes forth to minister to their wants and wait upon them. In this he treats them not as servants, but as honored guests. Jesus gave an example of this when he washed the feet of his disciples. (John 13:4-8.)
 - 2) And if he shall come in the second watch,—The Romans divided the night into four watches; the first watch is not named here, as it would be too early to expect one from a wedding feast in that watch; the fourth is omitted, perhaps because it was unusual for one to return so late as that watch; the teaching of Jesus here is that all should be ready when the Lord comes. The time of his coming is uncertain. The master of the house does not know what hour the robber will come, or he would watch, and not allow him to dig through the earthen cover of his roof. At an earlier period the night had been divided into three equal parts or watches. Those servants are blessed who are awake, faithful to duty, and watching for the master.
5. Verses 39-40: "And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."
- a. Compare: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:42-47).
 - b. These plain words from the Lord are for his disciples to be watchful; this warning is undergirded with the affirmation that we do not know when his coming shall be. If another statement was needed from the Lord to the end that we might know that we cannot learn when his coming will be, this statement would be sufficient. Beware of time-setters!
 - c. "The comparison between the coming of Jesus and that of a thief is the more striking from the dissimilarity between the two characters. There is but one point of comparison—the uncertainty of the time of their coming. As the goodman of the house, had he known what hour the thief would come, would have watched and have prevented his house from being broken into, so we, by watching for the coming of the Son of man, may prevent it from finding us unprepared" (McGarvey, Matt., pp.214).
 - d. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."
-

C. Luke 12:41-48: Peter's Query and the Lord's Reply.

1. Verses 12:41-42: "Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?"
 - a. Peter may have been looking mainly to the reward promised rather than toward the warning of being ready for the return of the Lord.
 - b. Boles: "This entire paragraph from verse 22 to verse 40 had been addressed directly to his disciples; hence Peter asked this question. He wanted to know if Jesus meant the parable to belong to the disciples exclusively, or if it was general, belonging 'even unto all.' It seems that he knew that the disciples were included in the teaching, but he did not know whether it belonged to others. Peter's question gave occasion for the reply that Jesus now gave."
 - c. "Peter's question here referred evidently to the longer and more important parable-story, where the reward which the faithful watchers were to receive is mentioned (ver. 37). The grandeur of that reward seems deeply to have impressed the impulsive apostle. Some true conception of the heaven-life had entered into Peter's mind; we know, too, that now and again dimly Peter seemed to grasp the secret of his Master's awful Divinity" [Pulpit Commentary].
2. Verses 43-44: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath."
 - a. The warning of preparedness is given in the form of a picture of an unfaithful servant. A faithful and wise servant is one who, having been given responsibilities by his master, is found to have been trustworthy in discharging those duties. When the master returns from a journey, and finding the servant busy doing his work, will reward the servant richly.
 - b. But the servant is evil who says in his heart, "My master is long in returning." Thus, thinking he can do what he wills, he begins to mistreat the other servants, and eats and drinks with the drunkards. That servant will be found by his master in that state of rebellion, for he will return unexpectedly and punish him properly.
 - c. "In stating the punishment, Jesus passes from the figure to the reality, and merges the parable in the description: cutting him asunder (Mt. 24:51) terminates the parable which has been itself almost a description, and the description begins with appointing him his portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. At this point it may be well to remind the reader that all the warnings in reference to his second coming, given by Jesus in the preceding as well as in the following divisions of this discourse, are equally applicable to our departure to meet him. Whether he first comes to us, or we first go to him, the result will be the same, for as we are at death we will be at his coming, seeing that it is concerning the deeds done in the body that we will be judged. (2 Cor. 5:10)" (McGarvey, pp.214f).
3. Verses 45-46: "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."
 - a. Matthew 24:48-51: "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) "After blessing the faithful servant, Jesus then gives the other side; the unfaithful servant is described as one who said "in his heart" that his master would not return for some time, and began to treat the servants under him in a shameful and brutal way. He used the time which belonged to his master and the money which the master had left in his care eating and drinking; he even drank

to drunkenness; he spent his time in revelry. He took advantage of the absence of his master, betrayed the trust imposed in him, and proved himself unworthy of the position that he held.

- 2) "While the servant was in charge and beating his fellow servants and living an idle, drunken life, the master returned and saw his servant in the height of his folly. The master will punish with terrible affliction this unfaithful servant. This is a vivid picture of the sudden and terrible punishment that shall be brought upon the unfaithful servant. There is a wide contrast in the treatment of the unfaithful servant and the faithful one. "Cut him asunder" is an expression of fearful punishment. (1 Sam. 15:33; Dan. 2:5; 3:29; Heb. 11:37.)"
4. Verses 47-48: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."
 - a. This passage addresses the subject of degrees of punishment. In the eternal scheme of things, even a "light" beating is still awful; the culprit would still be separated from God, from heaven, from glory, from rest, from light, from the redeemed, and from eternal life.
 - b. It is clear that individuals have different levels of intelligence, of ability, of opportunity, and comprehension. Some are well-blessed in these and other matters. We have observed a grand old adage which says, "Ability plus opportunity equals responsibility." One who is severely retarded in the mind, is not punished when he does some criminal act. Society does what is necessary to protect itself from this irresponsible person. We do not hold such a one criminally responsible; God would not do so either.
 - c. There are questions on this which lie far beyond human perception.
 - 1) What about those who were born into a jungle tribe where savagery, brutality, slavery, murder, and false religion are commonly practiced? Our Lord's statement says, "Those who do not know will receive few stripes."
 - 2) What about the teenage girl who is enclosed in an arab's harem? She is bound for life to an adulterous master who does with her as he wills. The same principle evidently would apply to her.
 - 3) What about the people who were born into a heathen society, where the Bible is unknown? The same principle would apply.
 - d. The Gospel of Christ is still the only means of our souls' salvation (Rom. 1:16). Our obligation is to use every means possible to spread the knowledge of the gospel to every person on earth. Our brethren in the first century were able to extend that information to all lands (Col. 1:6, 23).
 - 1) Colossians 1:6: "Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."
 - 2) Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."
 - e. Those who know God's will and do not do it, will receive "many stripes." They will be punished with a greater penalty than those who live and die in ignorance. To whom much is given, much is required.
- D. Luke 12:49-53: The Gospel Can Have Opposite Effect to Different Individuals.
 1. Verse 49: "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?"
 - a. Compare: Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first" (Mark 10:28-31).
 - 1) Consider these passages:
 - a) Matthew 19:27-30: "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you,

That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”

- b) Luke 18:29-30: “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.”
 - b. Johnson: Peter, as usual, speaks for them all, saying, in substance, “We have done what this man would not: we have accepted the kingdom on the right terms at personal sacrifice.” The question, “What shall we have, therefore?” added in Matthew, is plainly implied here and in Luke. Here is a frank statement of self-seeking, even in self-renunciation; self-denial in the hope of direct returns. The apostles were still hoping that their special honors in the kingdom would make amends for everything. Yet in the words of Peter now there may be a tone of despair, in view of the depression of their prospects implied in the words just spoken: “What shall we have, what amends, if the kingdom is to be of this exacting and unambitious kind?” No concealment anywhere of the low spiritual tone of the disciples.“
 - c. Our fellow-saints during the first century faced severe hardship because they were followers of Christ. The Lord himself suffered at the hands of his enemies. So did the apostles. Stephen was stoned to death by a vicious mob. What was his crime? He presented truth that they disdained. The apostles were beaten and imprisoned; James was executed.
 - d. A large number of Jews and proselytes obeyed the gospel in Judaea; at the death of Stephen, a great persecution was directed against these Christians, and they were scattered abroad. In this and other times of cruel treatment, how could these faithful ones survive? They helped each other. Some were able to provide shelter, food and other assistance to the many.
 - e. But the warning lies in the solemn reservation, preserved by Mark alone — With persecutions. No easy way leads to these honors and rewards (2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 6:4-10). Even when outward persecution is not present, still the principle is the same: it is no easy way. The hundred-fold will not prevent the persecutions; but neither will the persecutions interfere with the coming of the hundred-fold.
 - f. The apostles of Christ had left their secular employment; some were fishermen; the others had given up their sources of income. They willingly left these in order to join the Lord's band of disciples. He who had been God's agent in the creation, would see that they were fed, clothed, and protected. Their reward would be far superior to anything they had forfeited of this world's goods. Peter's wife and children, and his mother-in-law, would have their necessities provided. Gospel preachers today leave secular positions offering even great benefits and pay, to preach the truth at low wages; they are often despised by even some members where they preach; their children shunned by the children of some of the members. They are apt to be “put out to pasture,” but they have to provide their own pasture.
 - g. So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life” (Mark 10:29-32, NKJ).
 - h. What one loses of this world is more than made up for in spiritual advantages in the Lord's church. Persecution is at hand, but we have the aid of many faithful Christians! And in the world to come, in eternity, Heaven and eternal life await!
2. Verse 50: “But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”
- a. NKJ: “But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!”
-

- b. Compare: "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able" (Matt. 20:22). Our Lord was speaking in this passage directly to James and John.
- 1) "They knew not what they were asking, because to sit on his right hand and on his left was far different from what they thought, and was to be obtained in a way of which they had no conception" (McGarvey, p.176). The very nature of the spiritual kingdom precluded the exaltation of anyone above all the rest of its citizens. All those who are part of this kingdom are on equal footing.
 - 2) "The Lord first informs them that they have no idea as to what they were asking. They thought in terms of a literal, earthly kingdom, and in terms of a king sitting upon a throne, and in terms of the men of rank and power sitting in those special places beside their king. They knew what they were asking in those terms, but did not realize that what they were asking would be impossible because it could not be realized in the kingdom that Jesus would head" (Bill Jackson, *Book of Matthew*, p.526).
- c. The Lord added, as a different figure for the same hardship, the question: "Are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am to receive?" "Jesus here paints by another striking word his coming sorrows and sufferings as if a great wave of the sea were burying him, in their confusion and uproar, as if he were to be drowned in a terrible baptism in them. (Psalm 42:7; 69:2; Luke 12:50.) This is a graphic picture of the agonies of the soul of Jesus, yielding to the tremendous tides of human sin, passion, hate, and rage, and sinking alone, out of sight, in the gloomy waves of death. Incidentally, we see what is meant by baptism; it is not a mere 'sprinkling' of suffering, but an overwhelming of suffering in death; so baptism in water is not a sprinkling, but is a dipping, submersing, or overwhelming, or burial in water" (Boles, *Matthew*, pp.404f).
3. Verses 51-53: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law."
- a. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:34-37).
 - 1) A man's foes shall be of his own household. William Tyndale was betrayed to his death by a "faithful" servant (Coffman, p.147). Judas betrayed Christ. "In nearly all quarrels, except those about religion, the members of the same family stand together, but in religious feuds the family circle is often broken, and its parts arrayed against each other. When a man abandons the religion of his ancestors his own kindred feel more keenly than others the shame which the world attaches to the act, and are exasperated against the supposed apostate in a degree proportionate to their nearness to him" (McGarvey, p.94).
 - 2) Religious differences put the disciple's faith to a strong test. He must decide whether he loves the Lord or his family member more. Christ will not take second place. He that loves father or mother more than he loves Christ is not worthy of the Lord. This verse is parallel and thus explains Luke 14:26. To hate, as used in Luke, means to love less.
 - b. It would sometimes be the case that when one obeyed the gospel, even the members of his own family would turn against him, and force him to leave home. This could be the case of a wife, or son or daughter. A new Christian could lose his employment, his business or some other source of his livelihood, his own house, his own property—and be exposed to rejection and danger. His close relatives would turn against him, but because he was a faithful saint, there would be countless houses
-

opened to him; although he was an outcast to his parents and siblings, there would be others in the household of faith who could more than replace those he had lost!

- c. Johnson [in Mark]: “But to the soul all that is given up for Christ shall be returned, and thus graciously multiplied. (The possible thoughts of the lad who gave up his loaves and fishes, John 6:9). The principle of self-sacrifice sweetens life instead of embittering it, and the experience of self-denial surprises the soul with unthought-of wealth. So much at present; and in the age that is coming, with its full spiritual rewards, eternal life, So 1 Tim. 4:8.”

E. Luke 12:54-59: Wisdom in Common Things.

1. Verses 54-55: “And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.”
 - a. The natives of Palestine had learned that when a cloud rises in the west, that is a sign that a shower of rain is on the way. When the wind begins to blow from the south, that commonly meant the coming of hot weather. Generations had seen these signs, thus could predict coming weather.
 - b. Compare: “He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed” (Matt. 16:2-4).
 - 1) “This was not an endorsement of the Pharisees’ method of predicting the weather, but was a glaring contrast, pointed out by Jesus, between their supposed sagacity in material things and their blindness to far more important spiritual things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven” (Coffman, p.240).
 - 2) “What are ‘the signs of the times’? (1) The prophetic weeks of Daniel were about to expire. (2) The great herald of the new age, John the Baptist, had appeared according to prophecy, ‘in the spirit and power of Elijah.’ (3) The scepter had departed from Judah and the lawgiver from beneath his feet (Gen. 49:10). (4) Even a ‘sign from heaven’ had already been given at the baptism of Christ when God spoke out of heaven, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’ (Matt. 3:17). (5) It had been revealed to Simeon that he should not die till he had seen the Lord’s Christ; and it must be presumed that Simeon, by that time, was long since dead and buried. (6) All the world was expecting the coming of some Great One. (7) The Christ himself, ‘that Prophet like unto Moses,’ had appeared upon the banks of the Jordan and had been identified by John the Baptist as ‘the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world’! And John was the only authentic prophet Israel had had in half a millennium. Yes, it must be admitted that the Pharisees missed the signs of the times, however skilled they might have appeared as weather prophets!” (*ibid*).
 - c. “The times of the Messiah, the miraculous evidences which he had given that they were at hand. These were as plainly to be seen as the clouds at sunrise and at sunset, but the Pharisees and Sadducees failed to see them in their real significance” (McGarvey, p.141).
 - d. “Whether their interpretations were correct and a true forecast of weather conditions is not affirmed nor denied by Jesus; he simply takes them on their own claims and shows their inconsistency. The Jews even at that time published almanacs, prognosticating the rains of the coming year; they did not have the scientific knowledge that ‘weather forecasters’ have today; yet they claimed with equal positiveness to give correct interpretations” (Boles, Matt., p.339).
 - e. These people were classed as wicked (evil) and adulterous. They were wicked because they sought to destroy Christ and thus were opposing God; they were adulterous especially in the spiritual sense in that they had become unfaithful to God (and no doubt some of them were guilty also of the literal sin). “The relation between God and Israel had long been described as a marriage contract in which God was the husband and Israel the bride, hence a charge of adultery was a reflection upon Israel’s fidelity to God. That unequal marriage God would shortly dissolve through his own death, in the person of Christ...” (Rom. 7:4)” (Coffman, p.241).

- f. Such people are interested in signs but will not accept the genuine proof offered. It is foolish to waste one's time with this type of people once their character has been ascertained. Jesus was not about to "cast his pearls before swine." They were dishonest and their hearts were impervious to the truth. Hence, no sign was given them but the sign of Jonah.
- 1) "The one cosmic exception to the 'no sign' policy would be the resurrection of Christ, which would more than meet even their specifications as a 'sign from heaven.' To be sure, even that was of no avail because, instead of accepting it, they bribed witnesses to deny it! Christ fully knew the character of those evil men; and the sad words concluding verse 4 show the finality of Christ's judgment upon them. He never more worked any miracle or taught in that place again" (Coffman, p.241).
 - 2) Mark's account shows that the Lord was grieved over the attitude of these people. "And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation" (Mark 8:11-12).
- g. "The reference to Jonah was an enigma to both the friends and the foes of Jesus; for neither party as yet anticipated his death, burial, and resurrection. It is one of a number of remarks which Jesus let fall, the very obscurity of which caused them to be remembered and talked about until subsequent developments made them intelligible, and then they furnished very surprising proofs of his foreknowledge" (McGarvey, pp.141f).
2. Verse 56: "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"
 - a. Boles: "These people could read the signs of rain in the clouds and foretell the heat waves by the wind from the south, but they could not see the clear and sure signs of the presence of the Son of God among them. He had taught them as never man taught; he had worked signs and wonders in their presence; the miracles of healing which he had wrought among them all bore witness to his claim as the Messiah; the spotless purity of his life and the wisdom and perfection of his teaching emphasized his claim. They were rebuked and condemned for their pretended wisdom."
 - b. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) These things had an interest for them. Heat and drought, wind and rain, affected materially the prospect of their wheat-harvest and vintage, the fruitfulness of their orchards and oliveyards, therefore they gave their whole mind to the watching of the weather; but to the awful signs of the time in which they were living they were blind and deaf. What were these signs?
 - 2) The low state of morality among public men. Did none of them notice how utterly corrupt were priests and scribes and people, how hollow and meaningless their boasted religious rites, how far removed from them was the presence of the God of their fathers?
 - 3) Political situation. Did none of them notice the terribly strained relations between the Roman or Herodian, and the great national party? Were they blind to the bitter, irreconcilable hatred to mighty Rome which was seething scarcely beneath the surface of Jewish society? Were they deaf to the rumbling noises which too surely heralded a fierce and bloody war between little Palestine, split up into parties and sects, and the mighty world of Rome which had seized them in its own grip? What could be the result of such a war? Were they devoid of reason as well as blind and deaf?
 - 4) Heavenly warnings. What had they done with John the Baptist? Many in Israel knew that man was indeed a great prophet of the Lord. His burning words had penetrated far and wide; vast crowds had heard the awful sounds with breathless awe; but no one heeded, and the people watched him die. And now — they had listened to him who was speaking to them. He had told them all; no sign of power was wanting to his ministry, and it was just over, and the people had not repented.
 3. Verse 57: "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"
 - a. The following story reveals an episode which anyone should have known with common sense was wrong: "An Arizona man was arrested for allegedly baptizing himself in a church fountain in the nude
-

- last week. Jeremiah Sykes, 20, was reportedly found naked in the fountain of One Life Church in Mesa near Gilbert Road on Saturday. According to court documents obtained by FOX 10 Phoenix, he was told to leave but obstinately stayed and grabbed a blanket. Sykes was taken to a holding facility by police and charged with criminal trespass and indecent exposure.” [April, 2023].
- b. Consider 1 Corinthians 11:13-15: “Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.”
4. Verses 58-59: “When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.”
- a. Boles: “A man under indictment for crime against his adversary and on his way for trial is admonished to settle the case before the trial comes on; it can be settled easier out of court than to be followed by a long-drawn-out lawsuit, in which animosity is stirred up. The process of trial may move on with such intricacies that the outcome, though the claim be just, may result in condemnation; hence, it is wise to settle it, if it can be done, before the judge or jury pronounces sentence. If one is on the way to the magistrate with his adversary in law, whom he has wronged, it is right to become reconciled with him before he drags him to the judge and the judge pass the sentence and inflict the punishment. The application is that they should be reconciled to God and be discharged from the punishment due for their sins. The multitude to whom Jesus was speaking understood the physical facts concerning the wind and rain, but they were ignorant of the signs of the times about the Messiah.”
 - b. Thou shalt by no means come out—This is the conclusion of the application that Jesus made of his parable. The Jewish nation was under indictment for great national sin against God; it was at that time being brought to issue on the momentous question of receiving their long-promised Messiah, and through him, making peace with their offended God. They were at that time moving on to the courtroom of the Great Judge; the hour of trial for the nation as well as for individuals was at hand. They should make peace with their adversary while they had opportunity to do so. Some think that Jesus makes the application only to the nation, while others think that the principle is the same whether applied to a nation or an individual.
-

Luke Chapter 13

A. Luke 13:1-9: Repentance Discussed and Illustrated.

1. Verses 1-3: There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.”
 - b. Repentance is necessary whenever man commits sin:
 - 1) Repentance was preached in the early days of mankind: Jude 14:15 (Enoch).
 - 2) Repentance was preached before the flood: 2 Peter 1:5-6 (Noah).
 - 3) Repentance was preached by the Old Testament prophets: Isaiah 55:7-8.
 - 4) Ezekiel preached repentance: 18:31; 33:10-11.
 - 5) Daniel preached repentance to Nebuchadnezzar: Daniel 4:27.
 - 6) Jonah preached repentance in Nineveh: Jonah 3.
 - 7) John the Immerser preached repentance to the New Testament Jews: Matthew 3:2.
 - 8) Jesus, the Twelve and the Seventy preached repentance.
 - 9) We are required to preach repentance to the world today: Luke 24:46.
 - c. This incident is not recorded elsewhere in the Bible and is not found in secular history. This is the only reference to the event. Pilate must have sent soldiers into the outer court of the Temple area, and for some reason, slew certain people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices, thus mixing their blood with the blood of the animals.
 - d. This was very tragic! Pilate likely had some strong motivation for this cruel treatment of men in the process of worshiping Jehovah. But these victims were not the greatest of sinners! The Lord then tells his audience that they must repent or they would perish!
 - e. Coffman: “In that deep human prejudice to the effect that great sufferers are receiving only what they deserve lies a germ of truth, namely, that all human sorrow and suffering derive, in the last analysis, from human sin; but it is a gross untruth that all disasters befalling men must be attributed to their immediate, specific sins. Many suffer through the sins of others, and some for no apparent reason at all.”
 - f. Boles: “This is a severe rebuke to these men who reported this to Jesus and to all others who may be in sin; no one can ward off the force of the truth here spoken by Jesus. ‘Repent’ is used many times in the New Testament. It means a change of mind, disposition, governing purpose; unless one changes from an impenitent heart doom certainly awaits one. The suffering of these becomes a warning to all others to repent or to perish. There is no alternative; it is either repent or perish.”
2. Verses 4-5: “Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”
 - a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. Gill: [Or those eighteen] “upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them; there was a pool near Jerusalem, called the Pool of Siloam, John 9:7 near, or over which, was a tower built, which fell down and killed eighteen men; very likely as they were purifying themselves in the pool, and so was a case very much like the other, and might be a very late one: and this Christ the rather observes, and puts them in mind of, that they might see that not Galileans only, whom they had in great contempt, but

- even inhabitants of Jerusalem, died violent deaths, and came to untimely ends; and yet, as not in the former case, so neither in this was it to be concluded from hence, that they were sinners of a greater size, or their state worse than that of other men: think ye that they were sinners; or debtors; for as sins are called debts, Matthew 6:12 so sinners are called debtors: above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? there might be, and doubtless there were, as great, or greater sinners, in that holy city, and among such that made great pretensions to religion and holiness, as they were.”
3. Verses 6-9: “He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.'"
 - b. Ellicott: The parable stands obviously in very close connection with the foregoing teaching. The people had been warned of the danger of perishing, unless they repented. They are now taught that the forbearance and long-suffering of God are leading them to repentance. The sharp warning of the Baptist, “Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down” (Matthew 3:10), is expanded into a parable.
 - c. “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).
 - 1) The riches of God's goodness are expressed through the forbearance and longsuffering he had shown them. God is not willing that any lost soul should perish, and thus he suffers long with sinful men.
 - a) Ezekiel 18:31-32: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye."
 - b) 1 Timothy 2:4-5: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - c) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - 2) Sinful men, in their ignorance, think that because God does not punish their ungodly acts immediately and directly from heaven, that since they got away with sin once, they will always get away with rebellion. Their hearts are "fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11-12).
 - 3) The goodness of God does not rule out the justice of God. His goodness tempers his justice. If he meted out only justice, without mercy, no accountable person could be saved. But he has shown mercy by being patient.
 - 4) Mistaking God's forbearance for permission, the Jews had ignored his goodness. They had failed to see that God's patience was intended to give them time and occasion to repent. Compare: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not" (Rev. 2:21).
 - 5) Modern preachers in the Lord's church are making the same mistake. They argue that since no one can keep God's law perfectly, that God will overlook sin. They make an appeal to 1 John 1:7 as proof. But that passage shows in its context (1:6-10) that the continual cleansing by Christ's blood is conditional: we must walk in the light of God's word; we must be aware that we sin; and we must

confess our sins. We do not have a right to live in rebellion to any part of God's law: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10).

- b. For three years after the fig tree was planted, the owner had looked for fruit, but found none. He told his worker that it was merely taking up space [and drawing nutrients and moisture from the ground], but produced nothing. He instructed his vine-dresser to cut down the tree.
- c. In this interesting story, the worker asked his master to be patient, that he would loosen the soil and fertilize the tree, and after another year desired fruit would be forthcoming. Our Lord used this story to illustrate the willingness of God to be longsuffering with sinful people, giving them opportunity and time to repent.

B. Luke 13:10-17: A Healing on the Sabbath Day.

1. Verses 10-11: "And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself."
 - a. NKJ: Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 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. 12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." 13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.
 - b. Some of us have seen unfortunate individuals afflicted with the same or similar infirmities. It is not uncommon to meet one of these who has developed a high sense of pleasantness, not bemoaning their condition, but bearing their ailment cheerfully. What a wonderful disposition!
 - c. This lady had endured her problem for eighteen years. This woman did not appeal to the Lord for his aid, but was approached by him.
 2. Verses 12-13: "And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God."
 - a. Jesus saw this woman and had compassion on her grievous condition. He told her that she was freed from her infirmity; he put his hands on her and instantly she was made straight! The first words from her mouth was to extol the greatness of God! What a lovely attitude.
 - b. This was a common response from many who were healed by the Lord or one of his followers. An exception to this were the nine lepers healed by the Lord; only one turned back to express gratitude. Luke 17:11-19.
 - c. Boles: She was afflicted with "an infirmity eighteen years"; we are not told the nature of her affliction. Luke was a physician and would naturally refer to this miracle of healing. Her disease caused physical debility and deformity; it may have been caused by the wicked spirits, as she had "a spirit of infirmity." She was "bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up." Her disease was spinal and extending down to the loin; she was so bent down as to be totally unable to raise herself up, or even to look up.
 3. Verse 14: "And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day."
 - a. As sincerely held gratitude can spring forth from the heart with proper expression of thanks, so can the hard heart speak forth with vile words.
 - b. Compare: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. 12:34-35).
 - c. The ruler of the synagogue where the healing took place spoke harsh words of indignation, because Jesus healed on the Sabbath day. He argued that there were six other days of the week when work and healing could be done. He wrongly assumed that a miraculous act required some act of work which would be in violation of their laws of the Sabbath. We may be sure that the Lord did not perspire by
-

speaking to the woman or by putting his hands on her! Perhaps Jesus would never have seen this lady again.

4. Verses 15-16: “The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?”
 - a. Jesus was entirely correct in speaking with strong words, denouncing this man! He correctly defined him as a hypocrite.
 - b. He pointed out to this man that the Jews through the generations had led their animals to water on the Sabbath; this did not break the Mosaic Law governing that special day. Leading a thirsty ox a short distance to water involved no work.
 - c. The Lord stated that this woman was a descendant of Abraham, who had been afflicted by Satan for eighteen years, surely had a need even greater than a thirsty animal—even on a Sabbath day!
5. Verse 17: “And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.”
 - a. We stand in amazement at the Lord’s instant response. He was always able to specifically identify the core of the matter and address it directly.
 - b. NKJ: 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? 16 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?" 17 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.
 - c. The best thing that could be said about these hypocritical foes was that they could still feel shame! The Bible speaks of some who could not even blush, they were so deeply afflicted by sin.
 - 1) Jeremiah 6:15: “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.”
 - 2) Jeremiah 8:12: “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.”

C. Luke 13:18-23: Two Parables Describing the Kingdom.

1. Verses 18-19: “Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.”
 - a. Compare: “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof” (Matt. 13:31-32).
 - b. The kingdom is likened to the tiny mustard seed which grows into a large plant. Among the seeds commonly sowed by the ancient Jews, the mustard seed was the least. It is not the least of all seeds in the world. This limitation is to be understood also in the Lord’s description of the size of the mustard plant: it was the largest of the herbs which the Jews cultivated.
 - c. “As the emphasis, in this parable, is placed on the smallness of the seed and the greatness of its subsequent growth, we must take these as the points of significance and resemblance. The kingdom of heaven, like the seed, was very small in its beginning on the day of Pentecost, but afterward it became a very great kingdom. The parable is prophetic, and is still in process of fulfillment” (McGarvey, p.121).
 - 1) Acts 2:41: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

- 2) Acts 4:4: "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."
- 3) Acts 5:14: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."
- 4) Acts 6:7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."
- d. The birds lighting in the branches may suggest the indirect benefits which those outside the kingdom derive from it. Some think that since birds are used to represent evil men, then it may have that meaning here, representing evil men who seek to do harm to the church; but this is uncertain.
2. Verses 20-21: "And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."
 - a. The kingdom is likened to a woman who put three measures of leaven in a lump of bread dough. There appears to be no special significance to the fact that three measures of leaven were used; probably that was the amount commonly used.
 - b. "It is the property of leaven that it quietly but certainly diffuses itself through the mass in which it is placed. The kingdom of heaven is like it, in that it spreads itself in like manner through human society. This parable is also prophetic, and its fulfillment is constantly going on" (McGarvey, pp.121f).
 - c. This parable illustrates the internal spread of the kingdom within one of its citizens. Its natural progression is to enhance the whole person in all phases of his life. The kingdom is within us (Luke 17:21). As the seed of the kingdom germinates in our hearts, we are transformed (Luke 8:12).
 - 1) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - 2) James 1:21 "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."
3. Verse 22: "And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem."
 - a. Coffman: Journeying ... should not be understood as taking the most direct route to Jerusalem; for, actually, this journey required several months, and involved a circuitous progression which would allow Jesus to visit as many places as possible on this final tour; and yet, all the while, his invariable purpose remained that of proceeding to Jerusalem where he would fulfill his purpose of dying to save all men. He interrupted this journey no less than three times, going to Jerusalem each time, and then returning to resume the journey."
 - b. "And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee" (Luke 17:11).
 - c. Boles: Jesus now has his face set toward Jerusalem; Jesus now makes a fourth circuit through the villages and towns of Galilee previous to his going up to Jerusalem to attend the feast. Many think that this was the summer and fall before he was crucified, and that the "cities and villages" mentioned here are the cities and villages in Perea. If they mean the cities in Galilee, it was the fourth time that he had visited the cities in that country; but if it is meant that he visited the cities and villages in Perea he did not make the long circuit to Galilee. Authorities differ with respect to the meaning of these "cities and villages." He could have gone through Galilee on a circuit and then crossed the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee and visited Perea and then proceeded to Jerusalem; it is possible for him to have visited the cities on both sides of the Jordan, and thus visited Galilee and Perea. However, the point is clear that he was headed toward Jerusalem and that he visited cities and villages on the way to Jerusalem. It is to be noted that he taught in all of these villages.

D. Luke 13:23-30: Strive to Enter the Strait Gate.

1. Verses 23-24: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
 - a. Compare: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).
 - b. Perhaps reasoning from what Christ had already taught, and his rejection of the many errors of the leading religious parties, it must have occurred to this querist that salvation must be limited. The Lord showed by his answer that the questioner was correct.
 - c. The word used *strive*, which in the Greek, is graphic. This Greek term gives us our English word "agonize." Robertson: "Originally it was to contend for a prize in the games. The kindred word *agonia* occurs of Christ's struggle in Gethsemane (Luke 22:44)."
 - d. Jesus, therefore, stated that a decided struggle was necessary to obtain salvation.
 - 1) "Here the word *strive* is translated from the Greek word *agonizomai*, an expressive and emphatic term, signifying, literally, *to agonize*. We are therefore taught to agonize to enter in at the strait gate, by which it is implied that the attempt requires effort, wearisome and even painful toil. The word appears in the passage, 'And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things,' and has reference to the self-denying discipline the athlete exercises in bringing himself to that standard of fitness essential to the attainment of the goal toward which he strives" (Guy N. Woods, *Spiritual Sword Lectures*, p.253).
 - 2) The same word is used in Colossians 4:12 (*laboring fervently*—in prayer) and in 1 Timothy 6:12 (*fight*—the Christian life is a constant combat). The strait gate must be consciously entered. It does not matter whether our spouse, or parent, or child, or someone else, has entered in on the narrow way: we must personally and individually make the effort to enter ourselves.
 - e. This is true because the gate that enters onto the broad way is wide and is entered without effort, automatically when one either drifts into it, or consciously commits sin. While only those who deliberately obey the Lord enter the narrow way, all those who commit sin and do not obey the Lord and thus transport themselves through the wide gate.
 - f. Mourner's Bench religionists would grossly pervert this passage to legitimize their loud crying and moaning and praying as they demand that God send them some kind of sign that he has saved them; sometimes these sessions last a long time. Sam Watkins wrote a biography of his experiences in the Confederate Army [*Company Aytch*] described one of these cases:

"In sweeping the streets and cleaning up, an old tree had been set on fire, and had been smoking and burning for several days, and nobody seemed to notice it As it was the custom to 'call up mourners,' a long bench had been placed in proper position of them to kneel down, pouring out their souls in prayer to God, asking Him for the forgiveness of their sins, and the salvation of their sins, for Jesus Christ their Redeemers' sake, when the burning tree, without any warning, fell with a crash right across the ten mourners, crushing and killing them instantly" (pp.106f). [This took place at Dalton, GA, in 1864].
 - g. Pulpit Commentary on the verse:
 - 1) The Master, as was frequently his custom, gave no direct answer to his questioner, but his teaching which immediately follows contained the answer to the query. The older authorities, in place of "at the strait gate," read "through the narrow door." The meaning of the image, however, is the same, whichever reading be adopted. The image was not a new one. It had been used before by the Lord, perhaps more than once (see Matthew 7:13, 14)....
 - 2) The teaching of the Master here is, that the door of salvation is a narrow one, and, to pass through it, the man must strive in real earnest. "See," he seems to say; "if only few are saved, it will not be because the Jews are few and the Gentile nations many, but because, of the Jews and Gentiles, only

- a few really strive. Something different from race or national privileges will be the test at that narrow door which leads to life.
- 3) "Many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The reason for the exclusion of these many is to be sought in themselves. They wished to enter in, but confined themselves to wishes. They made no strong, vigorous efforts. Theirs was no life of stern self-surrender, of painful self-sacrifice. To wish to pass through that narrow door is not enough. [Editor's Note: The majority do not seek by means of the instructions given in the New Testament—Bob Winton].
 - h. "Jesus directed his answer not to the one who made the inquiry only, but to 'them'," or to the masses who were about him. He exhorts all to strive 'to enter in by the narrow door.' This is similar to the teaching in Matthew (7:13, 14), where Jesus contrasts the two ways. 'Strive' is the word used in contending for a prize in the games, and denotes the utmost effort put forth. It takes all that one can do to enter heaven; no one need think that he can work only part of the time and enter heaven. Many will 'seek to enter in,' but 'shall not be able.' Many seek halfheartedly, while others will put forth their utmost" (Boles).
 - 1) Luke 17:10: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - 3) Philippians 2:12: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."
 - 4) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - 5) Study also 2 Peter 1:1-21.
 2. Verse 25: "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are."
 - a. The time indicated by the Lord's statement here is at the Judgment of the Last Day (Matt. 7:21-23). In this life on earth, mankind has opportunities to prepare for eternity. Compare: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).
 - 1) Christ was given work to be done during his personal ministry on earth. We all know that when the end of life comes, we can no longer work. The hands that were so strong and skillful in life, lie folded in death, unable to do anything else in this world. When the Lord stated on the cross, "It is finished," he spoke of his earthly mission.
 - 2) Consider the case of Dorcas in Acts 9:39: "Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, **while she was with them.**"
 - a) Peter returned to Joppa with the messengers, and when he arrived, he was taken into the upper room where Dorcas' body had been laid. All the widows stood by him, weeping, and showing him the coats and garments which she had made "while she was with them." That is, before she died. [In her special case, the apostle Peter would be enabled to bring her back to life].
 - b) After her death, she could no longer make garments for others. This is a fact known to all of us as we live on earth. We learn at an early age that we must die and leave this world. Can you remember when you did not know this basic truth of life? Dorcas likely began to work again.
 - b. The depiction the Lord gives in the text, shows the man of the house having risen up and closed the door; it would stay closed. Those outside would plead to be allowed to enter, but entrance was now impossible. They had ignored or postponed earlier opportunities to make preparations.
 - c. Compare Revelation 11:11: "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them."
-

- 1) In eternity, the kind of character one possesses will be the same kind of character which he had developed in this life. "They that have done good" will be raised up to eternal life in Heaven—where no evil taints the scene. "They that have done evil" will be raised up to eternal condemnation. See Matthew 25:46.
 - 2) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 3) Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."
 - d. The practice of spiritual crimes will not be done in eternity, but the guilt acquired in our lives here will carry over into eternity—unless it is removed by the blood of Christ prior to our departure from this world. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:8-9).
 - e. But outside the gates of glory will be the unredeemed: "For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev. 22:15). Such they were while in this life, and such will they ever be in eternity! Those found to be filthy in the Judgment, were filthy in this life, and will remain filthy throughout eternity. He that is found righteous and holy in the Judgment, was such in life, and will remain thus in eternity. The kind of person we each become here on earth, will be our true status in eternity. Only the pure in heart will ever see God in peace.
3. Verses 26-27: "Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."
 - a. Compare: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).
 - b. Boles: The late-comers knock and ask admission, but the master answers them and turns them away. This teaches that the gospel call has its limitations of time; the door of mercy is open for a time, but not indefinitely; if men would enter they must pass in while the door stands open. The master will rise in his dignity and authority and close the door and will say: "I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." These Jews had heard Jesus; he had taught in their streets; they had witnessed his wonderful miracles, but had rejected him, and had judged themselves unworthy of his blessings. "Workers of iniquity" mean those who do evil; they are the ones who have followed unrighteous practices as a trade; their occupation was sin.
 - c. Acts 13:44-49: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but **seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life**, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."
 - d. No nearness of external communion with Christ will avail at the great day, in place of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Observe the style which Christ intimates that He will then
-

- assume, that of absolute Disposer of men's eternal destinies, and contrast it with His "despised and rejected" condition at that time" (Jamieson).
4. Verse 28: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."
 - a. Matthew 8:11-12: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
 - b. To sit down with their great Old Testament men of God means more than merely to occupy seats in the general presence with them. When we are invited into another's house and invited to sit down, we perceive that we are to be treated as honored guests, and may have happy fellowship with all the others who are there gathered! Heaven will be a grand reunion of all the faithful who served God faithfully upon the earth. There will be many such people present. Compare: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor. 4:14).
 - c. This statement suggests that many such Gentiles would be converted and enjoy the eternal blessings of heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Plainly indicated is the fact that these three Old Testament Patriarchs will be in heaven. "In view of the sins and shortcomings of those particular men, it seems that none in our own day should despair of winning the crown" (Coffman, p.107).
 - d. Some think that the kingdom of heaven (the church on earth) is what is being described. However, none of the three Old Testament men named were ever members of the church. Also, the blessed condition described as sitting down with these three is put in contrast with the wicked Jews who would be cast into outer darkness, a description of the torments of hell.
 - 1) "The Jews were 'children of the kingdom' in the sense that they were children and heirs of those to whom the kingdom was originally promised" (McGarvey, p.77).
 - 2) "The kingdom of heaven in which many Gentiles were to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (verse 11), must be the kingdom in its final state of glory; for these patriarchs lived too soon to sit down in the earthly kingdom. The outer darkness, then, which is contrasted with it, and into which those are to be cast out who are not admitted into the kingdom, must represent the final punishment of the wicked" (McGarvey, p.77).
 - e. Christ used various expressions to describe the final destiny of the disobedient. No one who believes the Bible will reject these descriptions.
 - 1) Fire—Matthew 3:12.
 - 2) Outer darkness—Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30.
 - 3) Punishment—Matthew 25:46; cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.
 - f. "'Weeping and gnashing of teeth' describes the anguish and sorrow of being eternally cast away from God. The 'weeping and gnashing' represent intense suffering; they have lost their favor with God, and shall gnash their teeth because others have obtained it" (Boles, Matt., p.192). While many are enjoying the spiritual feast of heaven, these will be undergoing the awful torment of eternal condemnation, being additionally tortured by the knowledge that things could have been so different!
 5. Verses 29-30: "And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) And they shall come from the east and west,—Salvation will be extended to the Gentiles; not only those who were near, but all those most distant, from all parts of the earth shall be called. (Isa. 45:6; 49:6.) They shall come from all quarters and recline at the table according to the prediction of the prophets and the commission given by Jesus. To recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was to the Jewish mind a representation of the highest honors and the greatest happiness. Many Gentiles shall become spiritual descendants of the fathers in faith (Heb. 11:8-10), participators of the kingdom of God below (Col. 1:13) and above (2 Pet. 1:11)
-

- 2) And behold, there are last who shall be first,—Jesus used this expression at the close of the parable of the "laborers in the vineyard." (Matt. 20:16.) It seems that there will be such a reversal of present relations; that many of those who seemed most likely to have been the favored guests will be excluded; while others, whose prospects for such an honor were far less favorable, will be selected as the recipients. The last are first in being permitted to enjoy a banquet from which the others were excluded.
- b. Matthew 19:29-30: "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."
 - 1) "This proverbial expression, in its present connection, means that many who are first in prospect of everlasting life shall be last, and many who are last in this respect shall be first. For example, the rich young man whose inquiries had given rise to this conversation (16-20), had been among the first, but now it appeared that he was among the last. Judas, also, who was then among the first, was destined to be last, and Matthias, who was among the last, being then only an obscure disciple (Acts 1:21-23), was to take his place" (McGarvey, p.171).
 - 2) The Jewish people were the first to have the gospel preached to them, beginning on the Pentecost Day of Acts Two; but the great majority of them rejected the truth [only three thousand obeyed the gospel in Acts 2]. At the proper time, the gospel was presented to the Gentiles; great numbers of them obeyed the gospel happily.
 - a) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - b) Acts 4:4: "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."
 - c) Acts 5:14: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."
 - d) Acts 11:20-21: "And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."
 - e) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - f) Acts 13:44-49: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."

E. Luke 13:31-35: Pitiableness of Jerusalem.

1. Verse 31: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee."
 - a. It seems strange that Pharisees to give a warning to Jesus about the possibility that Herod would kill him. There must have been an ulterior motive.
 - b. Coffman:

- 1) Jesus was somewhere in the area of Trans-Jordan, or possibly still in Galilee, both being within the political jurisdiction of Herod; but the idea is rejected which would view this blunt word from the Pharisees as anything but a lie.
- 2) As Russell said, "They were not telling the truth. There was no reason for thinking that Herod, although a man of base character, wished to kill Jesus." [32] When Jesus finally appeared before Herod Antipas (Luke 23:11), that ruler initiated no action against him, except to mock him and send him back to Pilate; and by including this in his record, Luke documented the Pharisees' falsehood.
- c. Boles a different view:
 - 1) Luke is the only one that records this incident. This was Herod Antipas; he had slain John the Baptist and was jealous of the influence which Jesus had gained over the people. Great multitudes followed Jesus and many supposed that he would at some favorable juncture proclaim himself king and set up his kingdom on earth; this would make him a rival of Herod, and Herod thought that he would destroy Jesus. He adopted this plan of sending the Pharisees to him, to induce Jesus to leave Galilee and hasten to Jerusalem, and there to be in greater danger from the Sanhedrin.
 - 2) Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great; he had now ruled over Galilee and Perea for thirty years. Herod did not want to kill Jesus as he had John the Baptist, for he feared the people; but he thought that he would drive Jesus out of his territory and that the Jews would kill him at Jerusalem.
 - 3) Cambridge: "These Pharisees were as eager as the Gadarenes to get rid of Jesus; but whether this was their sole motive or whether they further wished to separate Him from the multitudes who as yet protected His life, and to put Him in the power of the Sadducean hierarchy, is not clear. That any solicitude for His safety was purely hypocritical appears in the tone of our Lord's answer, which is yet far more merciful than that in which the prophet Amos had answered a similar message from an analogous quarter."
2. Verse 32: "And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."
 - a. MacLaren:
 - 1) "Even a lamb might be suspicious if wolves were to show themselves tenderly careful of its safety. Pharisees taking Christ's life under their protection were enough to suggest a trick. These men came to Christ desirous of posing as counterworking Herod's intention to slay Him. Our Lord's answer, bidding them go and tell Herod what He immediately communicates to them, shows that He regarded them as in a plot with that crafty, capricious kinglet. And evidently there was an understanding between them. For some reason or other, best known to his own changeable and whimsical nature, the man who at one moment was eagerly desirous to see Jesus, was at the next as eagerly desirous to get Him out of his territories; just as he admired and murdered John the Baptist.
 - 2) "The Pharisees, on the other hand, desired to draw Him to Jerusalem, where they would have Him in their power more completely than in the northern district So Christ answers the hidden schemes, and not the apparent solicitude They unmask the plot, they calmly put aside the threats of danger. They declare that His course was influenced by far other considerations. They show that He clearly saw what it was towards which He was journeying. And then, with sad irony, they declare that it, as it were, contrary to prophetic decorum and established usage that a prophet should be slain anywhere but in the streets of the bloody and sacred city."
 - b. Cambridge Bible: "The fox was among the ancients, as well as among the modems, the type of knavish craftiness and covert attack. This is the only word of unmitigated contempt (as distinguished from rebuke and scorn) recorded among the utterances of Christ, and it was more than justified by the mingled tyranny and timidity, insolence and baseness of Herod Antipas—a half-Samaritan, half-Idumaeon tetrarch, who, professing Judaism, lived in heathen practices, and governed by the grace of Caesar and the help of alien mercenaries; who had murdered the greatest of the Prophets to gratify a dancing wanton; and who was living at that moment in an adultery doubly-incestuous with a woman of whom he had treacherously robbed his brother while he was his guest."

- c. Boles:
- 1) It was a cunning warning from Herod and from the Pharisees; it was more cunning than friendly; hence, Jesus tells them : "Go and say to that fox." This shows the steadfastness and fearlessness of Jesus in carrying out his purpose to remain in that region until he had finished his work there.
 - 2) Herod was cunning and crafty; some think that the people had already given him the name "fox." While Jesus applied this term to Herod, in reality it also applied to the crafty efforts of the Pharisees to effect his ruin or at least his disgrace.
 - 3) I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, —Again Jesus uses proverbial phrases and designates the time as being short for his work. It is parallel to John 11:9, 10. Jesus meant to say that he had an appointed time in which he would continue his work with fearlessness and without interruption.
 - 4) "The third day I am perfected." This seems to refer to his death. In the plan of God Jesus must die at Jerusalem; he must finish his work before that time. The time was definitely marked and Jesus had set his face toward Jerusalem, where he would finish his work. The time was to be very short, during which he must accomplish the remainder of his work on earth.
- d. The word fox is feminine gender—that “she-fox.”
3. Verse 33: “Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”
- a. Other versions:
- 1) NKJ: “Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.”
 - 2) ASV: “Nevertheless I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”
- b. “It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. So cruel and bloody had been the conduct of the Jews toward their prophets that it was beyond probability that a prophet could perish out of Jerusalem; hence, Jesus did not feel any fear of malice from Herod in his territory. He knew exactly how his hands were tied by a fear of offending the people of Galilee; he could have easily excited sedition; he gave assurance to Herod that he had no such design, but looked rather to a brief ministry, and a bloody end. A prophet was tried only by the Sanhedrin, which met in Jerusalem. Jesus foretold that he would be tried by that court” (Boles).
- c. Robertson: “It is not accepted, it is inadmissible. A severely ironical indictment of Jerusalem. The shadow of the Cross reaches Perea where Jesus now is as he starts toward Jerusalem.”
- d. *It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.*—The word used here for “it cannot be,” occurs in this passage only of the New Testament, and has a peculiar half-ironical force—“It is not meet, it would be at variance with the fitness of things, it is morally impossible.” Jerusalem had made the slaughter of the prophets a special prerogative, a monopoly, as has been said, of which none might rob her. [Ellicott].
- e. *For it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem* — That unhappy city, which claims prescription for murdering the messengers of God. Such cruelty and malice cannot be found elsewhere. If a true prophet was put to death, he was prosecuted as a false prophet. Now the supreme court, whose prerogative it was to judge prophets, had its seat at Jerusalem. Inferior courts did not take cognizance of such causes; and therefore, if a prophet was put to death, it must be at Jerusalem. So Dr. Lightfoot here. Our Lord, “in saying a prophet could not perish out of that city, insinuated, that he knew the intentions of the Pharisees too well to pay any regard to their advice respecting departing from Galilee for fear of Herod. Or, in making this observation, his design may have been to display the wickedness of that city, the inhabitants of which had been, in every age, the chief enemies of the messengers of God: and to this agrees what our Lord says of Jerusalem in the pathetic lamentation which he now utters concerning it, on account of its crimes, its obstinacy, and its punishment.” [Benson].
-

4. Verses 34-35: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
 - a. Matthew 23:37-38: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
 - b. "The inimitable tenderness and pathos which breathe through this lamentation, following immediately the burning denunciations of the preceding speech, show plainly that the latter were not instigated by malice. They were judicial utterances wrung from a heart full of longings in behalf of the people denounced" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.202).
 - c. Their house was the temple. It was formerly called God's house, but they had made it into a den of thieves. It was to be left to them desolate—uninhabited. God's presence would not be there.
 - d. In Matthew 24:1-35, our Lord foretold the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. That harsh event would occur when the Roman army assaulted the city in 70 A.D. A close study of that passage will reveal the awful circumstances of history-changing disaster. The city was to be rebuilt but the temple was gone forever, as also were the Levitical priesthood and Jewish tribal identities.
 - e. Gill: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets,... These words, with what follow, as they stand in Matthew 23:37 were delivered by Christ, when he was in the temple at Jerusalem; but here they were spoken by him when in Galilee, in Herod's jurisdiction; so that it appears, that the same words were spoken by Christ at different times, in different places, and to different persons...."
 - f. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) It was the sorrowful summing-up of the tenderest love of centuries. Never had earthly city been loved like this. There the anointed of the Eternal were to fix their home. There the stately shrine for the service of the invisible King of Israel was to keep watch and ward over the favoured capital of the chosen race. There the visible presence of the Lord God Almighty, the Glory and the Pride of the people, was ever and anon to rest. And in this solemn last farewell, the Master looked back through the vista of the past ages of Jerusalem's history.
 - 2) It was a dark and gloomy contemplation. It had been all along the wicked chief city of a wicked people, of a people who had thrown away the fairest chances ever offered to men—the city of a people whose annals were memorable for deeds of blood, for the most striking ingratitude, for incapacity, for folly shading into crime.
 - 3) Not once nor twice in that dark story of Israel chosen messengers of the invisible King had visited the city he loved so well. These were invested with the high credentials which belong to envoys from the King of kings, with a voice sweeter and more persuasive, with a power grander and more far-reaching than were the common heritage of men; and these envoys, his prophets, they had maltreated, persecuted, murdered. How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings! God's great love to Israel had been imaged in the far back days of the people, when Moses judged them, under a similar metaphor.
 - 4) Then it was the eagle fluttering over her young and bearing them on her wings; now it is slightly altered to one if possible more tender and loving, certainly more homely. How often in bygone days would the almighty wings, indeed, had Israel only wished it, have been spread out over them a sure shelter!
 - 5) Now the time of grace was over, and the almighty wings were folded. And ye would not! Sad privilege, specially mentioned here by the Divine Teacher, this freedom of man's will to resist the grace of God. "Ye would not," says the Master, thus joining the generation who heard his voice to the stiffnecked Israel of the days of the wicked kings.
 - g. Coffman has these words:

- 1) Blessed is he that cometh ... etc. Some have seen in this verse, especially with reference to "until that day," a promise referring to "far future, to the day of the penitence of Israel." [38] However, despite the fact that "until" "could have" such meaning, there can be no certainty of it. It was apparently by design that the Holy Spirit uses a word which is, by definition, indefinite and ambiguous. Likewise, Paul in Romans 11:25 spoke of the hardening of Israel "until" the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. See full discussion of this in my Commentary on Romans 11:25-26.
 - 2) The meaning is that God has not closed the door upon Israel; they have closed it upon themselves; nor shall God's favor be lavished upon them any more "until" they change, a change that is neither affirmed as certain nor denied as possible.
 - 3) Christ closed his last public discourse with these same words. His use of them here seems to have been prompted by the lying warning of the Pharisees whose intent on his murder was crystal clear to the Son of God.
- .
-

Luke Chapter 14

A. Luke 14:1-6: Is It Lawful to Heal on the Sabbath Day?

1. Verses 1: “And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.”
 - a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. He would not have gone into this important Pharisee’s house without invitation. He was to eat a meal with this man and the other guests present. Notice that they watched him closely, which suggests that this was another occasion to entrap the Lord.
 - c. He was ever under scrutiny by his enemies, who also asked many “loaded” questions.
 - 1) Matthew 19:3: “The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?”
 - 2) Matthew 21:23: “And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?”
2. Verses 2-3: “And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?”
 - a. This is the only recorded example of this disease which our Lord healed. Dropsy is an old-fashioned or less technical term for edema, a swelling due to excess fluid accumulation in body tissues. Edema can occur in any parts of the body. Certain types can be dangerous.
 - b. We wonder why it was the case that this afflicted man was before the Lord unless it was a prepared trap? Of course, Jesus was able to read their minds and could clearly know their thoughts and schemes.
 - c. He responded to this situation by asking the lawyers and Pharisees, who were present, if it is “lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?”
 - d. Would any of them have administered treatment to one of their children if that little one suddenly had an accident to him on the Sabbath? Suppose this little child innocently suffered a serious cut? Would the father try to staunch the blood?
3. Verses 4-6: “And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things.”
 - a. These dishonest people would not answer; if they said it was a good thing to do, they would have uprooted their evil scheme. They did not answer. The Lord healed the man and let him return to his home or other activities.
 - b. Christ administered a fatal blow to their inconsistent views; he challenged them to deny that if they had one of their work animals to fall into a pit on the Sabbath, that they would rescue this valuable animal. Once more, these devious men would not answer!

B. Luke 14:7-14: Humility is Enjoined.

1. Verses 7-9: “And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him. And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.”
 - a. NKJ: So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 8 "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; 9 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. 10 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. 11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be

- exalted." 12 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. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."
- b. The meal was attended by a goodly number of invited guests. Our Lord used his opportunities to the very best advantage to teach. "And he put forth a parable — The ensuing discourse is so termed, because several parts of it are not to be understood literally. To those which were bidden — From this circumstance, that the guests were bidden, and from what is said, Luke 14:12, it appears that this was a great entertainment, to which many were invited: which renders it still more probable that the meeting was concerted, and the company chosen with a view to ensnare Jesus" (Benson).
2. Verses 10-11: "But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
 - a. He told these conceited men that, when they had been invited to a wedding feast, they should chose a humble place to sit; it might be the case that, if he picked out more exalted seat, someone who was more important might arrive, and you would be asked to take a lesser place, which would shame a self-important man.
 - b. But if this person had humbly taken a lesser-important place, the host might offer him a place of higher honor.
 - c. Pulpit Commentary: "The scene with the sufferer who had been healed of his dropsy was now over. The Master was silent, and the guests proceeded to take their places at the banquet. Jesus remained still, watching the manoeuvring on the part of scribes and doctors and wealthy guests to secure the higher and more honourable seats. 'The chief rooms;' better rendered 'first places.' Luke 14:7."
 - d. Boles: For every one that exalteth himself—This is Jesus' conclusion which he draws from the parable; its application is easily made. Jesus frequently repeated this. (Matt. 23:12.) Pride and a haughty spirit come before a fall. This principle is applicable alike in the affairs of men and in the kingdom of God; Jesus probably intended to direct their mind, not merely to abasement and exaltation among men, but also in a higher, spiritual sense in his kingdom and before God. This principle is taught throughout the Bible. (Prov. 16:18; Ezek. 21:26.)
 - 1) Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
 - 2) Ezekiel 21:26: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high."
 3. Verse 12: "Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee."
 - a. Commentators:
 - 1) Barnes: Call not thy friends ... This is not to be understood as commanding us not to entertain "at all" our relatives and friends; but we are to remember the "design" with which our Lord spoke. He intended, doubtless, to reprove those who sought the society of the wealthy, and particularly rich relatives, and those who claimed to be intimate with the great and honorable, and who, to show their intimacy, were in the habit of "seeking" their society, and making for them expensive entertainments. He meant, also, to commend charity shown to the poor. The passage means, therefore, call "not only" your friends, but call also the poor, etc. Compare Exodus 16:8; 1 Samuel 15:22; Jeremiah 7:22-23; Matthew 9:13.
 - 2) Jamieson: Call not thy friends—Jesus certainly did not mean us to dispense with the duties of ordinary fellowship, but, remitting these to their proper place, inculcates what is better [Bengel]. lest ... a recompence be given thee—a fear the world is not afflicted with [Bengel]. The meaning,
-

however, is that no exercise of principle is involved in it, as selfishness itself will suffice to prompt to it (Mt 5:46, 47). We would not invite someone merely to receive a return invitation.

- b. In society circumstances, when one family is invited by a friend, neighbor or relative, a responding invitation is usually in the offing. These events are common and good. Everyone enjoys such times.
4. Verses 13-14: "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."
 - a. But there are others, in a lower social status, who would enjoy such an occasion; these would not be likely to be able to give a return invitation. The Lord said these needy people also should be offered an invitation to partake of a meal. My beloved wife many times would extend our hospitality to such folks.
 - b. This preacher has, unfortunately, observed on many occasions, where a fellowship meal is scheduled for those who attend a service or gospel meeting, that the members retain their special "clicks" intact! No attention was shown to any who were not of their status. Marie and I always chose to sit with visitors, especially those who seemed to be ignored by the others. Baptisms often resulted from this simple kindness.

C. Luke 14:15-24: The Parable of the Excuses.

1. Verses 15: "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."
 - a. NKJ: 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!" 16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' 18 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.' 19 And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' 20 Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' 21 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.' 22 And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 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. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"
 - b. Matthew's account: "And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (22:1-14).

- c. Barnes: Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God - The kingdom of God here means the kingdom which the Messiah was to set up. See the notes at Matthew 3:2. The Jews supposed that he would be a temporal prince, and that his reign would be one of great magnificence and splendor. They supposed that the "Jews" then would be delivered from all their oppressions, and that, from being a degraded people, they would become the most distinguished and happy nation of the earth. To that period they looked forward as one of great happiness. There is some reason to think that they supposed that the ancient just people would then be raised up to enjoy the blessings of the reign of the Messiah. Our Saviour having mentioned the "resurrection of the just," this man understood it in the common way of the Jews, and spoke of the special happiness which they expected at that time. The Jews "only," he expected, would partake of those blessings. Those notions the Saviour corrects in the parable which follows.
- d. Pulpit Commentary:
- 1) "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. One of those who were partaking of the banquet, and had witnessed the whole scene, now speaks to the Stranger Guest. He had looked on the miracle performed for the afflicted man: he had heard the wise words spoken by the Galilaean Rabbi; he had listened to the gentle and yet pungent rebuke to the Pharisee for his ostentatious hospitality to the rich and great; he had marked the quiet reminder as to the many sufferers who really stood in need of the viands so plentifully spread for those who wanted them not [*was not in need*—bw]; he had been specially struck by the mention of the recompense which the just who remembered the poor would receive at the resurrection.
 - 2) "This quiet observer, noticing that the Master's remarks were touching upon the recompense of the just in the world to come, now breaks in with a remark on the blessedness of him who should eat bread in the kingdom of God. The words do not seem to have been spoken in a mocking spirit, but to have been the genuine outcome of the speaker's admiration of the Guest so hated and yet so wondered at."
- e. Boles:
- 1) "And when one of them that sat at meat—It should be remembered that Jesus was still in the house 'of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a sabbath' (14:1), and that he was an invited guest. He had spoken the two parables above mentioned and one of the fellow guests heard and said: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."
 - 2) "Much discussion has been had by commentators as to why this one should have so spoken; there is also a diversity of opinion as to what his words mean. Some think that he meant literal bread eaten in Jerusalem at the great feast, while others think that he had reference to eating bread in the Messianic kingdom, which, he thought, was an earthly kingdom. The Jews believed that the kingdom of the Messiah would be ushered in with a magnificent festival, at which all the members of the Jewish families should be guests.
 - 3) "Some think that this one understood Jesus' reference to the resurrection as being the resurrection of the old kingdom of Israel. It is thought that Jesus gave the following parable to correct that false view. Some think that this man gave utterance to a religious thought because he was in company where religious things were being discussed; however, we need not speculate as to what he meant or what prompted him to so express himself. It remains as a fact that he did say what is recorded here."
2. Verses 16-17: "Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready."
- a. In the ancient mode of planning a feast and inviting the guests, this arrangement was followed: the feast was planned and a preliminary invitation was issued to the guests so that they could be preparing to attend; when the feast was ready, servants were sent bidding the guests to come and eat. "The guests
-

- had been invited before, but no exact time had been fixed for them to come. Now they are notified that it is time to come; and 'all things are ready'" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.186).
- b. Who is represented by the first servant? Perhaps the prophets of the Old Testament who prophesied to Israel of the coming kingdom, thus to prepare the nation for it. The first invitation seems to be a reference to the preparatory work done by many prophets over many years. Consider:
 - 1) Moses viewed Christ as the Prophet who was greater than he (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22-23).
 - 2) Isaiah and Micah prophesied of the kingdom as the "house of God" (Isa. 2:2-3; Mic. 4:1-2; I Tim. 3:15).
 - 3) Jeremiah prophesied of the kingdom as the "new covenant" (31:31-33; Heb. 8:6-10).
 - 4) Ezekiel saw the kingdom as a sheepfold (34:11,22-23; John 10:14-16).
 - 5) Daniel prophesied specifically of the eternal kingdom (2:31-44; Acts 1:8; Col. 1:13-14).
 - 6) Joel prophesied the kingdom would begin with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (2:28-32; Acts 2:1ff).
 - 7) Amos saw the kingdom as the restored tabernacle of David (9:11-12; Acts 15:13-18).
 - 8) Zechariah prophesied of the kingdom as the temple (6:12-13; Heb. 6:20; 8:4).
 - 9) John the Immerser, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy all preached the fact that the kingdom was at hand (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:10-11).
 - c. The second invitation involves a different period from the prophetic and preparatory eras. This invitation was extended only after the feast had been prepared, which was after the Lord's death, burial and resurrection. The killing of the oxen and the fatlings is a figure of speech describing the spiritual feast which God has prepared for all who will partake:
 - 1) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."
 - 2) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 - d. This invitation was first extended to the Jews starting on the first Pentecost following the Lord's resurrection. These "other servants" represent the apostles and other Christians who carried the gospel to Israel during the first several years of the church's history.
3. Verses 18-20: "And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."
 - a. "It was an insult to the king to treat his invitation with contempt by going, one to his farm and another to his merchandise; but to seize the servants who had brought the kind invitation, and to mistreat and slay them, was an act of the most malignant hostility, justifying, according to the usages of kings, the most fearful retribution"(McGarvey, pp.186f).
 - b. This part of the parable describes the attitude on the part of many of the Jews when the gospel was first being preached. "They made light of it" (Matt. 22:5). They were more interested in their own worldly affairs. These servants were shamefully mistreated at the hands of some of the Jews (Cf. Matt. 21:35-36; Acts 7:51-60; 8:1ff; 9:1ff; Acts 12; 2 Cor. 11:23-28; Rev. 2:8-11-17; 3:7-13).
 4. Verses 21-22: "So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."
 - a. Matthew included this thought: "But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." As the result of their mistreatment his servants, the king in the story sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.
 - 1) This punishment was meted out against them in the coming of the Roman army against Jerusalem in A.D. 70, when the city was taken, the temple razed, and hundreds of thousands of Jews slain.
-

- 2) In Matthew 24:1-35 Jesus will describe many of the horrors attendant to the demise of the Jewish state.
 - 3) In Luke 19:41-44, this is given: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
 - b. This verse serves as "a parenthesis and is not to be understood that the destruction of Jerusalem took place prior to the Gentiles' invitation to share in God's grace and kingdom. Acts 10 and 15, the missionary journeys of Paul, and the New Testament Epistles serve as adequate evidence that the Gentiles were not only invited but accepted God's grace not too long after Pentecost" (Varner, *Book of Matthew*, p.564).
 - c. "...The destruction of Jerusalem was a direct action of heavenly vengeance upon the Jewish nation for their rejection of Christ. Man may temporize and avoid the fact if they will, but the wrath of God is the ultimate answer to all human perversity....The type of historical visitation upon cities and nations that disobey God, like that which fell upon Jerusalem, has not disappeared but may still be seen. France rejected the Bible, tied it to the tail of an ass, dragged it through the city, and burned it on the city dump, elevating at the same time the low goddess of Reason; but since that time, the government of France has fallen 35 times!" (Coffman, pp.345f).
 - d. In this current year [2023], are we about to see such punishment in the western world? Maybe there is still time for repentance! "The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, Even all the nations that forget God." (Ps. 9:17. ASV).
5. Verses 23-24: "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."
- a. The king said that those who were originally invited were not worthy, therefore they were to go to the highways and invite all that they would be able to find to come to the feast. By this means, an ample number of guests were provided for the son's wedding feast.
 - 1) "The wedding was a success. So also will the true religion of God prevail at last....No man or group of men, no nation or group of nations, can prevent the accomplishment of the eternal design of God. The fact that the ultimate guests were 'both bad and good' emphasizes the probationary nature of the church in this dispensation" (Coffman, *Matthew*, p.346).
 - 2) This point is similar to the lesson taught in the parable of the net wherein fish of all kinds were caught (Matt. 13:47-48).
 - b. "The first invitations had been extended only to those of suitable rank to be guests of the king; but now all persons found on the highways, 'both bad and good,' are invited, and they, appreciating the honor conferred on them, accept the invitation, and the king triumphs in reference to the number, if not in reference to the rank of his guests. The conduct of those first invited brought ruin on themselves without defeating the purpose of the king" (McGarvey, *Matthew*, p.187).
 - c. The Jews, having generally rejected the gospel, are left to their own sad fate; the Gentiles, having been steeped in sin for generations, accepted the gospel in great numbers, so that today the church is comprised almost exclusively of them. In the meantime, consider the history of the Jews since then.
 - d. "Invariably, in all Christ's teachings, it is also clear that mankind in the broadest sense is not worthy of salvation; that is, they cannot merit it. In the three parables in this series here delivered to the Pharisees, it is clear that in the case of the two sons, neither of them was what a son should have been; and in the case of the one before us, the total population, in the truest and highest sense, were not *entitled* to be invited, the first because they were unworthy of it, and the others because they were not
-

of sufficient excellence. In the light of this, how can any man feel that God, in any sense, 'owes' him eternal life?" (Coffman, p.347). See also Matthew 20:1-16, the story of the laborers in the vineyard.

D. Luke 14:25-33: Requirement for Cross-bearing.

1. Verses 25-27: "And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."
 - a. "Now there went with him great multitudes:—Be it remembered that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem; he had paused in the house of the Pharisee and had remained there at the feast and had spoken the three parables discussed above. It seems that he is now proceeding toward Jerusalem and a great multitude is following him. The Jews traveled in companies to Jerusalem to attend the feast. (Luke 2:44.) This discourse is recorded only by Luke; there are similar declarations in Matt. 10:37, 38; Mark 9:50. This is another proof that Jesus repeated many of his sayings and interwove them into different connections and discourses. As Jesus proceeded on the way the multitude that followed him increased; however, it is not necessary to infer that the crowds followed him all the way to Jericho and thence to Jerusalem" (Boles).
 - b. Compare: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:37-39).
 - c. Religious differences put the disciple's faith to a strong test. He must decide whether he loves the Lord or his family member more. Christ will not take second place. He that loves father or mother more than he loves Christ is not worthy of the Lord. This verse is parallel and thus explains Luke 14:26. To hate, as used in Luke, means to love less.
 - 1) "And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah....And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated..." (Gen. 29:30-31). Jacob did not hate Leah, he simply loved her less than he loved Rachel.
 - 2) Romans 9:9-12: "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." [God *hated* Esau only in the sense that he chose Jacob to be in the lineage of the Messiah, and not Esau].
 - 3) One who loves his parent more than he loves Christ is said to hate Christ. He hates him only in the sense that he loves him less than he loves the parent.
 - d. It is impossible to have the approval of the Lord while holding some one or some thing else in higher esteem.
 - 1) Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
 - 2) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - 3) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - 4) Luke 9:23: "And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 16:22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."

-
- e. "The cross, on account of its use in the execution of the basest criminals, was a symbol of dishonor. The dishonor attached to being a disciple of Jesus is here graphically symbolized by taking a cross on one's shoulder and following Jesus" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.94).
 - 1) To "take up his cross" means willingly to submit to whatever hardship or persecution which being a faithful Christian entails.
 - 2) To remain faithful to Christ despite the rejection and opposition on the part of unbelievers demonstrates the highest degree of love for the Master. Bearing the cross involves bearing our obligations and refusing under any circumstance to cast them aside.
 - f. The point here is not limited to those who literally lose their lives for the cause of Christ, but extends to every member of the church of Christ. It includes losing our lives in sacrificing our own personal wishes and pleasures to the enhancement of the Lord's great work.
 - 1) "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20).
 - 2) "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves...for even Christ pleased not himself..." (Rom. 15:1,3).
 - g. Our text is a call for selflessness. Virtually every significant problem in our country is traceable to selfishness, in its many forms. Why do people rob banks? Why do they cheat? What motive causes drug deals to sell their unholy product? Why are many murders committed? The major problems of any society could be cured if all the members of that society subscribed to the principles of the gospel, one of which is unselfishness.
 - 1) This is one of the several paradoxes of the Bible. To get we must give. To live we must die. To be exalted we must be abased.
 - 2) The one who attempts to preserve his life by shunning the cross is doomed to die spiritually. The one who loses his life for the Lord's sake will find (save) his life spiritually. "By denying Christ before persecutors in order to escape persecution, one loses his soul; but when one remains faithful to Christ and suffers persecution even unto death, that one finds eternal life" (Boles, p.238).
2. Verses 28-30: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish."
- a. "Common sense teaches men not to begin any costly work without first seeing that they have wherewithal to finish. And he who does otherwise exposes himself to general ridicule. Nor will any wise potentate enter on a war with any hostile power without first seeing to it that, despite formidable odds (two to one), he be able to stand his ground; and if he has no hope of this, he will feel that nothing remains for him but to make the best terms he can. Even so, says our Lord, 'in the warfare you will each have to wage as My disciples, despise not your enemy's strength, for the odds are all against you; and you had better see to it that, despite every disadvantage, you still have wherewithal to hold out and win the day, or else not begin at all, and make the best you can in such awful circumstances'" (Jamieson).
 - b. The Lord is not discouraging anyone from obeying the gospel, but is showing ahead of time that his commitment to Christ must be firm and determined; there will be strong enemies to assault his faith, including false teachers, the allure of the world, the influence of family and friends, and sinful things to which he was once held. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17).
 - c. The apostle Peter shows the grave danger to one who becomes a Christian, is faithful for a while, then turns back to his old sinful life. "For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered
-

unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire” (3 Pet. 2:20-22, ASV).

- 1) Notice the ones he describes had “escaped the pollutions of the world.” That means that they had obeyed the gospel and received the blessings and benefits pertaining to saved people. The only way anyone can escape the defilements of this world is to obey the gospel. As Peter expresses it, the escape was effected through “the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” The knowledge of Christ is the gospel of Christ; it is in the gospel that we learn all of the truths, precepts and requirements which can produce freedom from the guilt of sin [the defilements of this world].
 - 2) The pollutions (*miasma*) means *defilements*—“the vices of the ungodly which contaminate a person in his intercourse with the world” [Vine's Expository Dictionary]. Concerning this Greek term, Macknight said that, being part of “the language of the ancient physicians, signified the infection of the plague. It is used here to denote sin in general; but more especially the sin of lasciviousness, on account of its infectious nature and destructive consequences” (p.556). The defilements of the world includes sin—of any kind; sin defiles the soul.
 - 3) The defiled ones Peter discusses had escaped from the pollutions that had contaminated their souls; they had obeyed the gospel (cf. Acts 22:16; Rom. 10:16; Rev. 1:5). But these had become entangled again with sin, and overcome.
 - 4) “From this we learn that it is possible for one who has escaped from the defilement of the world through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to become entangled in worldly things to the extent that he is overcome by them. There are those who believe in the impossibility of apostasy, saying that the child of God can never so sin as to be finally lost. But in this passage Peter teaches that one who has escaped the defilements of the world, or has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, can become entangled in the world's defilements again and be overcome by them” (ALC, 1956, pp.325f).
 - 5) As a fish can become entangled in a fisherman's net, so unwary Christians can become entangled in the devil's snare. The people the apostle has been discussing in the context were false teachers who alleged that one could live licentious lives and still enjoy liberty [salvation]. Those who teach that a Christian cannot fall from grace, despite his conduct, teach the same faulty doctrine. Sin taints the soul, whether the individual is an alien sinner or a Christian. The deceivers became ensnared by the same bait with which they enticed others.
 - 6) Compare: “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (Jas. 5:19-20). The ones being addressed are brethren in Christ; they can err from the truth and are in need of conversion [being restored to salvation: Acts 8:22].
- d. The apostle reports that their latter condition was worse than their former state (before they obeyed the gospel).
- 1) “Such is the condition characteristic of those who have been delivered from the corruption of the world only to return to its defilements. The last state for all such is worse than the first: (a) apostates are usually more abandoned in sin than those who have never walked in righteousness; (b) such a state involves more guilt because of the greater knowledge such a one possesses; © such individuals are far more difficult to influence for good than those who have never known the way of righteousness” (Woods, p.177).
 - 2) A Christian who willfully returns to a life of sin does so despite knowing the truth; he cannot claim ignorance; he knows the truth and still goes into sin.
 - 3) Having repudiated the truth by his willful disobedience, he has turned his back on the only means of his salvation; if he does not love and respect the truth, the truth will have no appeal to his heart.
 - 4) Consider these awesome passages:
 - a) Hebrews 6:4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word

- of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”
- b) Hebrews 10:23-31: “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”
- 5) When a man has shown his preference for sin over righteousness, God does not block his way; he gives him up to do those things which are unseemly.
- a) Romans 1:24: “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.”
 - b) Romans 1:26-28: “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”
 - c) As examples of this process, consider the cases of Balaam (Num. 22-24), Judas (Matt. 26:14-16), rebellious Israel (Jer. 6:15-16), and the Gentiles of ancient days (Rom. 1:18-32).
- e. They would have been better if they had never known the way of truth than to have turned from the holy commandment.
- 1) “Since this fallen, apostate state is worse than the first it is obviously better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandments delivered to them....To know the way of righteousness means to have saving knowledge of God and to walk in the ways that are right according to God’s standards” (ALC, 1956, p.326).
 - 2) In this verse we have strong evidence that a saved person can return to sin and be lost. The doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy is false.
 - a) James 5:19-20: “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” An examination of this passage shows that inspiration is speaking of a child of God who has erred from the truth; if another saint converts that wayward member, he has brought back a sinner (an erring saint) from the error of his way, and has delivered that precious soul from death (spiritual death in the present world and from the second death in the next world).
 - b) Luke 12:47-48: “And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” [This passage evidently addresses the subject of degrees of punishment. In the eternal scheme of things, even a “light” beating is still awful; the culprit would still be
-

- separated from God, from heaven, from glory, from rest, from light, from the redeemed, and from eternal life].
- c) Matthew 11:20-24: “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”
 - f. The holy commandment is the word of God—the gospel.
 - 1) Isaiah 35:8: “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
 - 3) Compare: “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed” (Gal. 1:23).
 - g. The two animals are used by the apostle to depict the awfulness of being contaminated with sin.
 - 1) The animals Peter names are the dog and the swine; the dog is a scavenger and the swine was considered as an abomination (by the Jews and the Arabs). Those who know dogs and swine know how accurate Peter’s statement is.
 - a) Proverbs 26:11: “As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.”
 - b) Matthew 7:6: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”
 - 2) “It should be observed that in both instances the animal was *changed*. That each returned to its former offensive habits does not alter the fact that a change had occurred. Advocates of the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy, in an effort to avoid the obvious force of this passage, insist that the dog remained a dog, the sow a sow. Such is not the point of the proverb. The dog had ejected that which was foul; the sow had been washed. That each returned to its former manner of life reveals that the old nature *returned*. Peter cites the proverb as an illustration of that which had occurred in the lives of these men who, though they had escaped the corruptions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, had become entangled again therein, and overcome, and their last state was thus worse than the first” (Woods, p.178).
 - 3) “The application of the proverb is that a person may through obedience to the gospel and by the power of the blood of Christ become free from sin and continue in that freedom for a while, but turn back to sin and become so defiled that he will be lost....The application is that a person becomes free of sin and then after remaining free for a while becomes entangled and deviled by that sin again” (ALC, 1956, p.326).
 3. Verses 31-32: “Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.”
 - a. Jesus used another illustration about preparing for another kind of challenge. If a certain king has the notion of attacking another king, first he must wisely consider the operation. If he has a smaller army
-

than the invading foe, then it might behoove him to seek a peaceful solution. This make good sense in situation being described.

- b. One who is seriously considering becoming a Christian, should be appraised of the potential problems he is to face. The danger is not to be terrorized by the prospects, but to be so firmly committed that he is willing to stand up to the assaults on his faith, gaining strength from the gospel, from other saints, and keeping in mind his initial
4. Verse 33: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."
- a. Review: "And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:57-62).
 - b. Boles: "The one who does not renounce all cannot be a disciple of Jesus. One must 'renounce' all; here the principle in the two parables of the rash builder and of the rash king is applied; the minor details do not matter; the spirit of self-sacrifice is the point. One should neither make a false start nor a hopeless stand, but give up all at once for Christ, and give his life to him. The cost is great; one must give his influence, his money, his energy, his life, his all, if he would be a disciple of Jesus."

E. Luke 14:34-35: Lessons From Salt.

1. Verse 34: "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?"
 - a. Compare: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).
 - b. Man can live without many things, but not without light, water, bread, and salt. The Lord referred to himself as the light of the world, the bread of life, and the giver of everlasting water; he here described his faithful followers as the salt of the earth.
 - 1) Salt has hundreds of uses. It is used in the home, on the farm, in construction, in making glass, in soap, and in food processing. Wars have been fought over salt. Roman soldiers were paid in salt. The Latin word *salarium* (salt) gives our English word *salary*. "Not worth his salt" was an expression used by the Greeks to describe a slave who had been bought with a measure of salt.
 - 2) There is an unbelievable amount of salt in the world: about three-eighths of a pound of salt is dissolved in a gallon of sea water. It has been estimated that if the seas were evaporated, there would remain about 4.4 million cubic miles of rock salt, enough to cover the land areas of earth to a depth of 500 feet.
 - c. Jesus used salt, with its significant characteristics, to aptly describe his faithful followers.
 - 1) **Salt preserves.** It is used on meat to prevent spoilage; it is used in pickling for the same purpose; it is used in the cells of the body to facilitate healing. God's faithful people have a preserving effect on society (Prov. 14:34). If more *salt* had been found in Sodom, it would not have been destroyed (Gen. 18). The 7,000 in Israel who had not bowed their knee to Baal kept their nation from destruction (1 Kings 19:18). When Israel left God, God gave them up. Our own country owes its preservation to the saints who live here. Its continuation depends, not merely on military might, but on the righteousness of its citizens.
 - 2) **Salt gives flavor.** Many recipes call for salt; its absence is quickly detected. What salt is to food, Christians are to the world. Without the godly flavoring of the saints, this world would be a most unsavory place. Our presence makes the world to be more flavorful to God. Cf. Enoch; Elijah; Hebrews 11:38.
 - 3) **Salt has a purifying effect.** Ordinary bacteria cannot live in salt. Salt is used as a mouthwash, a gargling solution, and to brush teeth. Christians often have a *disinfecting effect* on society. Some

people will clean up their speech when a Christian is present. Through our influence in teaching the gospel, many clean up their lives by obeying the gospel. Where there has been no impact of the gospel, ignorance, poverty, oppression, natural disasters, and immorality predominate.

- 4) **Salt is a positive force.** If it is in coffee or ice cream, its presence cannot be concealed. Its absence from other food is also noted.
 - 5) **Salt has a permeating effect.** When a ham is packed in salt, the salt permeates and preserves; but the salt must make contact with the ham. Christian influence can permeate society with its preserving and flavoring characteristics, if saints make contact with society. Christians are not like a sponge which soaks up what is around it; a sponge takes up but does not "put out" unless it is squeezed. We are not to scatter salt as we journey through life, rather we are the salt—as we live among men, the influence of the gospel in our lives will have its proper effect on those around us.
 - 6) **Salt is enduring.** The flavor of salt is not lost by age or severe tests. Mines which are thousands of years old still produce good salt. If salt is dissolved in water and heated to a high temperature, it still retains its qualities. The followers of Christ have this enduring quality. Trials will not destroy us (Heb. 10:31-35); time does not sap our strength (Heb. 10:36-39; 2 Pet. 3:18). We lose our strength only if we are contaminated by worldliness (sin; error; indifference).
 - 7) **Salt is precious.** Life would not be pleasant without it. The oceans would soon stagnate; food would spoil; disease would spread. Salt is essential to life, thus is precious. The blessings and influence of one Christian is powerful, thus it is precious to the world. One individual obeys the gospel and influences others to obey.
- d. If our country suddenly lost all or even most of Christianity's saving influences, think of the horrible consequences that would quickly develop. All of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21) would increase to the fullest degree. There would be no reason extant for God to preserve the nation (Ps. 9:17; Isa. 60:12; 2 Chron. 7:14; Deut. 9:3-5; 2 Kings 17:13-18; Jer. 18:7-10; 51:49,53; 51:54-56,58).
 - e. Where the influence of Christianity is not found, "the living conditions for the masses are wretched; a few rich masters rule with a ruthless and iron hand. Liberties are crushed; little value is placed on human life; living conditions are squalid; and opportunities for betterment are few" (Marlin, J.T., *The Sermon on the Mount*, Spiritual Sword Lectures, p.62).
 - 1) This condition began with religious apostasy which in turn began with the individual Christians turning back to the world. Political leaders are corrupted, and society as a whole degenerates spiritually and morally. Finally, there is nothing left of the nation worth saving. This state might develop when the citizens are offered opportunities to obey the gospel, but refuse it.
 - 2) "In every age of the world when the forces of righteousness have become sufficiently suppressed, tragedy for that people has been the inevitable result. The dissolution of all people has followed an undeviating course" (ibid.).
 - 3) There is no way that any nation can long continue without the preserving, uplifting influence of godliness. Christianity is the only hope for a happy future for our nation or any other nation.
 - f. Therefore, if Christians (the salt) lose their savor, with what shall society be flavored and preserved? There would be no hope. And the verse illustrates the utterly worthless state of an apostate Christian! He is represented as adulterated salt which has no flavoring or preserving quality. Corrupted salt cannot be thrown on the fields for it still has power to destroy good crops; it can only be thrown on the footpaths and roads where it is trodden underfoot. Such a Christian is good for nothing! This teaches the supreme importance of remaining completely unadulterated by the world. It is significant that salt does not lose its special qualities unless it becomes adulterated from without. Left pure, salt retains its qualities. But saints, like salt, can become contaminated and thus lose their special properties which make them valuable and useful to the Lord.
 - g. We must remain pure in doctrine, for if our belief and practices are corrupted with human doctrines, our worship will be unacceptable (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7, 13; 2 John 9-11; Gal. 2:4-5; 2 Cor. 2:15-17; Jude 3; 1 Pet. 4:11; John 4:24). Those who teach error on the plan of salvation, on the identity of the

church, on the nature of the kingdom, on the Bible doctrine of final things, on godly living, (on any one or all of these or other such things) are following the commandments of men; therefore they cannot offer worship that is acceptable to God! And we would be wrong to extend our fellowship to them or to try to worship with them (1 John 1:6-7; 2 John 9-11). We must remain pure in life, sincerely following the truth (Phil. 1:27; Tit. 2:3; Heb. 12:14; Rom. 12:1-2; Matt. 5:8; Col. 3; Eph. 5:1-17; 1 Pet. 2:5,9).

- h. In order for salt to be effective, it must come in direct contact with that which it is intended to affect. A fresh ham will not be preserved if it and the salt do not make direct, continual contact.
 - 1) A saint cannot do his best in flavoring and preserving of society unless contact exists between him and members of society. In this passage, therefore, Christ condemns monasticism and isolationism. A saint is not of the world (John 17:16; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 6:14), but he lives in the world (John 17:15; 1 Pet. 2:9).
 - 2) We are able to do our proper work of influencing the world to obey the gospel, live godly lives, worship and serve God, only if we contact those in the world.
2. Verse 35: "It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - a. Boles: When salt has lost its saltness, it has lost its true nature; when it has lost its nature, it cannot function as salt and is unfit for that which people use salt. It is good for nothing and is cast away. Salt that has lost its savor does not make good fertilizer; rather it destroys the fertility of the soil and kills vegetation. There is no place about the house, yard, or garden where it can be used; no one will allow it to be thrown into his field, and the only place for it is in the street, and there it is cast to be trodden under foot of men. 'Dunghill' is used here for 'manure'; this is its only use in the New Testament; it is used a few times in the Old Testament. Jesus used strong terms to emphasize the worthlessness of a mere professor in his discipleship. He concluded with an oft-repeated saying: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:15; 13:43; Luke 8:8)."
 - b. See: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). This command is repeated in each of the seven letters. It is similar to a statement frequently made by Jesus in his ministry.
 - 1) Matthew 11:15: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 2) Matthew 13:9: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 3) Matthew 13:43: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 4) Mark 4:23: "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 5) Luke 14:35: "It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - c. The Lord taught the need to take heed how we hear and what we hear.
 - 1) Mark 4:24: "And he said unto them, Take heed **what** ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given."
 - 2) Luke 8:18: "Take heed therefore **how** ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have."
 - d. Hearing is personal and individual; each is to hear what the Spirit says to all the congregations. Notice that the information given in Revelation is attributed to the Spirit, but the source is the Father, through Christ, by the angel, to John—and on to men. The Father and the Son speak through the Spirit-revealed written word of God.

Luke Chapter 15

A. Luke 15:1-7: Parable of the Lost Sheep.

1. “The three parables of this chapter were spoken against the murmurers. Publicans and sinners admitted they were unclean, lost, and needed help, and were seeking earnestly for the truth. They were in the attitude to be helped. The scribes and Pharisees were self-righteous, vain, and thought they needed no help. They could not be helped. The parables show the lost condition of those away from God and the interest he takes in trying to save them and the joy in heaven over the salvation of one of them on the one hand, and the attitude of the self-righteous on the other hand” (Kenningham, p.200).
2. Verses 1-2: “Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”
 - a. These two verses form the background for the three parables next used by the Lord. Mark reported in his inspired account of the gospel that the common people heard him gladly (12:37). Here we are told that the tax collectors and those called sinners came to hear him. The Pharisees and scribes murmured against Jesus, even abusing him for sharing a meal with them.
 - b. Compare: “And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance?” (Mark 2:15-17). Luke recorded this episode in 5:29-30.
 - c. Those in need of a physician are sick people; those who are well have no need to seek medical assistance or treatment. If Jesus was to heal the spiritual ills of men, it was necessary for him to go where they were. Who could argue with such logic! Jesus came to call sinners to repentance; to do this he must talk to them. This does not imply that the Pharisees did not need to repent; they had the appearance of being righteous, but the publicans and sinners obviously needed to repent. In Matthew 23, Christ denounced the sins of the scribes and Pharisees, and exposed their need to repent.
3. Verses 3-4: “And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?”
 - a. Matthew’s account: “For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish” (18:11-14).
 - b. From my notes on Matthew’s account:
 - 1) “As it is not the will of the shepherd that one stray sheep should perish, even so it is not the will of God that an erring disciple shall perish. And now, if the shepherd does not despise the foolish sheep, and leave it to perish because it has gone astray, and if God does not despise the erring disciple, why should we despise him? On the one hand, the disciple is of much more value than a sheep, and, on the other, God against whom he has sinned could much more properly despise him than we who are so much like him” (McGarvey, p.158).
 - 2) Christ came to save those who were lost, which included the whole race: (Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:23; 1 Tim. 1:13-15; Heb. 2:10; Matt. 26:28). No one should despise any other lost person.
 - 3) Christ wishes to reclaim any of his little ones who go astray. No one should despise any of these erring disciples. It is the will of God than none of these little ones (followers of Christ) should perish. "The importance of this lesson cannot be overemphasized. The selfish conduct of brethren who are more interested in having their own way, than in strengthening and saving the weak and

- uninformed, is in direct opposition against the declared will of God, and they will be held responsible for the souls whom they have despised when they face the judgment at the last day. Cf. 1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 2 Peter 3:9" (ALC, 1959, p.170).
- c. The parable relates the case of a shepherd having his flock feeding somewhere in open country; if one of his sheep strays and becomes lost from the flock, the man will leave the ninety-nine sheep, trusting them to stay together, while he searches for the one which is lost.
4. Verses 5-6: "And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."
 - a. Having found the lost animal, he puts it on his shoulder and returns to the flock, calling attention to those near him that he has found his sheep. He calls on them to rejoice with him, which manifestly they would do.
 - b. How could a shepherd recognize one sheep from the many? They know his voice! [See the illustration of this in my Book on John, p.266].
 - c. "As there are many flocks in such a place as this, each one takes a different path, and it is his business to find pasture for them. It is necessary, therefore, that they should be taught to follow, and not to stray away into the unfenced fields of corn which lie so temptingly on either side. Any one that thus wanders is sure to get into trouble. The shepherd calls sharply from time to time to remind them of his presence. They know his voice and follow on; but if a stranger calls, they stop short, lift up their heads in alarm, and, if it is repeated, they turn and flee, because they know not the voice of a stranger. This is not the fanciful costume of a parable; it is simple fact. I have made the experiment repeatedly." —Thompson's *The Land and the Book*.
 5. Verse 7: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."
 - a. Barnes:
 - 1) It is a principle of human nature that the "recovery" of an object in danger of being lost, affords much more intense joy than the quiet "possession" of many that are safe. This our Saviour illustrated by the case of the lost sheep and of the piece of silver. It might also be illustrated by many other things. Thus we rejoice most in our health when we recover from a dangerous disease; we rejoice over a child rescued from danger or disease more than over those who are in health or safety. We rejoice that property is saved from conflagration or the tempest more than over much more that has not been in danger. This feeling our Lord represents as existing in heaven. "Likewise," in like manner, or on the same principle, there is joy.
 - 2) In heaven—Among the angels of God. Compare Luke 15:10. Heavenly beings are thus represented as rejoicing over those who repent on earth. They see the guilt and danger of people; they know what God has done for the race, and they rejoice at the recovery of any from the guilt and ruins of sin.
 - b. Jamieson:
 - 1) He was speaking of what took place "in heaven," or among "angels," and of "their" emotions when they contemplate the creatures of God; and he says that "they" rejoiced in the repentance of one "sinner" more than in the holiness of many who had not fallen. We are not to suppose that he meant to teach that there were just ninety-nine holy angels to one sinner. He means merely that they rejoice more over the "repentance" of one sinner than they do over many who have not fallen. By this he vindicated his own conduct....
 - 2) If they rejoice also, it shows how desirable is the repentance of a sinner. They know of how much value is an immortal soul. They see what is meant by eternal death; and they do not feel "too much," or have "too much anxiety" about the soul that can never die (Jamieson).
-

- c. Matthew 9:12-13: “But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

B. Luke 15:8-10: The Parable of the Lost Coin.

1. Verse 8: “Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?”
 - a. This parable tells of a certain woman who lost one of her ten pieces of silver. Especially during hard economic times, the loss of even a small value coil can be a harsh loss. This was so in the generation in which this writer grew up. To guard against losing a coin, we wrapped our coins in a handkerchief and tied it securely. Our money was then safe in the handkerchief which was carried in a pocket.
 - b. So valuable was the missing coin that the lady used a candle to search; she swept the floor and looked carefully.
2. Verse 9: “And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.”
 - a. Like the shepherd who found his missing sheep, she asked her friends to rejoice with her; in their turn, they would have done just as this woman had done.
 - b. In the parable, the lost coin represented a lost soul. That person is in a desperately dangerous condition. The punishments of *Gehenna* are in the offing as his eternal state.
 - c. If we can comprehend somewhat of the horrors of that terrible place, we will place a very high value on our soul! That awareness will keep us as close to our Lord as possible. If our love for God, for the worth of our soul, the great value of other souls, and an undying love for truth, is strong, that also will bind us closely to our Savior and our God!
3. Verse 10: “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”
 - a. See the comments given above under verse seven.
 - b. When we perceive a person lost in sin or in error, our heart is touched? Surely it must be. When another Christian falls into sin, how do we view it? Sorrow should tear at our heart! When some alien sinner obeys the gospel and puts on his Lord in baptism, every other saint rejoices. At the repentance of one of our fellow saints, we are filled with happiness.

C. Luke 15:11-32: The Parable of the Lost Boy.

1. Verses 11-12: “And 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 falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.”
 - a. This parable describes the case of alien sinners and wayward Christians.

The Father in the Family	God: Eph. 4:6
The Father’s Family	Church of Christ: Isa. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:15
The Prodigal Son	The Erring Christian: Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:6-10
The Far Country	The Realm of Satan
The Prodigal’s Condition	Sin, Degradation, Separation from God Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1-3
The Prodigal’s Return	Repentance and Restoration
The Elder Brother	The Weak, Self-righteous Christian

- b. Boles:

- 1) The three parables were spoken in the presence of "publicans and sinners" and the "Pharisees and the scribes"; the first class had come to Jesus "to hear him" teach, but the last class had come to spy, criticize, and accuse him. It is well to keep these two classes in mind as we study the parable.
 - 2) This may be called the "parable of the lost son" as the other two and called the "lost sheep" and "lost coin." And the younger of them said to his father,—The father had two sons. In the first parable the lost sheep strayed of itself, but a piece of money could not be lost of itself; in the one the attention is fastened upon the condition of the thing lost, while in the second case attention is fastened upon her sorrow of the one who lost it; but in the parable of the prodigal son there is blame to be attached to the one that is lost.
 - 3) There were two sons, and, according to Jewish law of inheritance, the older son would receive two portions; the younger son would receive only one-third of the inheritance. According to the custom, the father might, during his lifetime, dispose of all his property by a gift as he may wish.
- c. Coffman:
- 1) That this parable is an unqualified tragedy, first to last, may not be doubted, despite the rejoicing over the return of the prodigal; and, as is the case in many of Jesus' teachings, the total unworthiness of the human race in the sight of God is plainly taught. To be sure, people are precious in God's sight; God loves them; God offered His Son upon Calvary for their redemption; and one redeemed soul is valued above the world and everything in it (Mark 8:36,37); but Jesus was careful to use illustrations, such as this parable, in such a manner as to show beyond any shadow of doubt that no man **DESERVES** salvation through his own merit.
 - 2) The prodigal son did not merit the honorable reinstatement he received of the father; nor did the hard-hearted elder brother deserve the father's entreaty at the end of it. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-6), both those workers who came in the eleventh hour and received reward, and those who worked all day and complained against the householder, proved themselves to be without merit.
 - 3) The same situation is seen in the parable of two sons (Matthew 21:28-32); who would wish to have a son like either one of them? Likewise, in the parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matthew 22:12-14), neither the nobility who scorned the invitation, nor the rabble that accepted it, had any quality of character that could have merited the invitation.
2. Verses 13-14: "And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."
- a. Expositor's Greek Testament:
- 1) "The interest in the lost now appropriately takes the form of eager longing and patient waiting for the return of the erring one, that there may be room for describing the repentance referred to in Luke 15:7; Luke 15:10, which is the motive for the return. Also in the moral sphere the subject of the finding cannot be purely passive: there must be self-recovery to give ethical value to the event. A sinning man cannot be brought back to God like a straying sheep to the fold.
 - 2) "Hence the beautiful picture of the sin, the misery, the penitent reflections, and the return of the prodigal peculiar to this parable. It is not mere scene-painting. It is meant to show how vastly higher is the significance of the terms 'lost' and 'found' in the human sphere, justifying increased interest in the finding, and so showing the utter unreasonableness of the fault-finding directed against Jesus for His efforts to win to goodness the publicans and sinners.
 - 3) "Jesus thereby said in effect: You blame in me a joy which is universal, that of finding the lost, and which ought to be greater in the case of human beings just because it is a man that is found and not a beast. Does not the story as I tell it rebuke your cynicism and melt your hearts? Yet such things are happening among these publicans and sinners you despise, every day."
-

- b. Jesus had always been open with his teachings, and though the Jews did not always grasp its import, what he taught was available to public knowledge. Of course there were some things which he related in parabolic form. Parables were used in the Bible for several excellent purposes:
- 1) To *reveal* truth. "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:26-29).
 - 2) To *immortalize* the truth (to fasten it tightly to the heart so that it would ever be remembered). The parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates this facet of parables very well (Luke 10:30-37).
 - 3) To *conceal* the truth from those who would abuse it. This is the reason the Lord had to explain to the apostles why he spoke in parables: "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*" (Matt. 13:13-17).
 - 4) "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25).
- c. The younger brother wasted the proceeds he had received from his father— *on riotous living*. He gave himself over to living dissolutely or profligately [recklessly extravagant or wasteful]. It is likely the case that he had "friends" who aided in this foolish lifestyle. A banker told me about a young man who inherited about two hundred thousand dollars from his father. No one was available to give him sound guidance. Within a few weeks, this entire fortune was entirely gone! So were his "friends."
- d. After he had wasted all he had, a mighty famine arose in that land. Soon he was in grave need of even the essentials of life.
3. Verses 15-16: "And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."
- a. NKJ: Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. 17 "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! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'"
 - b. The young man was so destitute that he gladly took a job feeding swine. Clearly, the father and sons of the parable were Jewish; the Mosaic Law forbade them to eat pork, thus it would be an extremely unlikely case that this boy would have anything to do with swine, ordinarily. But his situation was very desperate.
 - c. Boles:
 - 1) He "joined himself" to "one of the citizens of that country." The verb here means to "glue or cement"; this implies that he forced himself upon the citizen, who was unwilling to engage him and who took him into service only upon persistent entreaty. This unhappy and miserable young man is now a useless appendage to a stranger who did not care for him.
-

- 2) He was sent "into his fields to feed swine." Presumably this young man was a Jew; swine were unclean animals with the Jews; this once proud and wealthy Jewish son is now the feeder of unclean animals; it is worse than that, for he associates with the swine and "would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat."
 - 3) He had wanted the wrong thing all along, and it was no better now; all he wanted before was to fill his belly, and he now must fill it with that which gives him no satisfaction. "Husks" generally signifies a covering of grain, a dry and useless substance, which is hardly fit for food for any animal. This means that his food was so scanty that even the pods which the swine were eating were the object of his craving appetite; but these were denied him probably by the overseer.
 - d. Barnes: Some have understood this as meaning "no one gave him anything — any bread or provisions;" but the connection requires us to understand it of the "husks." He did not go a begging — his master was bound to provide for his wants; but the provision which he made for him was so poor that he would have preferred the food of the swine. He desired a portion of their food, but that was not given him. A certain quantity was measured out for them, and he was not at liberty to eat it himself. Nothing could more strikingly show the evil of his condition, or the deep degradation, and pollution, and wretchedness of sin. [*One who is living in sin is spiritually destitute* —Bob Winton].
4. Verses 17-19: "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."
- a. **He came to himself.** "What a testimony to the nature of the home he had left! But did he not know all this ere he departed and every day of his voluntary exile? He did, and he did not. His heart being wholly estranged from home and steeped in selfish gratification, his father's house never came within the range of his vision, or but as another name for bondage and gloom. Now empty, desolate, withered, perishing, home, with all its peace, plenty, freedom, dignity, starts into view, fills all his visions as a warm and living reality, and breaks his heart" (Jamieson). **Home** is truly a wondrous word!
 - b. He is now able to view his condition in its true light! "I would be better off as one of my father's hired servants! I would have food and shelter, of which I am now bereft!" We might do well to wonder how many others of our time are in such dire circumstances! Many of these might be ready to be taught the gospel, bringing spiritual food and nourishment to their souls, and perhaps at the same time, to obtain relief for their material needs.
 - c. By being honest with himself, this young man was able to come to repentance. There can be no penitence for anyone without honesty—within himself and with the truth of his real condition. "I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. 7:9-10, ASV). Notice the phrase, "godly sorrow." This is sorrow for having trampled God's will underfoot. *Godly sorrow produces repentance.*
 - 1) Paul had good cause for rejoicing on learning that many of the Corinthians had repented; he did not rejoice on account of the rebuke he gave them in the first epistle. The sorrow they experienced was godly in nature, stemming from the knowledge they had sinned; this godly sorrow led them to repent. The apostle was exultant over the end result.
 - 2) Godly sorrow and the sorrow produced as a consequence of sin are not identical. There is a severe pain in both cases, but the cause of the grief is different. If a man commits a crime, is apprehended, and imprisoned, he will naturally be grieved on account of the consequences of his criminal act; this is not godly sorrow. Godly sorrow would result in his case if he was genuinely grieved over the sinful (criminal) act he committed.
-

- 3) "Godly sorrow results in repentance, and repentance results in salvation, and this result is never to be regretted, either by those who attain it, or by those who have helped towards its attainment" (McGarvey, p.207).
- d. The young man in the parable experienced godly sorrow; he truly repented; he resolved to return to his father, confessing that he had been foolishly sinful, and asked to be made one of the father's hired workers. Can anyone deny this boy's godly sorrow and penitence? As the story turns out, the father knew that his son had genuinely changed.
5. Verses 20-21: "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."
- a. His repentance was completed when he returned to his father and readily made the confession of his sins. But we here learn that the father beheld the boy while he was still a great way off and instantly and with compassion, ran to meet the long-lost son!
- b. The father fell on the neck of his son and kissed him. He knew that the young man had repented or he would not have returned; he showed his willingness to forgiveness by how he greeted him. The boy might not have known how he would be received by his father. We can perceive the gladness that must have flooded through the son.
- c. Nevertheless, he quickly said to the father exactly what he had determined to say: "I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I'm not worthy to be called your son." Any father in a similar case would be filled with gladness! My son has returned home penitently. He would be overwhelmed with happiness.
- d. The young man acknowledged that he had sinned against heaven. He had violated the truths of the Almighty and stood condemned in God's sight. How few sins there are which do not affect other people. A member of a family who sins, in some way, adversely affects others of the group. The same is true when a Christian sins—the congregation is harmed in some way and to some extent. But the main one affected is God, for it is his will that has been violated—Heaven is pained by sin; and there is great rejoicing there when the transgressor repents.
- e. Sin directly and disastrously affects the sinner.
- 1) "The soul that sinneth, **it** shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon **him**, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon **him**" (Ezek. 18:20).
- 2) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every **one** may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).
6. Verses 22-23: "But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, 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."
- a. The father called for the best robe, a ring, and sandals, and that the fattened calf be prepared for a happy homecoming feast!
- b. "And bring hither the fatted calf. There was a custom in the large Palestinian farms that always a calf should be fattening ready for festal occasions. And let us eat... And they began to be merry. Who are intended by these plurals, us and they? We must not forget that the parable-story under the mortal imagery is telling of heavenly as well as of earthly things. The sharers in their joy over the lost, the servants of the prodigal's father on earth" (Pulpit Commentary).
- c. It would be natural for the young man to bathe before he donned the clean garments. There would be plenty of time since preparing the calf for a meal would require time.
7. Verse 24: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."
-

- a. [*As dead, and is alive again*] The metaphor of 'death' to express the condition of impenitent sin is universal in the Bible. "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead," Revelation 3:1. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead," Ephesians 5:14. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins," Ephesians 2:1. "Yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead," Romans 6:13. was lost] This poor youth had been in the exact Roman sense *perditus*—a 'lost,' an 'abandoned' character. (Cambridge Bible).
- b. Ephesians 2:1: "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The condition of every alien sinner is one of separation from God. "Death" means "separation." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). Alien sinners are separated from God; they are dead in trespasses and sins. In effect, there is no difference between *trespass* and *sin*; sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). The word "sin" means "to miss the mark." Paul's point in using both terms may simply be to include all kinds of sin. These terms are used interchangeably. See Matthew 6:9-15; Luke 11:4.
- c. Anyone who is guilty of sin is separated from God; spiritually, he is dead. "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6). Every accountable person is either in the realm of sin or in the realm of salvation; there is no other alternative. He is either in Christ or out of Christ. If the individual is in Christ, he possesses the spiritual blessings of God (Eph. 1:3), including being alive spiritually.
- d. In Ephesians 2, Paul is addressing men and women who once were in this dreadful condition of being separated from God; they were dead in trespasses and sin. But God has quickened them; he has made them to be alive. This he did when they obeyed the gospel.
 - 1) Romans 6:3-6: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
 - 2) Romans 6:11: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 3) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

D. Luke 15:25-32: The Elder Brother.

1. Verses 25-28: "Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him."
 - a. NKJ: "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 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. 30 But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' 31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32 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.'"

- b. The elder brother was in the field, about his usual work for his father. He was a dependable man. It may be the case that this man held in his heart a resentment toward his wastrel brother and toward his father for having given in to the younger son's earlier demands. At that particular time he could not know what this missing brother had been doing.
- c. The older son drew near the house and heard music and perceived that dancing and merrymaking was in progress; asked one of the servants the meaning of these happy signs. He learned that the brother had returned and the father had slain the fattened calf and had welcomed the younger son back with this joyful celebration.
- d. This brother grew angry and refused to come into the place of festivities. This response is a common reaction. There are plenty of cases where someone has been mistreated, perhaps even badly, who becomes gravely upset when the offending party makes some token of reconciliation. It is difficult for the victim to accept this, for the wound was deep and could have been avoided. Perhaps we all know of cases of this. This should not happen between spiritual brethren.
- e. The father of the family came out to appeal to this son to come in and take part of the in the party. But his feelings had been sorely hurt—he thought he had a just cause.
- f. Boles:
 - 1) Instead of entering the house, as his position in the family would have justified, upon learning what was going on, he called a servant and inquired as to the particulars. His cool and calculating selfishness betrays itself in this little incident. There are three words in the Greek for servants in the parable; there are "hired servants," "servants," and "footboys" or "lackeys"; the elder brother called one of the "lackeys." These three classes of servants may indicate the wealth and high standing of this family.
 - 2) The servant reported: "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound." This should have been good news to the elder brother. This servant seems to have thought that the elder brother would receive the announcement with like emotions of the father; hence he says: "Thy brother" and "thy father" are rejoicing together, and that the father had "killed the fatted calf."
 - 3) No mention is made of the robe, ring, and shoes with which the younger son had been clothed; only "the fatted calf" was mentioned, which was enough to indicate that great honor was bestowed upon the returned son. He was "safe and sound," which was an added reason for the merrymaking; the returned son was in a healthful condition.
2. Verses 29-30: "And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."
 - a. Coffman:
 - 1) "The persons primarily in view, as represented by the elder son, were the scribes, Pharisees, and other religious leaders of Israel. It was their anger at the Lord's inclusion of publicans and sinners as objects of heavenly grace which, in a large degree, motivated their hatred of Jesus. The fierce religious pride and exclusiveness of the leaders were but the metastasis of the cancer of selfishness within them; and their attitude toward others was an inherent contradiction of the purpose of God, whose love of all men Jesus had come to proclaim. [metastasis: "the development of secondary tumors at a distance from a primary site of cancer. In this case, the disease of selfishness—bw].
 - 2) "The selfishness of the religious leaders manifested itself in their despising the Gentiles, but it did not stop there. Inherent in the nature of selfishness is the constant restriction and withdrawal flowing out of it; and the progression of selfishness in Israel's leaders had, in the times of Jesus, reached a level in which most of the chosen people themselves were also despised by their leaders. On one pretext or another, they hated everybody but themselves. Even of the multitudes of their

- own people, the Pharisees said, "This multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed" (John 7:49)."
- b. *Lo, these many years do I serve thee.*—The very word "I serve," as a slave serves, is eminently suggestive. The obedience had all along been servile, prompted by fear and hope, even as the slave's obedience is. The language put into the mouth of the elder son is clearly meant to represent the habitual thoughts of the Pharisees. They are taken, as it were, after our Lord's manner, as seen in the previous parables, at their own valuation of themselves. They are conscious of no transgressions; but in that very unconsciousness lies the secret of the absence of any sense of joy in being forgiven, of any power to sympathize with the joy of others, even of any satisfaction in the service in which they pride themselves. (Comp. Notes on Luke 7:47-50.) They are scandalised at the gladness which others feel when a penitent returns to God. It seems like an insult and wrong to themselves. Their life has been one of uniform obedience; they have performed their religious duties. Why is so much stir made about those who have fallen as they never fell? [Ellicott].
 - c. The older brother assumed the worst against his brother, that he had wasted his inheritance on harlots; drunkenness and immorality often go together. This may have been what the younger brother had done, but the older sibling could not know this to be a fact. He put down his brother and tried to exalt his own goodness.
3. Verses 31-32: "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."
 - a. The father kindly spoke to this brother, trying to get him to put away his anger and other sinful actions and join in with the safe return of the missing brother. As far as the parable is concerned, the elder brother is left in this same selfish and stubborn condition. [In the story, the elder brother still had in prospect the major part of the father's inheritance].
 - b. Consider: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - c. Brother Lipscomb makes these good comments:
 - 1) "This is not a destruction of the souls of men, but they will be banished from the presence of the Lord. The bonds that unite them will be destroyed forever. They will never be restored. And away from God, with all the means of help and blessing from God severed, man will be the subject of misery and woe forever. The Scriptures are so clear on this point that it seems that none willing to receive the truth can doubt this.
 - 2) "In making the punishment for sin a light matter, we make sin against God a trivial matter and derogate his honor, majesty, holiness, and power. The whole trouble arises over a misconception of the meaning of death. Death does not mean annihilation, but separation of the spirit, the vital principle, from the body. Spiritual death means the separation of the soul and body from God, the vitalizing principle of spiritual life. Eternal death is the final and everlasting separation of the soul and body from God, the vitalizing principle of spiritual life.
 - 3) "Eternal death is the final and everlasting separation of soul and body from the presence and glory of God. Thus separated, it is not annihilated. It is subject to perpetual and eternal suffering. Nothing looking toward annihilation is found in the Bible when we rightly use terms. This idea is not found in the Bible. Whence does it come? It comes from a disposition to mitigate rebellion against God, and to find lighter punishment than God has prescribed. Why should this be done? Is man too fearful of sinning against God? Lighten the sin and ameliorate the suffering and will it then make men dread sin and rebellion more? We may well suspect our position and our spirit when we find ourselves excusing sin or ameliorating the woes that come from sin against God" (Lipscomb, Thessalonians, pp.90f).
-

- d. Barnes:
- 1) "The word which is here rendered *destruction* (*oleqthros*), is different from that which occurs in Mat. 25:46, and which is there rendered *punishment*, *kolasis*. The word *oleqthros*—*olethron*—occurs only here and in 1 Cor. 5:5, 1 Thes. 5:3, 1 Tim. 6:9; in each of which places, it is rendered *destruction*.
 - 2) "It does not denote annihilation, but is used in the same sense in which we use the word when we say that a thing is *destroyed*. Thus health is destroyed when it fails; property is destroyed when it is burned or sunk in the ocean; a limb is destroyed that is lost in battle; life is destroyed when one dies.
 - 3) "In the case before us, the destruction, whatever it be, is (1) to be continued for ever; and (2) it is to be of the nature of punishment. The meaning then must be, that the soul is destroyed as to the great purposes of its being—its enjoyment, dignity, honour, holiness, happiness. It will not be annihilated, but will live and linger on *in destruction*" (Barnes, pp.72f).
- e. Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The word *destroy* in this passage is from the Greek word *apollumi*. The idea of the word "is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being. This is clear from its use, as, *e.g.*, of the marring of wine skins, Luke 5:37; of lost sheep, *i.e.*, lost to the shepherd, metaphorical of spiritual destitution, Luke 15:4,6, etc.; the lost son, 15:24; of the perishing of food, John 6:27; of gold, 1 Pet. 1:7" (Vine, Vol. 1, p.302). This word is found in the following verses:
- 1) Matthew 2:13: "And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to **destroy** him."
 - 2) Matthew 27:20: "But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and **destroy** Jesus."
 - 3) Luke 13:3, 5: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish....I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise **perish**."
 - 4) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should **not perish**, but have everlasting life."
 - 5) John 10:28: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand."
 - 6) John 17:12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is **lost**, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."
- f. The eternal destruction of our text is an unending banishment from God, a never-ending separation in which the offender is punished in a place prepared for the devil and his angels.
- 1) Matthew 8:12: "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
 - 2) Matthew 13:42: "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
 - 3) Matthew 13:50: "And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."
 - 4) This punishment involves being separated from the presence of the Lord. In this life, no one is fully separated from the blessings of God.
 - 5) While we live here, we have access to the earth's blessings, all of which God has supplied, including light, rest, food, water, and air; we may also avail ourselves of the spiritual blessings of the gospel. But in hell, none of God's blessings are available! There will be no water to cool the burning tongue; no breeze to give comfort; no access to any feature of God's grace; prayers will
-

not be heard; the Bible cannot be read there; there will be no hope. Separated from the presence of the Lord, we can have none of his blessings!

Luke Chapter 16

A. Luke 16:1-12: The Crooked Steward.

1. Verses 1-3: “And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.”
 - a. “This parable was addressed to the Lord’s disciples and was intended to teach a lesson on the proper use of ones’s material blessings” (Kenningham, p.204).
 - b. Fourfold Gospel:
 - 1) “And he said also unto the disciples [If we remember that many publicans were now taking their stand among Jesus' disciples, we will more readily understand why Jesus addressed to them a parable about an unjust man. They would be more readily affected by such a story]. There was a certain rich man, who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods. [‘Wasting’ of this verse and ‘wasted’ of Luke xv. 13 are parts of the same verb. The attitude of the two brethren to their father's estate, as set forth in the previous parable, introduced thoughts as to the proper relation which a man bears to his possessions, and these relations Jesus discusses in this parable.
 - 2) “While no parable has been so diversely explained, yet the trend of interpretation has been in the main satisfactory. In verse 8 the Lord himself gives the key to the parable, which is that the children of light, in the conduct of their affairs, should emulate the wisdom and prudence of the children of the world in the conduct of their affairs. The difficulty of the parable is more apparent than real.
 - 3) “The whole parabolic machinery is borrowed from worldly and irreligious life, where dishonest cunning and rascality are freely tolerated. The child of light is to be equally shrewd and wise in the management of his affairs God's word, of course, nowhere teaches the absurdity.”
 - c. Personal responsibility is taught throughout the Bible. Every accountable person must answer to the Almighty over how he has lived in this world. Those who are employed here are accountable to their employers. Everyone is responsible to someone.
 - d. Trial lawyers have done a grave disservice to our nation by countless lawsuits which have shifted responsibility from the individual to the manufacturer or someone else; the gun maker is made the criminal instead of the user of the weapon. All of those faulty and fraudulent schemes will certainly vanish in the Judgment of the Last Day!
 - e. The steward of this story was accused, correctly, of having wasted the property entrusted to his care. As the shoe-heel meets the pavement, just that certainly he must give an account of his actions. He was about to “Meet his Waterloo!”
 - f. What was he to do? He could not dig—he was physically unable or was unwilling to do that menial task. He had too much pride to beg.
2. Verses 4-7: “I am 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 lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.”
 - a. He here stated the fact that he would to be put out of his stewardship; he knew he was guilty and he now knows his employer is also fully aware of his crimes. What shall I do?
 - b. In his evil mind, he developed a scheme. He approached each of his master’s debtors and asked how much he owed. To each of these men he told them to divided his debt into half or reduce the amount, and pay that smaller figure. This pleased the debtors but robbed the master. It was clearly wrong.

- c. Fourfold Gospel:
- 1) And calling to him each one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A hundred measures of oil. [The measure mentioned here is the Hebrew bath, which corresponded roughly to a firkin or nine gallons.] And he said unto him, Take thy bond [literally, writings], and sit down quickly and write fifty. [The amount remitted here—450 gallons of olive oil—represented a large sum of money. Such a reduction would put the debtor under great obligation to the steward.]
 - 2) Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. [The measure here is the Hebrew cor, which contains ten baths, or ephahs, or, more exactly, eighty-six and seven-tenths gallons.] He saith unto him, Take thy bond, and write fourscore. [The amount remitted was about 267 bushels, and the debtor himself altered the writing, that he might be in no uncertainty about it.
 - 3) Scholars disagree as to whether these debtors were tenants or traders; I. e., purchasers of produce who had given their bonds or notes for the same. Meyer, Trench, Godet and others favor this latter view, but the language used and the customs of the land rather indicate that the former is correct.
 - 4) In the East rents are in proportion to tile crop [one section of the crop higher than another; water can drain from one to the other—bw], and hence they vary as it varies. It was natural, therefore, that the steward should ask the amount of the rent; and also natural, since rents were thus payable in kind, that the tenant should answer as to the very thing owed. A trader would have been held, not for the purchase, but for the piece, and would rather have specified the money due than the quantity or thing bought. Since the price of produce varies, it has been the immemorial custom everywhere to fix the amount to be paid for it at the very time it is purchased, and this amount becomes the debt.]
3. Verse 8: “And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”
- a. The owner learned of this fraud, but commended the steward. He had found a way partially to repay his boss. For this the lord praised the man. That the steward did wrong in his evil plan is obvious. In the parable, our Lord does not endorse this wicked act.
 - b. “The Lord commended the unjust steward ... All of the tedious explanations insisting that it was not Jesus, but the lord in the parable, who commended the unjust steward, are completely frustrated by the fact of the lord in the parable being a representation of God. Certainly Jesus, who was one with the Father in all things, commended this rogue, not for his dishonesty, but for his prudent handling of his worldly interests; and if Jesus had not intended this to be understood, there is no way to believe he would have spoken the parable in the first place” [Coffman].
 - c. “You are fired?” is not expressly stated in the parable, but is implied. The steward made a plan whereby he would be able to make a living after his dismissal. Those debtors whose debts were lowered by the steward before he was dismissed, would have been enriched, to some degree, by this fraud, would remember [and likely aid him] in the future.
 - d. Our Lord observed that people of the world are shrewd and thoughtful over their property and money; they do not become wealthy by being ignorant or foolish. Those who “walk in the light” are the true followers of Christ. Christians will not lie, cheat or defraud others to become rich; people of the world will use any advantage, no matter how evil, to advance their selfish agenda. They think the righteous are foolish for not using this kind of “wisdom.”
 - e. The wisdom enjoined upon saints is to be wise in making preparations for Heaven, treasures which are spiritual in nature. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt 6:19-21).
-

- 1) Treasures in heaven are safe. These are spiritual in nature and eternal in scope; they are **reserved** in heaven. "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:3-5).
 - 2) "The security of such treasures against the moth and the rust and the thieves which threaten earthly possessions is presented as a motive to obedience. The contrast is very striking. No man who pauses a single moment for reflection can fail to realize it" (McGarvey, p.66).
 - 3) These heavenly treasures are for the individual, not for someone else; they are yours and no one can deprive you of them without your cooperation. "All that one gives or does for the kingdom of God will accrue to his eternal credit. Not even a cup of cold water will lose its reward (Matt. 10:42)" (Coffman, p.86).
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 9:25: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
4. Verse 9: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."
- a. Boles: And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends—Jesus makes his own application of the parable. We should be satisfied with his explanation; sometimes the thought is lost amidst the drapery of the parable. The master of the unrighteous steward commended him for his prudent foresight, and Jesus, speaking to his disciples, said to them that they should use a like forethought in regard to their spiritual and eternal interests. Surely Christians should show better judgment in their relations with one another than "crooks" do in their dealings with one another; the devotees of material goods often use more sense in handling them than do Christians as custodians of eternal things.
 - b. "Mammon" has reference to material wealth, precious things of this world. Christians are instructed to set their focus on things above, eternal and incorruptible rewards.
 - c. Our brethren in the first centuries sometimes sold their possessions in order to aid the needy; at the same time they were laying up for themselves treasures in heaven.
 - 1) Acts 2:45: "And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."
 - 2) Acts 4:32-35: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."
 - d. We are told to work, so that we may be able to help others: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
 - 1) 1 Timothy 6:10-12: "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good
-

- fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses” (ASV).
- 2) 1 Timothy 6:17-19: “Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed” (ASV).
 - 3) Colossians 3:1-6: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.”
5. Verses 10-12: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”
- a. If a worker proves himself by being trustworthy in a smaller chore, that makes him ready for a larger work. An Air Traffic Controller learns to separate aircraft safely during light traffic occasions, he thus becomes adept in handling heavier traffic. One advances in skill by safe steps. Our Lord trained the twelve apostles in the Limited Commission; later they were fully able to do the Great Commission.
 - b. Christ may give us uncomplicated work at first, then when we have shown our faithfulness, we are given bigger duties. We thus make progress to other jobs in the kingdom.
 - c. If we have shown ourselves trustworthy over matters that pertain to this world, we become suitable to do the greater work of preparing for eternity.
 - d. On the other hand, if one has been proved untrustworthy in matters that are his, others will not trust him with dealing with their affairs.
 - 1) Jamieson: “Here all we have is on trust as stewards, who have an account to render. Hereafter, what the faithful have will be their own property, being no longer on probation, but in secure, undisturbed, rightful, everlasting possession and enjoyment of all that is graciously bestowed on us. Thus money is neither to be idolized nor despised: we must sit loose to it and use it for God's glory.”
 - 2) Pulpit: “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's. Here we have our earthly possessions plainly spoken of as the goods of another, that is, of God, and of these goods we are but the temporary stewards. Who shall give you that which is your own? We have here a very magnificent promise. Although on earth man can possess nothing of his own—here he is but a steward for a time of property belonging to another—yet a prospect is held out to him that, if he be found faithful in the trust while on earth, in the world to come something will be given to him really and truly his own. There will be no dismissal or death there.”
6. Verse 13: “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
- a. One who lays up his treasures in heaven serves God; one who lays up his treasures on earth serves mammon (a term for riches). Boles: “Jesus repeats a self-evident truth when he says, ‘No servant can serve two masters.’ These masters have different wills and purposes; they contradict each other in their demands; hence, it is impossible for one servant to serve two such masters. It is like attempting to travel in two directions at the same time, or attempting to love two entirely contradictory characters. A servant is supposed to obey his master; this obedience is called love. If one attempts to serve two masters, he will hate one and love the other; or he will honor one and dishonor the other.
-

- b. Coffman: This contrasts God and Mammon (personified) as deities between whom every soul must choose. Any attempt to serve both is actually the service of Mammon. Summers pointed out that Luke here used a word for "servant" which actually means "house servant";[23] and this gives an equivalent meaning that "nobody can be a house boy in two different mansions at once!"
- B. Luke 16:14-18: No One Can Serve Two Masters at the Same Time.
1. Verse 14: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him."
 - a. One who lays up his treasures in heaven serves God; one who lays up his treasures on earth serves mammon (a term for riches).
 - b. "If a servant obeys one master he must disobey the other; the very act of obedience to one is disobedience to the other....God and mammon are of such opposite natures that it is impossible to love either one supremely without hating the other; that which attracts to one repels from the other" (Boles, pp.166f).
 - c. We are obliged to follow every word that proceeds from God (Matt. 4:10).
 - 1) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - 2) Joshua 24:19-24: "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey."
 - 3) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - 4) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 5) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (ASV).
 - d. The Lord's enemies were quick to direct harsh accusation and ridicule at him, but they were never able to respond to his arguments; they ignored or otherwise refused to answer him. In Matthew 22, after a series of confrontations with Jesus, in which he put different groups of enemies to silence, we are told in verse 46: "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."
 - e. "[*They derided him*] The word is one expressive of the strongest and most open insolence, Luke 23:35. There is a weaker form of the word in Galatians 6:7. Here the jeering was doubtless aimed by these haughty and respected plutocrats at the deep poverty of Jesus and His humble followers. It marks however the phase of daring opposition which was not kindled till the close of His ministry. They thought it most ridiculous to suppose that riches hindered religion—for were not they rich and religious?" (Cambridge Bible).
 2. Verse 15: "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."
 - a. After many years of teaching many people, privately and publicly, we have heard perhaps every excuse that the human mind can manufacture, trying to justify why they will not obey the gospel.
 - b. The Pharisees were quick to justify [in their own eyes] their faulty religious beliefs and practices. Matthew 23 is our Lord's final address to them; it is devastating to them. He concludes at the end of
-

- his condemnation: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:33).
- c. Fourfold Gospel: "The Pharisees lived in such outward contrast to the publicans and made such pretensions and claims that men esteemed them righteous, but they were none the less abominable in God's sight. God approves righteousness when inward, but despises the mere outward show of it."
3. Verse 16: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."
- a. Other versions:
- 1) ASV: "The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it."
 - 2) NKJ: "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it."
- b. The Jewish people were under the Mosaic Law and the revelations of the Old Testament prophets until the work of John the Immerser. Both John and Jesus lived under this system.
- c. When John, Jesus and his apostles and his disciples did their work, the kingdom was preached:
- 1) Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 2) Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 3) Matthew 10:7: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 4) Luke 10:9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
- d. Eighty-four preachers had by inspiration proclaimed the immediacy of the kingdom's establishment (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9). It came on the Pentecost day of Acts 2. Therefore, we would be foolish and in error to pray for something that has already been accomplished.
- e. Boles:
- 1) "Jesus here introduces the idea of a new dispensation which was drawing nigh. 'The law and the prophets' belonged to the old dispensation. The entire testimony under the old dispensation is sometimes expressed more fully by 'the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms.' (Luke 24:44.) The law and the prophets were the sole fountains of religious truth down to John the Baptist; then the kingdom of God began to be preached, first by John, next by Jesus, and then by his disciples.
 - 2) "The Pharisees boasted of being righteous according to the law and the prophets; they were in reality not so faithful to the law as they were faithful to their traditions of the law. Jesus did not set aside the law, but fulfilled it.
 - 3) "'Every man entereth violently into it.' This is similar to Matt. 11:12. This seems to mean that everyone was striving to enter the preparatory state of the kingdom; people were attempting to force their way into the kingdom of God; they did not understand its nature, and were doing violence to the kingdom that Jesus preached by perverting and misapplying his teachings with respect to it."
- f. Matthew 11:12: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The following is from my book on Matthew: McGarvey offers these points:
- 1) "'The kingdom of heaven is being forced, and men of force are seizing it.' The kingdom of heaven can not be literally *forced*; therefore, this term is to be understood metaphorically. The kingdom is compared to a walled city, into which men are trying to force their way in order to get possession of it, and this is said to have been going on 'since the days of John the Baptist.'
 - 2) "In order to see what actual conduct of men is thus depicted, we must glance back at the history from the time of John. When the multitude first rushed out to John at the Jordan, many of them
-

thought that he was the expected Messiah, and they were eager to set up by force the expected kingdom.

- 3) “Disappointed in this, the same 'men of force' soon gathered around Jesus, and on the very day in which the news of John's death reached Galilee, there followed Jesus into the wilderness about five thousand men, who, near the close of the day, tried to 'take him by force and make him a king.' (14:12-21; comp. John 6:15.) It was this disposition to force their way into the misconceived kingdom, which made it necessary for Jesus to frequently avoid the multitudes, and to sometimes command persons whom he had healed, 'Tell it to no man.'
- 4) “The verse, then, refers to the eagerness of the people to enter by violence into the privileges and honors of the kingdom—a disposition which arose from the mistaken idea that it was to be a political or military kingdom” (McGarvey, p.98).
 - g. When John initially announced the nearness of the kingdom, there was a "mad rush" by many "to take it by storm." This "describes the impatience with which men were entering into the kingdom of God with a misunderstanding of its nature" (Boles, p.245). As the Jews became more aware of the true nature of the kingdom and the Lord's teaching, the carnally minded ones forsook him (John 6:60-69).
4. Verse 17: “And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fall” (ASV).
 - a. Compare: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt. 24:35).
 - b. The statement here shows at least two things: the earth is not eternal and the Lord's words are unshakable. In nature, the universe and the earth seem to be the most stable and permanent of all. But the Lord affirmed that these would not always be (Cf. 2 Pet. 3:10; Heb. 12:25-29). Paul described material things as temporal and the things which cannot be seen as eternal (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Genesis 8:22 implies that the earth will have a limited history ("while the earth remaineth").
 - c. 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which **liveth and abideth for ever**. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But **the word of the Lord endureth for ever**. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
5. Verse 18: “Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”
 - a. We remember that the Lord is addressing the complaint the Pharisees made to him in Luke 15:2: “And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”
 - b. These enemies of truth were stubborn and unscrupulous enemies of Jesus; they claimed to be devoted believers in the Mosaic Law and the prophets. In this verses, our Lord points out their repudiation of God's law on marriage, which predates the Law of Moses (Gen. 2:21-24).
 - c. Consider: “The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, **except it be for fornication**, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 19:3-9).

C. Luke 16:19-31: The Rich Man and Lazarus.

1. Verses 19-21: “There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full

of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.”

- a. NKJ: "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.”
 - b. Some allege that this story is a mere parable, and is not speaking of a real event.
 - 1) There is no proof it is a parable; it still teaches the truth even if it were a parable.
 - 2) A parable was taken from the common occurrences of life, from things that either did happen or could happen.
 - 3) Lazarus is given a regular name. If the story is parabolic, it is the only one in all the Bible in which a character is given a name.
 - 4) Actually, Lazarus, the rich man, and the rich man's five brothers, were real human beings, just as real as Abraham! Lazarus still resides in the place of comfort and the rich man still writhes in the agony of the punishment the Lord described.
 - c. Everything about the story smacks of reality!
 - 1) The rich man's wealth and the way he lived.
 - 2) The lowly status of Lazarus who had to beg to live.
 - 3) The dogs which licked this beggar's sores.
 - d. At death the body returns to the earth and the spirit passes into God's keeping.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - 2) Daniel 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt."
 - 3) Luke 23:46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 4) Philippians 1:23: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
 - e. Where did God keep these men?
 - 1) He kept Lazarus in *Abraham's bosom*, which was a place of comfort and happiness.
 - a) In ancient terminology, the guest of honor at a feast occupied the highest place of honor, which was at the right hand of the host; this was called "the bosom" of the host. Christ used the term figuratively.
 - b) To be in the "bosom of Abraham" in Jewish thought was to have the greatest honor (for a Jew). Hence, Lazarus (a Jew) is described as having the highest possible honor and blessing.
 - 2) He kept the rich man in a place of torment, called *hades* (verse 23).
 - 3) The rich man could see Lazarus, but could not join him because of the great gulf fixed between the two places.
 - f. Putting the evidence together, we have this information at hand:
 - 1) At death, Christ entered hades.
 - 2) He also described this place as Paradise.
 - 3) The evil rich man also went to hades, but into a place of punishment.
 - 4) Lazarus entered the spirit world, into a place called Abraham's bosom, a state of comfort and happiness.
 - 5) Lazarus and Christ entered a different place from that of the rich man, yet both places are called *Hades*.
 - g. Some conclusions can be reliably reached from this evidence.
 - 1) The spirits of the individuals involved in these stories were disembodied.
 - 2) They were all in the place called hades (the *hadean realm*).
-

- 3) Christ left the hadean realm at his resurrection; these others were not raised.
 - 4) The rich man, Lazarus, and every other dead person resides in this hadean realm awaiting the resurrection and Judgment.
 - a) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
 - h. The rich man fared sumptuously and was clothed in purple clothing. Lydia, a lady from Thyatira, was a merchant who dealt in purple at Philippi (Acts 16:14-15). This was a very expensive dye used only on the most costly fabrics, being derived from a certain sea shell (murex). This was the dye that gave rise to the words "royal purple" (Boles, Acts, p.314).
 - i. The contrast between the state of the rich man and Lazarus is definitely drawn. "Lazarus is naked and clothed with sores instead of royal apparel, and desires crumbs instead of a banquet. That he limited his desire to crumbs suggests a freedom from both worldly lust and envy. Whether he got the crumbs is not stated. His sufferings may have been as unmitigated on earth as those of the rich man were in Hades (verse 24), and it is certain that even if he received the crumbs they did not count as a gift, being mere refuse, utterly worthless in the sight of the rich man. The very point of the parable is that the rich man gave him nothing. The dogs also suggest a contrast. The rich man is surrounded by loyal brethren and attentive servants, while Lazarus is the companion of dogs, the scavenger of the streets, who treat him with a rude compassion as one of their number, soothing his sores with their saliva" (FourFold Gospel).
 2. Verses 22-23: "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."
 - a. ASV: "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in **Hades** he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."
 - b. In the process of time, Lazarus died; he was carried by angels to a place called "Abraham's Bosom." It was not the sore-covered body that was transported to this place; it was his spirit, his soul. Clearly, this is the same location where Jesus and the penitent thief went (Luke 23:42-43). The spirit of Jesus was there only three days; the thief, Lazarus, and Abraham are still there.
 - c. The wicked rich man also died—and was buried. Likely his family and friends saw to it that his funeral was ornate, impressive and expensive. They could not know the details of the present state of his soul!
 - d. The location of the rich man's soul was that part of Hades where the residents are in a state of punishment; even there, their sins done on earth are remembered by Jehovah and are being addressed.
 - 1) Numbers 32:23: "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."
 - 2) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - e. After the death of the rich man, he first perceived his tormented condition; and looking afar off, he could see Lazarus in another location. Where did God keep these men?
 - 1) He kept Lazarus in *Abraham's bosom*, which was a place of comfort and happiness. In ancient terminology, the guest of honor at a feast occupied the highest place of honor, which was at the right hand of the host; this was called "the bosom" of the host. Christ used the term figuratively. To be in the "bosom of Abraham" in Jewish thought was to have the greatest honor (for a Jew). Hence, Lazarus (a Jew) is described as having the highest possible honor and blessing.
-

- 2) He kept the rich man in a place of torment, called *hades* (verse 23). The rich man could see Lazarus, but could not join him because of the great gulf fixed between the two places.
3. Verse 24: "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."
- a. The rich man was just as real as Lazarus, and Abraham was equally real; each was a real person who had lived upon the earth and was now in the realm of Hades; unlike Lazarus and Abraham, the rich man was in a state of flames and punishment. Why did Jesus not give the name of this rich man? Could it be that some of his relatives were still on earth and would be known by some present? This would have brought unnecessary anguish to them!
 - b. Somehow this man recognized Abraham, although he had never known him on earth; we can see why he knew Lazarus, for doubtless he had seen him a number of times.
 - c. He pleaded with Abraham to send Lazarus to come to his aid. On earth, he could have made life far better for the beggar, but did not; now he was asking a favor from Lazarus! In his life on earth, he had more than plenty; in Hades [Tartarus] he was bereft of any comfort. He wanted Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue—I am tormented in this flame."
 - d. The report of Lazarus and the disobedient rich man of Luke 16 establishes the following facts regarding the soul of one who has departed from this life:
 - 1) The rich man could see both Abraham and Lazarus—this requires consciousness.
 - 2) Lazarus was in a state of happiness—he was comforted, which requires consciousness.
 - 3) The rich man was in a tormented state—his anguish requires consciousness.
 - 4) The rich man could communicate with Abraham across the great gulf that separated the place of torments where the rich man was, and the place of comfort where Lazarus and Abraham were—consciousness is necessary in order for communication to be possible.
 - 5) The rich man recognized Lazarus and called him by name—which requires consciousness.
 - 6) The rich man made two requests of Abraham—which requires consciousness.
 - 7) The rich man's requests for the services of Lazarus necessitated consciousness.
 - 8) The rich man could remember his earthly status and his five disobedient brothers—memory requires consciousness.
 - 9) The rich man was concerned over the spiritual status of his wicked brothers back on earth—any emotion requires consciousness.
4. Verses 25-26: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."
- a. The situations of the rich man and the beggar had been reversed. One is now comforted and the other was tormented. The current conditions could not be changed.
 - b. Notice that the rich man could remember his life on earth. He was both conscious and retained memory of his life on earth; he could recall the pleasures and plenty which attended him daily; he could also remember the status of Lazarus, and was fully cognizant of his identity.
 - c. Abraham also called the rich man's attention to the great chasm that separated Paradise and Tartarus; there was no way for passage between the two. One side would not go and the other side would not.
 - d. In *hades*, a great gulf is fixed (*made fast*) between Paradise and Tartarus: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence" (Luke 16:26). This gulf is a chasm, a broad yawning space (Barnes).
 - 1) It is impossible to pass over this great chasm; thus, once a lost person is confined to *tartarus* at death, there is no leaving until the resurrection and Judgment.
 - 2) One's fate is forever sealed the instant he enters the *hadean* realm; if he is righteous when he dies, he will never be lost; if he dies unrighteous, he cannot be saved. "He that is unjust, let him be
-

- unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:11-12).
- e. The repulsiveness and horrors of the place was a fitting depiction for the place of final punishment for rebellion against God. There is a difference between Tartarus and Gehenna.
- 1) Gehenna occurs twelve times in the New Testament, of which Christ used it eleven times.
- a) Matthew 5:22: "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."
- b) Matthew 5:29-30: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell."
- c) Matthew 18:8-9: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."
- d) Matthew 23:15: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."
- e) Matthew 23:33: "*Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"
- f) Mark 9:43-48: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
- g) Luke 12:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
- h) James 3:6: "And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."
5. Verses 27-28: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."
- a. "I pray thee therefore, father.—The re iterated appeal to Abraham as 'father' is suggestive in many ways: (1) as speaking out that in which too many of the rich man's class put an undue trust, resting on the fatherhood of Abraham rather than on that of God (Matthew 3:9); (2) as showing that the refusal of the previous verse had been accepted, as it were, submissively. There is no rebellious defiance, no blasphemous execration, such as men have pictured to themselves as resounding ever more in the realms of darkness. Abraham is the sufferer's father still, and he yet counts on his sympathy" (Ellicott). [This rich man was a physical descendant of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, but neither of these could offer him any help in his present status].
-

- b. It was impossible for Lazarus to bring any comfort to this rich man; he did not want the beggar, but now he sought his aid in returning to earth to warn the five wicked brothers of this distraught soul.
 - c. While in life, he could have been obedient to God's law, but now it was too late; while his brothers were alive on earth, they could also have turned to the law of God. He now became interested in others, but there was no help to be sent from the Hadean Realm to aid them.
 - d. "Five brethren — The number 'five' is mentioned merely to preserve the appearance of verisimilitude in the story. It is not to be spiritualized, nor are we to suppose that it has any hidden or inscrutable meaning. May testify unto them — May bear "witness" to them, or may inform them of what is my situation, and the dreadful consequences of the life that I have led. It is remarkable that he did not ask to go himself. He knew that he could not be released, even for so short a time. His condition was fixed. Yet he had no wish that his friends should suffer, and he supposed that if one went from the dead they would hear him" (Barnes).
 - e. The rich man was a real person and his five brothers were real people. These were just as real as were Abraham and Lazarus. We have no information about the state of the five brothers, but Abraham and Lazarus are still in Paradise and the rich man is still where he was when the story was revealed by our Lord and reported by Luke.
6. Verse 29: "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."
- a. "The reply of Abraham was especially addressed to those Jews who were standing round him and ever asking for a sign. They had all read and heard again and again the Books of Moses and the records of the prophets; if these guides had failed to show them the right way, a special messenger sent to them would be quite useless" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - b. The Jewish people were expected to have ultimate respect for God's revelation; so must we. No one have respect for God without respecting his word.
 - 1) Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" One who does not respect what the Lord says, has no respect for the Lord himself—and will obey him.
 - 2) 2 Samuel 12:9-10: "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife." When David violated God's will, he showed disrespect and irreverence to God.
 - c. God said not to murder or steal: we cannot respect God if we disregard his prohibitions. God commands certain things: we cannot respect God if we disregard his requirements. We cannot respect a man if we despise what he says. How much respect do we have for a man whose word we will not trust? One who refuses to obey God does not respect God; to respect his word, is to respect God.
7. Verses 30-31: "And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."
- a. Boles: *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets,*—The answer of Abraham is positive and final; the rich man had affirmed that "they will repent" if one should go to them from among the dead. Abraham tells him that they would not. If they would not hear God at one time, they would not hear him at another time. He had spoken to them through "Moses and the prophets"; if they would not hear them they would not "be persuaded, if one rise from the dead." As proof of this, Jesus was crucified, buried, and arose from the dead, yet the Jewish leaders still rejected him. The truth of God brought to the heart is necessary to repentance; and if it fails vain will be the efforts of men, living or dead, however miraculous. No stronger inducement now can be presented to men for repentance than that which God has presented.
 - b. Consider the following from the ASV:
-

- 1) Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them."
 - 2) Luke 10:26: "And he said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?"
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."
 - 5) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."
 - 6) Revelation 22:18-19: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.'
-

The Hadean Realm

- A. This place is called *Hades*, a Greek word meaning "the place of the unseen dead."
1. The word occurs in these passages [*hell* in the KJV, *hades* in the ASV]:
 - a. Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18 And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
 - b. Luke 16:23: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." "And in **Hades** he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (ASV).
 - c. Revelation 1:18: "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." "And the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of **Hades**" (AAV).
 - 1) The KJV uses the word *hell* to translate *hades*. This old word in English means "to cover up." Thus, "He hellied the potatoes." The place of eternal punishment is translated from the Greek word *Gehenna*.
 - 2) Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - 3) Mark 9:43: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched" (ASV).
 - 4) The equivalent Hebrew word for *hades* in the Old Testament is *Sheol*.
 - 5) The KJV uses *hell* to translate *hades*, *Gehenna*, *sheol*, and *Tartarus*; it was the only available English word at the time. Since then, the Hebrew and Greek words have been adopted as English words.
- B. The word *Paradise* means "pleasure garden" or "pleasure park."
1. It is a Persian word which has also been transliterated into both Greek and English.
 2. Any place of pleasure could be called *paradise*. The word is applied to heaven (Rev. 2:7) and to that place of comfort in *hades* called "Abraham's bosom."
 - a. *Paradise* is a general term like *city*; heaven is called a city, but every time the word *city* is used heaven is not meant.
 - b. *Paradise* is used to describe a place of comfort and pleasure, where the holy dead await the resurrection and Judgment of the last day.
- C. The Greek word *Tartarus* is used to describe the place where the unholy beings are kept.
1. Passages:
 - a. 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The word *hell* is *tartarus* in the Greek text.
 - b. Compare: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9).
 - c. 2 Peter 3:7: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."
 2. *Tartarus* is not the final abode, but is the place of retention and punishment of those who await the end of time, the resurrection, and the Judgment.
 - a. If *tartarus* is the final destiny of the condemned, why remove them for the Judgment, and then return them to the same place?
 - b. This Greek word means "an abyss, a dungeon, a prison house." It is described in Luke 16:23-24 as a state of intense discomfort [torment]: "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on
-

me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23-24).

3. In hades, a great gulf is fixed (*made fast*) between paradise and tartarus: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence" (Luke 16:26). This gulf is a chasm, a broad yawning space (Barnes).
 - a. It is impossible to pass over this great chasm; thus, once a lost person is confined to *tartarus* at death, there is no leaving until the resurrection and Judgment.
 - b. One's fate is forever sealed the instant he enters the hadean realm; if he is righteous when he dies, he will never be lost; if he dies unrighteous, he cannot be saved.
 - 1) Luke 16:26-31: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."
 - 2) Revelation 22:11-12: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

D. The Greek word *Gehenna* (hell) describes the place of final punishment for the wicked.

1. This Greek word represents the Hebrew word, *Ge-hinnom*, which is derived from the valley Hinnom just outside Jerusalem, which was used as the city dump. It had a horribly foul odor and a continual smoldering fire: "And he defiled Topheth, which *is* in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech" (2 Kings 23:10).
2. The repulsiveness and horrors of the place was a fitting depiction for the place of final punishment for rebellion against God.
3. The word occurs twelve times in the New Testament, of which Christ used it eleven times.
 - a. Matthew 5:22: "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of **hell fire**."
 - b. Matthew 5:29-30: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into **hell**. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into **hell**."
 - c. Matthew 18:8-9: "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into **everlasting fire**. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into **hell fire**."
 - d. Matthew 23:15: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of **hell** than yourselves."
 - e. Matthew 23:33: "*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of **hell**?*"
 - f. Mark 9:43-48: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into **hell**, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into **hell**, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where

their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into **hell fire**: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

- g. Luke 12:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into **hell**; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
4. The only other place in the New Testament where this word is used in James 3:6: "And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on **fire of hell**."
5. It is into this dreadful place the ungodly will be ultimately cast.
 - a. Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - b. Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - c. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - d. Luke 12:5: "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - e. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - f. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
- E. Heaven is that place of eternal reward where everything is glorious, pleasant, and joyful.
 1. Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 2. Revelation 21:4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Luke Chapter 17

A. Luke 17:1-10: Offenses and Faith.

1. Verses 1-2: “Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”
 - a. Matthew 18:6-8: “But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh! And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire” (ASV).
 - b. It is better to give up some pleasure, opportunity, position, condition, practice, etc., if the thing involved causes one to commit sin. It is better to forego such if the result is to lose one's soul.
 - c. "In the physical realm, amputations of various kinds daily illustrate the validity of our Lord's words. Removal of a mortally infected member is required for the preservation of life. The use of strong metaphor, as in the case here, frequently marked the teachings of Christ. (Also see Matt. 5:29,30)" (Coffman, Matthew, p.278).
 - d. "The words of Jesus here are not to be taken literally, for God does not permit us to injure and maim our bodies in order to avoid temptation, but shows us, by this impressive figure of speech, that we should deny our selfish and proud desires, and ‘put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth’" (Boles, p.371).
 - e. It is better to be alive spiritually here (and eternally in heaven) while deprived of certain things which cause sin, than to enjoy the pleasure of those sinful things which culminates in one's being cast into *Gehenna*. Compare: “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward” (Heb. 11:24-26).
 - f. And he said unto his disciples [Jesus here ceases to speak to the Pharisees, and begins a new series of sayings addressed to the disciples, which sayings are, however, pertinent to the occasion, and not wholly disconnected with what he has just been saying]. It is impossible [in a world where Pharisees abound, etc.—I Cor. xi. 19] but that occasions of stumbling should come; but woe unto him, through whom they come It were well for him if a millstone ... were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones [beginners in the faith, or weaklings—Rom. xiv. 1] to stumble [Fourfold Gospel].
2. Verses 3-4: “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”
 - a. Compare: “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25-26).
 - 1) Mark does not mention our rebuking the offender, but Luke’s account does. If he will not repent, we are not to receive him back. God does not have fellowship with a sinful Christian; that does not mean that he holds a grudge.
 - 2) If we allow him to continue as though he has never committed sin against us, he will have the idea that his soul is free from guilt; the rebuke is essential if he does not repent. No faithful Christian would want a wayward saint to continue in sin! This is a very serious matter!

- b. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:14-15). We are to forgive others if we expect to receive pardon from the Father. Matthew 18:15-35.
 - c. Notice that the burden of pointing out brother's sin against us, is us. He may not be aware of what he has said or done; or he might not perceive the seriousness of the offense. If we ignore it and let this offending brother continue as he is, he may lose his soul! The offended party is to rebuke the other.
 - d. It does not matter how many times a brother sins against us, when he states his repentance, we extend our forgiveness. We most likely will never experience a brother who sins against us multiple times in a single day, but if that should happen, we receive him back into our fellowship, giving him the benefit of any doubt when he states his penitence.
 - e. We forgive, but we cannot remove the guilt of sin; that is only within the power of Deity. We forgive in the sense that we receive the offender back into our fellowship, and treat him as though he had never committed the offense.
3. Verses 5-6: "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."
- a. Consider: "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24).
 - b. In our text, it was the apostles of Christ who asked for an increase in their faith. We are told in Romans 10:17 that faith is produced by learning the word of God. The more that we learn of God's truth, the greater our faith grows.
 - c. The exercise of miraculous gifts required faith on the part of the one thus gifted. This is the point the Lord made in this passage. "In order to work a miracle it was necessary not only to have a miraculous endowment, but also to exercise faith. This is declared in the Savior's answer, and it had already been indicated to the disciples at the time of Peter's attempt to walk on the water. (14:31.) The faith in question was the belief that what was commanded would be done—faith in the power with which they were endued. When they spoke doubtfully to the demon he had power to resist them" (McGarvey, Mark, p.153).
 - d. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another **faith** by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:8-10).
 - 1) The faith here named is miraculous faith; the faith that could only be obtained as a gift from the Holy Spirit. This is the kind of faith that was able to heal the crippled man of Acts three. The faith that produced the miracle that healed the crippled man was in Peter and John—not in the lame man. This gift was necessary in order for certain miracles to be done.
 - 2) Matthew 17:19-20: "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."
 - 3) Matthew 21:20-22: "And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 13:2: "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, and have not charity, I am nothing."
 - e. The following information is taken from the book, *The Land and the Book*, p.120, by Thompson:
-

- 1) "This sycamore is a remarkable tree. It not only bears several crops of figs during the year, but those figs, grow on short stems along the trunk and large branches, and not at the end of twigs, as in other fruit-bearing trees. The figs are small, and of a greenish yellow color. At Gaza and Askelon, I saw them of a purple tinge, and much larger than they are in this part of the country.
 - 2) "They were carried to market in large quantities, and appeared to be more valued there than with us. Still they are at best very insipid, and none but the poorer classes eat them. This agrees with and explains an allusion in Amos. He had aroused the wrath of Jeroboam by the severity of his rebukes, and, being advised to flee for his life, excuses himself by a statement which implies that he belonged to the humblest class of the community: 'I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herd-man, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit' (Amos 7:14).
 - 3) "None but the very poor consent to be herdmen, and only such, at this day, gather sycamore fruit, or use it. The natives say that the sycamore bears seven crops a year. I think it is irregular in this matter. Some bear oftener than others, and the same tree yields more crops one year than another and is easily propagated, merely by planting a stout branch in the ground, and watering it until it has struck out roots into the soil. This it does with great rapidity, and to a vast depth.
 - 4) "It was with reference to this latter fact that our blessed Lord selected it to illustrate the power of faith: If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine [sycamore] tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you'" (Luke 17:6).
4. Verses 7-9: "But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not."
 - a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Jesus told the apostles, if a man had a servant who had been given the job of plowing or taking care of sheep, and when the day was over, the master would not tell his servant to sit down and he, the master, would prepare food for the worker to eat. That was not the way things worked; it would be the servant who would be told to provide the meal. This was the task of the servant.
 - c. The field labor was ordinary service; the preparation for the evening feast demanded of them, when they returned weary with toil, tested the principles of their zeal and fidelity to their master. We are to take this parable or illustration in the sense which lies on its surface, of the obligations strictly implied in the relation of a servant to a master. A faithful servant will obey promptly every command of the master. No special thanks are to be extended the servant for doing his duty. Being a faithful servant, he gladly gave the extra time and the larger measure of service, expecting nothing except the good will of the master. The servant will provide his master's meal and serve him while eating it, and then consider that he has done only his well-understood duty, but nothing that calls for special gratitude from his master. [Boles].
 5. Verse 10: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."
 - a. The case of the servant in the illustration is made an object lesson for the apostles. They had been serving Christ from their call into service, and were to continue do so until he was seized and brought to trial, and then crucified. We are soon to learn that they became demoralized by these tragedies.
-

- b. But the Lord here urges them to develop the disposition he describes. After they have done the will of God, they should not expect to be regaled over their obedience; they had been obedient, but were still unprofitable servants; they did their job, just as the servant had done.
- c. Pulpit:
 - 1) “No spirit of self-complacency and of self-satisfaction must be allowed to brood over the faithful servant's thoughts In God's great love is man's real treasure; man is simply a steward of some of God's possessions for a time; man is a servant whose duty it is to work ceaselessly for his Master, God.
 - 2) “There are hints of great rewards reserved for the faithful steward in heaven, promises that a time should come when the unwearied servant should sit down and eat and drink in his Master's house; but these high guerdons were not earned, but were simply free, gracious gifts from the Divine Sovereign to his creatures who should try to do his will.
 - 3) “This patient, unwearied toil; this deep sense of indebtedness to God who loves man with so intense, so strange a love; this feeling that we can never do enough for him, that when we have taxed all our energies to the utmost in his service, we have done little or nothing, and yet that all the while he is smiling on with his smile of indescribable love....”

B. Luke 17:11-19: The Ten Lepers.

- 1. Verses 11-12: “And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.” ASV: “And it came to pass, as they were on their way to Jerusalem, that he was passing along the borders of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off.”
 - a. We remember that the Lord and the Twelve were enroute to Jerusalem, with many episodes of their encountering various people and his teaching many lessons along the way. At this point in the trip they were traveling through parts of Galilee and Samaria.
 - b. Along the borders of Samaria and Galilee ... It will be noted that the English Revised Version (1885) margin renders this place "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee"; and, according to Robertson, that is correct. Regardless of which reading is used, what Jesus did was to go through Samaria (first) and then through Galilee to the point where he took up the "journey." [Coffman].
 - c. As he entered into a certain village, he met a group of ten men, all of them lepers. The Mosaic Law directed that those afflicted with this dreadful disease should dwell apart from the populace, to avoid spreading it. There was no danger in these ten men contaminating each other, but if healthy people were to approach them, they were to issue a warning. In this case, these men stood afar off and called out to the Lord. “And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean” (Lev. 13:45).
 - 2. Verses 13-14: “And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.”
 - a. As the Lord came toward them, they called out to him, asking for mercy. It is evident that they did not come into close proximity to the Lord, but even if they had, there would have been no chance of the ailment being communicated to him and his apostles.
 - b. Compare: “And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them” (Mark 1:40-44). He besought him; he kneeled down before him, and said, “If thou wilt, thou canst
-

make me clean.” This man approached Jesus in the very best way. He did not demand that the Lord cleanse him, but asked for this benefit; he stated that he knew that Jesus had this power to cleanse him.

- c. Our Lord simply told them to go and present themselves to the priests; his point was that the priests would tell them what they should do, in keeping with what the Law of Moses prescribed. Before they got to the priests, they were cleansed.
3. Verses 15-16: “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?”
 - a. One man of the ten, realized he was cleansed, and immediately approached the Lord, falling at his feet, glorifying God. He was not ashamed to cry out with a loud voice, addressing his tribute of praise to the Almighty.
 - b. We are told that this man was a Samaritan, leaving the indication that the nine were Jews. They were in one group, not because they were united in a common faith, for the Jews and Samaritans had little or nothing to do with each other; the ten were together because of the common ailment.
 - c. Only this Samaritan returned to express gratitude to Jesus; the nine went on their own selfish way.
4. Verses 17-19: “There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”
 - a. The Lord evidently is here speaking to the twelve, noticing that only this stranger came to say thanks. It seems almost impossible to us to think that those nine men did not declare to him sincere gratitude.
 - b. Surely, they were most glad to have their awful condition removed. What could have been more important for them to do than to state to the Lord their thankfulness. A fertile mind might dream up various “more important” matters.
 - c. But it was on the faith of this Samaritan that he was relieved of this leprosy. He and other nine vocalized faith when they called out for cleansing. The one who returned to thank the Lord demonstrated faith by this act.

C. Luke 17:20-37: Question About the Coming Kingdom.

1. Verses 20-21: “And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”
 - a. John, Jesus, the twelve, and the seventy disciples had all preached the coming of the kingdom. This entity was that which had been predicted in Daniel 2:44. The Pharisees demanded that Jesus tell them exactly when the kingdom would come. They were trying to put undue pressure on him.
 - b. The Lord’s reply was to show that the was not a literal, earthly kingdom. Its arrival was not to be seen with human eyes. Contrary to the common view among the Jews, it was not to be a powerful, militaristic government, which would drive out the Romans, and cause the Jewish state to be a mighty empire.
 - c. The rule of this new kingdom would be from within the individual citizens. It could not be pointed out for anyone to see; it would not come so that human eyesight could see its arrival. The kingdom would be within.
 - d. Nevertheless, this kingdom would be real [ASV]:
 - 1) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.”
 - 2) Hebrews 12:28-29: “Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire” (ASV).
 - 3) Revelation 1:6: “And he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (ASV).
 - 4) Revelation 1:9: “I John, your brother and partaker with you in tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (ASV).

- 5) John 18:36-37: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."
- e. 1 Corinthians 4:20: "For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power." The kingdom of God does not rest on words only, but on miraculous power! The miracles that were wrought in the first century proved that point. It came in close connection with supernatural demonstrations, proving to those who witnessed them (and to those today who read of them) that the kingdom of God is now with men.
2. Verses 22-24: "And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day."
- a. NKJ: 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.
- b. Boles:
- 1) It is difficult to determine just what Jesus means here; to what special event or cluster of events does Jesus here refer? It is thought that he had reference to the severe trials and struggles and progress that his kingdom would have; the time would come when they should "desire to see one of the days of the Son of God." "One of the days" that they should desire to see may refer to one of the days that was then passing when mercy was offered by Jesus.
 - 2) During the life of Jesus the fate of the nation hung in the balance. If the disciples in times of discouragement and despondency should wish again the earthly presence of their Lord, how much more would this be true of the Pharisees and the unbelieving Jews in the days of their dreadful calamities, when they shall discern and acknowledge too late the character and claim of the Messiah whom they rejected.
- c. "In the first place, our Lord addressed these words to the disciples, who, in the long weary years of toil and bitter opposition which lay before them, would often long to be back again among the days of the old Galilaeian life, when they could take their doubts and fears to their Master, when they could listen without stint to his teaching, to the words which belonged to the higher wisdom. Oh, could they have him only for one day in their midst again" (Pulpit Commentary).
- d. Compare: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matt. 24:23-28).
- 1) During the time when the Roman army would have Jerusalem under siege, Jesus foretold of false teachers who would try to get the inhabitants to follow them, that they knew where the Messiah was. He warned them not to believe this untrue claim. He spoke of fictitious "christs" who would try to ensnare gullible people.
 - 2) Christ here told the brethren that his real coming, the Second Coming, would be instantly known by all! "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7).
 - 3) When the lightning flashes from the east, its light shines to the west; the whole sky is alive with its streaks; this is especially true at night. In such a manner with the return of Christ be.
-

- e. During the long, continuing period of opposition and persecution, Paul and other saints had a longing for the return of Christ; no one on earth could know when that final event in human history would occur.
 - 1) Titus 2:13: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 - 2) James 5:7-9 : “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”
 - 3) Revelation 22:20: “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” [John wrote the book of Revelation near the end of the first century].
 - f. FourFold Gospel: “In their restless eagerness the unwary disciples would be tempted to follow the false Messiahs who excited widespread admiration and attention. Against all this Jesus warns them, telling them that when the kingdom of heaven does at last assume a visible shape in the manifestation of its King, that manifestation will be so glorious, universal and pronounced as to be absolutely unmistakable.”
3. Verses 25-27: “But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.”
- a. Before the Second Coming of Christ, he must first be rejected by the current generation—the Jews. Although large numbers of Jews obeyed the gospel on the Pentecost of Acts two, yet the majority of them rejected the truth. These who did not accept this New Covenant [Jer. 31:31-33] had allowed themselves to be misguided by false teachers, including the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Lord had warned them against this; he pointed out the various religious and spiritual errors that were common.
 - b. John 1:11-12: “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” A clear view of this passage of the identification of "his own" (*ta idia*) to which he came and "his own" (*hoi idioi*) who rejected him is this: the first “his own” having reference to the Jewish people in general and the second “his own” referring to those who had been prepared for the Messiah by the work John the Immerser. Of course, this does not say that the entirety of the groups indicated totally rejected him.
 - c. A common occurrence of Jews who rejected the gospel is indicated in Acts 13:44-46: “And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”
 - 1) This episode refers to Jews who were located in pagan lands; they were part of the synagogues; while these repudiated the Gospel, there were Gentiles who desired to learn the truth.
 - 2) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - 3) Acts 17:11-12: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”
 - d. During the time of Noah, the ordinary affairs of life continued unchanged, through the years; Noah had preached about the impending flood [cf. 2 Pet. 2:5], but his neighbors ignored his warnings.
-

-
- e. Compare Matthew 24:36-39: “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”
 - f. The comparisons between the coming of the flood and the Lord's return are clear:
 - 1) The flood came suddenly, there were no outward signs in nature of its approach, and human activities were normal, giving no indications of an imminent flood.
 - 2) Normal human affairs were being pursued right up to the last.
 - 3) No other such event had ever occurred in human history.
 - 4) The only warning given came through the preaching that Noah did.
 - 5) "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." There will be no outward sign in nature to warn of his coming; human affairs will be going on as usual; no other such event has ever occurred in human history before; the only warning given is that which is issued through God's word on the subject.
 4. Verses 28-29: “Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.”
 - a. There was a time when Sodom and her sister cities of the plain in which it was built, had reached the end of their probation. Genesis 19 details some of the spiritual crimes with which the men of that city had corrupted themselves. Abraham had pleaded with God to spare the city, for the sake of his nephew Lot and his family. Not even ten righteous people could be found. The citizens of these cities were in the dark about what was in the offing for them! So it will be when our Lord returns at the end of time.
 - b. Outwardly, their common affairs were the same: they ate; they drank; they bought; they sold, they planted, they gathered their crops. But these were the last crops they would ever plant; there was no possibility of a harvest! Their doom was sealed.
 - c. The very same day in which Lot departed from Sodom, fire and brimstone fell from above, utterly destroying Sodom and the others nearby corrupted cities! There is discussion and doubt about the very locations of these places today.
 5. Verse 30: “Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.”
 - a. It is clear that our Lord spoke of the same or similar lessons in various settings. Matthew 24 gives the events pertaining to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and the Second Coming of Christ. A distinct turning point is stated in verse 36: “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” The preceding actions would occur during that generation: “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (verse 34).
 - b. Luke does not make the same definite distinction between the destruction of Jerusalem and the return of the Lord. No man can know when the second coming will be; but Matthew shows that the signs he had given would definitely point to the nearing destruction of Jerusalem; he had given several general and specific signs which the disciples could discern and thus be able to leave to avoid its destruction.
 6. Verses 31-33: “In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.”
 - a. Lot was hesitant about leaving Sodom; he had married daughters living in that place; we are told that he had sons there; all of his wealth was tied up in the city and its environs. “And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, when they had
-

- brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed” (Gen. 19:15-17).
- b. Matthew 24:16-20: “Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day.”
- c. The houses of Palestine were so-constructed that one could walk on the roofs, and even from roof to roof. The roof was a place where one could take advantage of the evening breezes during the summer, and have the sun's warmth during the colder times. If one was on the roof when the Roman army appeared, he was not to take the time to enter his house to get clothing or provisions; he would not have sufficient time. He could escape from the city by walking from roof to roof, at least for a distance, thus avoiding the jammed streets and turmoil below.
- 1) Those addressed are the Lord's people. If the "rapture" theory were true (and it is not true), they would not need to go back to their houses for clothes. There would be no reason for them to flee. They would suddenly be whisked away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. If this is the end of time, there would be no need to flee for there would be no place to go (2 Pet. 3:10).
 - 2) This passage is describing a local event, directly affecting only those who lived in Judea when the Roman army approached to lay siege to the city. There is no such thing as the "rapture" taught in the Scriptures! Farmers of that time would take to the fields only such clothing as were necessary. If the Romans came while they were working their crops, they were to quickly leave the area, trusting God to provide for their necessities, for they would not have time to go home and make regular preparations.
- d. Jesus told his disciples to be ready to leave Jerusalem when the local signs became visible. “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto” (Luke 21:20-21).
7. Verses 34-36: “I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.”
- a. Matthew 24:40-41: "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *women shall be grinding at the mill*; the one shall be taken, and the other left." The Lord is certainly depicting here events to occur at his Second Coming.
 - 1) Christ pictures the affairs of life being pursued when he suddenly makes his appearance. Two people will be working in the field, two women will be grinding at the mill: one of each pair will be taken and the other left. Thus, farmers will be doing their regular work; wives will be tending to their chores; children will be playing, people will be working, sinful conduct will still be practiced—and suddenly Christ will appear! The ancient method for grinding flour usually required two people, one to turn the stone half-way around and the other to complete the cycle.
 - 2) One will be taken and another will be left. This fits the picture given in other passages describing the Lord's return (1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28-29). The dead will be raised, the living will be changed, the saints will be caught up with the risen saints to meet Christ in the air; the world will be burned up; we all will be taken into the Judgment, with the righteous in one assembly and the unrighteous in another—separated then and forever! The one taken is to be in the gathering of the righteous; the one left is destined for that other group.
 - b. Notice that nothing is said here about anyone fleeing. There will be no place to which one may run; and there will be no possibility of escaping from the Lord, even though many will desire to do so. A separation of all mankind will take place at the return of the Lord and the resurrection of all the dead.
 - 1) Matthew 25:31-33: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and
-

- he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.”
- 2) John 5:28-29: “Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment” (ASV).
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: “Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”
8. Verse 37: “And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.”
- a. Christ gives a picture of a carcass and the eagles (vultures) gathering around it. Two possible meanings may be indicated: (1) The carcass being a symbolic reference to Israel, with the birds representing the Romans who were about to feast upon it (Cf. Deut. 28:49; Hab. 1:8); or (2) the birds represent the false teachers and the carcass being representative of the Jews, whose bones were about to be picked by the deceivers. The former is more likely the correct picture.
 - b. "It is claimed that eagles do not feed on dead bodies; this is true, but the Jews and Greeks made no distinction between the word 'eagle' which included the entire species of birds of prey, which included vultures. Some think that the giffon vulture is meant which surpasses the eagle in size and power. Aristotle notes how this bird scents its prey from afar, and congregates in the wake of an army" (Boles, Matthew, p.469). Note on giffon vulture: “The griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) is a large Old World vulture in the bird of prey family *Accipitridae*. It is also known as the Eurasian griffon. It is not to be confused with a different species, Rüppell's griffon vulture (*Gyps rueppellii*). It is closely related to the white-backed vulture (*Gyps africanus*).” [Internet Definition].
 - c. "Strangely enough, eagles were the invariable decorations of the Roman standards under which the veteran legions of Titus gathered to press the siege of the city" (Coffman, p.390).
 - d. "As sign after sign appeared, they were able to read it in the book as plainly as they saw it with their eyes. We are not slow, therefore, to believe the statement of Eusebius, that the whole body of the church at Jerusalem removed from the city before the final siege began. (Ec. Hist. B.iii, c. v.) Nor can we fail to recognize these fleeing Christians among those persons of whom Josephus speaks when he says that, 'Many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city as from a ship when it was going to sink.' (B. ii, ch. xx, 1.) This flight occurred at the very crisis at which Jesus had warned his disciples to flee to the mountains (verses 15-22); that is, after Cestius Gallus, having laid siege to Jerusalem, with every prospect of taking it, suddenly, as Josephus expresses it, 'retired from the city without any reason in the world.' (Book ii, ch.xix, 6,7.)" (McGarvey, p.210).
-

Luke Chapter 18

A. Luke 18:1-8: An Unjust Judge.

1. Verses 1-2: “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.”
 - a. “And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man” (ASV).
 - b. As seen in the ASV, the word men does not appear in the passage; the statement is to people in general, that they ought to pray always. We are expected regularly to pray. If we do not continue to pray, one result is that we will grow weak.
 - c. Galatians 6:9: “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” To faint is to grow weary in the soul; to cease to do one's God-given duty.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 4:1: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:3, 5: "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds....And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him."
 - d. The judge in the story now appears, being described as one who had no reverence for God and no regard for man. This condition does not necessarily mean that he is impartial. The justice he dispensed was more for his own comfort than to do what was right.
2. Verse 3: “And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.” NKJ: | “Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.’”
 - a. The widow’s plea before the judge was to avenge her for whatever she thought her adversary had done toward her. It is common in most societies for widows to be mistreated and cheated.
 - 1) Exodus 22:22: “Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.”
 - 2) Deuteronomy 24:17: “Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless; nor take a widow's raiment to pledge.”
 - 3) Deuteronomy 27:19: “Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.”
 - 4) 1 Kings 17:9: “Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.”
 - 5) Malachi 3:5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.”
 - 6) Mark 12:40: “Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.”
 - b. “The condition of widows was indeed desolate, helpless, and friendless; God has legislated in favor of the widow because man has been prone to impose upon them This widow was without influence and unable to bribe; she had little to hope from this wicked judge. She lived in the same city with him, and ‘came oft unto him’ begging him to avenge her of her adversary; she was asking justice against those who had mistreated her; she was asking to be delivered from the oppression of her adversary” (Boles).

3. Verses 4-5: "And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."
 - a. In the parable, the woman returned to the judge, making the same request; for a while, he denied her appeal. Her persistence motivated him to grant the demand.
 - b. He did not rule in her favor due to rightness of her case, but because he perceived that she would keep on coming to him; so to avoid her pestering him, he gave her justice.
 - c. Compare: "I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth" (Luke 11:8).
 4. Verses 6-7: "And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."
 - a. Our Lord called attention to the decision of the unjust judge; to avoid being pestered by the widow, he ruled in her favor; he was unjust because he did not base his ruling on truth or justice, but on his wish to be at ease.
 - b. On the other hand, God will surely bring justice to his elect, those who belong to him and serve him faithfully.
 - c. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) But we are counselled here to cry day and night unto him, and, though there be no sign or reply, our prayers shall be treasured up before him, and in his own good time they will be answered. Though he bear long with them. With whom does God bear long? With the wrong-doers, whose works and words oppress and make life heavy and grievous to the servants of God; with these who have no claim to consideration will God bear long. And this announcement gives us some clue to the meaning of the delay we often experience before we get an answer to many of our prayers.
 - 2) The prayer is heard, but God, in the exercise of mercy and forbearance, has dealings with the oppressors. It were easy for the Almighty to grant an immediate answer, but only at the cost often of visiting some of the oppressors with immediate punishment, and this is not his way of working. God bears long before his judgments swift and terrible are sent forth.
 - 3) This has ever been his way of working with individuals as with nations. Was it not thus, for instance, that he acted towards Egypt and her Pharaohs during the long period of the bitter Hebrew bondage? We who would he God's servants must be content to wait God's time, and, while waiting, patiently go on pleading, sure that in the end "God will avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him."
 5. Verse 8: "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"
 - a. "I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? Though a beloved people cry continually unto a just God, yet will he in mercy be longsuffering to their enemies, and because of the longsuffering he will seem to delay his answer, but the delay will not be extended a moment longer than necessary. When the season of repentance is past, and the measure of iniquity is full (Ge 15:16), then the Lord's answer will be speedy, immediate. But despite this admonition to pray without discouragement, and this promise to answer with all speed, God's patience with the wicked, and his consequent delays in answering the prayers of the just, will prove such a trial to his people as to leave it questionable whether any of them will have faith enough to pray until the coming of the Lord. We find an echo of this passage at 2Pe 3:1-13. Compare also Mt 24:12,13." [Four Fold Gospel].
 - b. If God speedily executes punishment upon all sinful people, will faithful people be found on the earth at the Second Coming of Christ? We know that the word of the Lord endures forever (Matt. 24:35; 1 Peter. 1:22-25).
-

- c. The article “the” appears in front of faith, thus **the faith** is expressed in the text; the faith refers to the gospel, the once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3 Eph. 4:4-6). Jesus raises the unanswered question, will the faith be found on the earth? God’s word will survive the passage of time, but that does not guarantee that there will be honest people on the earth which know, believe and practice it.
- d. God is longsuffering. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).
 - 1) Having assured the scoffers that God means what he says, Peter now advises them to take advantage of the opportunity to repent—while they have that privilege! God is not delaying the return of Christ; he has not forgotten or postponed the occasion, but has simply set the time far enough into the future to give as many as possible the opportunity to obey the gospel and prepare for eternity.
 - 2) He is not slack [slow, tardy]. The word is used in 1 Timothy 3:13, being translated as tarry: “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” There is a time fixed in the mind of the Almighty when the end shall come (Mark 13:32-33; Acts 17:30-31).
- e. Regardless of the amount of time that God allows to pass, he will without fail fulfill every promise. Scoffers think to the contrary; but there will be no tardiness in the fulfillment of his promises and threats. Instead of slackness, God is showing long-sufferance toward sinful man. These scoffers were perverting this evidence of God’s patience into an argument against the truth of his word. The Scriptures often speak of his longsuffering (cf. Rom. 11:11-36).
 - 1) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
 - 2) Romans 12:1: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”
 - 3) Revelation 2:20-22: “Revelation 2:20-22 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.”
 - 4) Deuteronomy 5:29: “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”
- f. The true followers of Christ have been given an unending commission, to teach the gospel to as many in each generation as possible; the response to the appeal of the gospel remains with the individual.
 - 1) Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - 3) Luke 24:47: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

B. Luke 18:9-14: The Pharisee and the Publican.

- 1. Verses 9-10: “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.”
 - a. The purpose of this parable is stated clearly in the early part of the story. There were some who put their trust in their own righteousness, while they despised others.
-

- b. The two men of the story represented two kinds of people: the self-righteous and those who knew their own unworthiness. These two men, each a member of the Jewish nation, went to the temple to engage in prayer. There were certain times when the priests within the holy place would burn incense; the devout citizens would be on the outside of the temple, praying: “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1).
2. Verses 11-12: “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”
- a. The Lord said that the Pharisee prayed with himself. “So far as the phrase has any special point, it indicates that he was not praying to God at all; he was practically praying to himself, congratulating himself, half-consciously, that he had no need to pray, in the sense of asking for pardon, or peace, or righteousness...” (Ellicott).
- b. The gratitude he gave to God appears more to be self-congratulatory attainment. But giving him any benefit of doubt, he boasted that he was greater than other people, who were extortioners, unjust, adulterers, *et al.* He was also proud not to be as this nearby publican.
- c. Compare: “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Rev. 3:17-18).
- d. Vincent: “A Jewish saying is quoted that a true Rabbin ought to thank God every day of his life; 1, that he was not created a Gentile; 2, that he was not a plebeian; 3, that he was not born a woman.”
- e. Brother Boles has this excellent comment:
- 1) “The Pharisee belonged to the aristocracy of his time, a member of the ruling class; and both his virtues and his sins were those of the class to which he belonged. His good points were many. He was not an adulterer, nor an extortioner, nor unjust. He avoided the outward, gross sins into which many fall.
- 2) “On the positive side, he was outwardly religious, as he should have been, keeping all the ceremonies of the law and paying tithes even beyond what the law required, and observing a hundred times as many fasts each year as God had commanded. He was superior to many of his own times, and also of our own times.
- 3) “His failure was a lack of humility, a proud and selfish arrogance having developed within him that made him unsympathetic to others. Furthermore, he had fallen into the fatal error of supposing that he had placed God in his debt, that God owed him salvation on the basis of the good deeds that he did and his outward observance of the commandments in the law.”
- f. This man denied that he was of the common sort:
- 1) Was not an extortioner: Harshly greedy; who take away the goods of others by force and violence. It means, also, those who take advantage of the necessities of others, the poor and the oppressed, and extort their property.
- 2) He was not unjust: They who are not fair and honest in their dealings; who get the property of others by fraud.
3. Verse 13: “And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”
- a. What the Pharisee lacked in humility, this publican had in an honest abundance. Not so much as looking toward heaven, he profoundly asked God to be merciful. He confessed his sinful conduct to God and asked for mercy.
- b. But smote upon his breast.—The same act meets us as the expression of extremest sorrow in those who stood by the cross (Luke 23:48). Looked at physiologically, it seems to imply a tension of the vessels of the heart, such as we all feel in deep emotion, to which outward impact seems, in some
-

measure, to minister relief. So men strike their chest, when suffering from cold, to quicken the circulation of the blood. As being spontaneous and involuntary, it attested the reality of the emotion, and contrasted with the calm, fixed attitude of the Pharisee. [Ellicott].

4. Verse 14: "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."
 - a. A parable is a story taken from life and comparisons are drawn. It is likely that this story had been repeated in real life experiences of the kinds of people the Lord here described.
 - b. It is clear that the proud Pharisee was not intended as one a true follower of Christ should imitate. But the whole demeanor of the publican is praiseworthy. This man returned to his house justified.
 - c. The haughty heart has its reward in the here and now; it is short-lived and is unsatisfactory in the future. The humble heart is pleasing to the Lord in the here and now, and will be supremely blessed in eternity.
 - d. "Every one who exalts himself shall be abased in the future, and he who humbles himself, shall be exalted!" "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).
- C. Luke 18:15-17: The Lord and the Infants.
 1. Verse 15: "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them."
 - a. Compare: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence" (Matt. 19:13-15).
 - b. Among this collection of little ones, some must have been infants, with others who would have been a little older. "And they were bringing unto him also their **babes**, that he should touch them: but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them" (ASV).
 - c. It may have been the case that the disciples were trying to lessen the Lord's load of work, when they tried to keep these parents and their "babes" from coming up to Jesus.
 2. Verse 16: "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."
 - a. The Lord was aware of the situation and interceded in behalf of the parents and their children. The stated purpose for these children being brought to the Lord was that he might lay his hands on them and pray for them. "The prayers of a good man in our behalf have always been regarded as a blessing: no wonder that the mothers of these children desired the prayers of Jesus in behalf of their little ones" (McGarvey, p.166).
 - b. These little ones were not brought for any healing, but for the Lord's prayers. "It was an ancient custom to lay hands on one in pronouncing the blessing. (Gen. 48:14; 2 Kings 5:11; Matt. 9:18.) The parents believed that since children at the age of eight days were taken into the privileges of covenant with God they could receive a covenant blessing....These parents came with their children and interrupted the course of instruction; the disciples thought that these parents were interrupting an important subject with trivial affairs" (Boles, Matthew, p.390).
 - 1) "Those who have imagined that there is an allusion here to infant baptism, or to infant church membership, are indebted for the idea, not to their Bibles, but to their creeds" (McGarvey, p.166).
 - 2) In Matthew 18, Christ held up little children in their innocence and humility, as proper examples of what all in the kingdom must be and have. Here he declares that the innocent children represent the condition of those who are in the kingdom of heaven.
 - 3) "Hebrews 12:2: "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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

- 4) 1 Peter 2:21: “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”
- c. The “coming” to Jesus under consideration is not the coming to him for salvation, but for the purpose plainly stated in Matthew 19:13; they were brought that Jesus might lay hands on them, pray for them, and convey this blessing. The very nature of their spiritual condition erases any need for them to come to the Lord for salvation. Lying behind the notion of infant baptism and church membership is the foul doctrine of original sin. If a little child comes into the world guilty of sin, from whom did he inherit that guilt? Certainly it was not from God! And Ezekiel 18:20 frankly says that sin is personal; it is not obtained from the individual's father (or mother). Sin is declared to be the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4); Ezekiel declares that the wickedness (sin) of the tainted individual shall be upon himself; it cannot be transferred to another, just as righteousness pertains to him who does righteousness (1 John 3:7).
- 1) There is no record, direct or indirect, in the New Testament of any little one being baptized. If the household of Lydia, the Jailer, or Cornelius had any that were baptized, then let the proponents tell the name and age of just one! The pure spiritual nature of a little child shows that he has no need to be baptized; the requirements of the gospel plan of salvation show that no infant can obey the gospel: they cannot believe, repent, or confess faith in Christ; thus, they cannot obey the gospel in baptism.
 - 2) **Of such is the kingdom of heaven.** "Not of little children, but of such *as* little children. Neither the kingdom as it now is, nor the kingdom as it will be, is composed of little children, but in both states of its existence it is composed of persons with characters like theirs....As, however, children are here made the models of those in the kingdom, it is quite certain that on account of their freedom from personal transgression they will be admitted unconditionally into the eternal kingdom" (McGarvey, pp.166f).
3. Verse 17: “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.”
- a. Strictly construed this clause means, “Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child receives it.” To receive the kingdom of God is a different act from entering into it. The distinction is made in this very sentence: ‘Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom as a little child, he shall not enter therein.’ Receiving it precedes entering into it, and means no more than accepting its teaching. This a little child does with an implicit faith from the moment that its understanding is sufficiently developed. [McGarvey].
 - b. Mark 10:16: “And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.” The Lord is said to have taken them in his arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16). Any right-thinking parent would have wanted the Lord to intercede with the Father in behalf of their children.
 - c. “Not content with merely laying his hands on them, he took them up in his arms to do so, and blessed them. The tenderness which he manifested toward the little children should cause parents to more highly appreciate them, and to labor more assiduously to bring, them up in the doctrine and discipline of the Lord” [*ibid.*].
 - d. The blessing was not some nebulous, indefinable generality. It would have included an expression of gratitude for them and a request for God’s providence over these children. Christ was praying for these children. Compare: “...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas. 5:16). Notice the parallel passages regarding the Lord’s Supper:
 - 1) Matthew 26:26: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and **blessed it**, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” [Greek 2168 is used].
 - 2) Luke 22:19-20: “And he took bread, and **gave thanks**, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” [Greek 2127 is used].
-

3) The Lord took bread and blessed it. Luke 22:19 says he gave thanks for it. Thus, to bless means to give thanks. The Greek term used is "*eucharisteo*."

D. Luke 18:18-30: The Rich Young Ruler.

1. Verse 18: "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
 - a. Compare: "And when he was gone forth into the way, **there came one running, and kneeled to him**, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17).
 - b. This man came running up to the Lord and asked him what he must do to inherit eternal life. His rapid approach to Jesus indicates his earnest desire for eternal life. His approach seems to be abrupt and perhaps immature. He showed his sincerity and respect for the Master. He kneeled and addressed him as "Good Master." That was as it should have been.
 - c. Putting the three accounts of his story we find that he was a ruler, that he was young and that he was rich.
 - 1) Matthew 19:20: "The **young** man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"
 - 2) Mark 10:22: "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had **great possessions**."
 - 3) Luke 18:18: "And a certain **ruler** asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
 - d. This young man had a powerful incentive for approaching Jesus, to learn the requirements for him to obtain life eternal.
2. Verses 19-21: "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.
 - a. Why callest thou me good? Christ does not rebuke the young man for employing what was nothing more than the language of respect by any pupil to a teacher—Abbott. But he asks him whether he looks upon him merely as any other teacher; or does he recognize him as a divine teacher—the only one who is truly good; the "good master" who knows all things, and whose teaching is eternally true.— There is none good but one, that is God. He does not deny that he is good; for he is the one who is good, even God (1 John 3:5). Some have mistakenly found in these words an affirmation that Christ is not divine. [Johnson, Mark].
 - b. The list of commands named by the Lord include:
 - 1) Do not commit adultery.
 - 2) Do not kill. In Matthew's account: "Thou shalt do no murder."
 - 3) Do not steal.
 - 4) Do not bear false witness.
 - 5) Do not defraud.
 - a) "It seems as if intended to be a special application of the tenth commandment. One who had great possessions, gathered in the usual ways by which men gain wealth, needed to examine himself specially by that text. Were there no ill-gotten gains in his treasure?—Ellicott.
 - b) Our Lord gives this enumeration of the commandments to bring out the self-righteous spirit of the young man, which he before saw" (Johnson, *ibid.*).
 - 6) Honor thy father and mother.
 - 7) Matthew adds: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."
- c. The young man had addressed Jesus as "Good Master." The Lord asked why he had addressed him in that manner. "The Lord's question calls attention to the fact that the young man recognized the deity of the Christ. This was demonstrated by his words and by his actions, his kneeling. This crucial point would remove all grounds for any failure to follow instructions to be given" (Deaver, *The Book of Matthew*, p.512).
- d. "'The Good was one of the many Judaic titles of God. The point of our Lord's remark is that a word with such hallowed association should not be used in a merely conventional manner.' (See Ps. 145:9.) In fact, it is easy to detect in this conversation a definite leading on the part of Christ to elicit an

- acknowledgment from that young man that Christ is God. It is as though the Lord had said, 'I see you recognize me as Good; since only God is Good, do you thus receive me?'" (Coffman, p.296).
- e. In reply to the young man's first question, Christ told him that he must keep the commandments in order to enter into life. So, from the Lord's plain words, obedience to God is a requirement if we would have eternal life. This is what is said in other places (see Heb. 5:8-9). It matters not that this man lived under the Mosaic Dispensation; regardless of the age under which a man spent his time on earth, it must needs be that he have been obedient unto God if he is to have eternal life in heaven. The specific requirements of God's law have changed with the passing of the various laws, but there has never been a time when God did not require obedience to his will.
 - f. Jesus answered listed five commands of the ten in the Decalogue, plus "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 19:19). This latter command embraces the sentiment in the last requirement in the Ten: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house," etc. Notice that Jesus interpreted the command "Thou shalt not kill," as "Thou shalt do no murder" (Matt. 19:18). Thus, the Law did not forbid all killing, but forbade murder. It was right for those in authority to execute certain lawbreakers; it was right for God to do so. What was forbidden was murder, not legal executions.
 - g. Why the Lord omitted the first four while including the last six is a matter of conjecture. "We suppose that he named the last six rather than the first four, because the six were then more frequently violated than the four, and obedience to them was on this account a better test of character" (McGarvey, pp.167f). This young man was a credit to his generation in many ways. He would be considered an outstanding person by many of our day who think a facade of spirituality is sufficient. He inquired whether there was yet something else that he needed to add or change. Thus, "What lack I yet?" (Matt. 19:20).
3. Verses 22-23: "Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich."
 - a. Mark 10:21-22: "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."
 - b. The Savior knew the man's heart and discerned his great weakness: his interest in material possessions was too great, hence the Lord quickly devised a means of exposing this frailty to the young man's mind. He told him to sell his possession and come follow him, if he would be perfect.
 - c. No one in the flesh is able to attain to a state of absolute, sinless perfection; no one but Christ was ever able to do so. However, each one of us is expected to reach a state of spiritual maturity where all our faculties have been brought under the control of the Lord. (See Matt. 5:48; 1 John 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:6; 14:20; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12; Heb. 5:12-14; Jas 1:4; 3:2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. Gen. 6:9; Job 1:1). But none of us will ever reach a point in this life when we can say that we do not sin (1 John 1:7-10; Rom. 3:9,23).
 - d. The blessings of heaven are described by the Lord as "treasure in heaven." (cf. Matt. 6:19-21). The instruction to follow Christ was probably intended in the literal sense as was the case in Matthew 8:19-22 (cf. the Twelve). To follow Christ requires that we be willing to sacrifice anything we hold dear if it comes between us and the Lord. **It is likely the case that Jesus expected the young man to join his band of disciples, as they traveled about Palestine.**
 - e. Does the Lord require that any who would follow him today must sell their possessions and distribute the proceeds to the poor before they can be Christians? We can know that this is not required for several reasons. Mary had a house in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12); Philip had a great house in Caesarea Palestina (Acts 21:8); Ananias and his wife were not required to sell their possession, or to give the money it brought to the church after it was sold (Acts 5:4). Philemon was evidently a wealthy man and he was not required to rid himself of his wealth. These all were in good standing with the Lord
-

even though they retained their property. "Furthermore, the Lord's teachings in the parable of the pounds, the parable of the talents, and many other passages suggest and even demand that ownership of property was not condemned by Jesus nor forbidden to members of his kingdom" (Coffman, Matthew, p.298).

4. Verses 24-27: "And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."
 - a. Compare: "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:23-27).
 - b. There is nothing inherently wrong with having material wealth or possessions, even with having them in great abundance. The inherent danger is that one will place his trust in his riches instead of in God. Riches are not sinful for many great men of faith in Bible times were wealthy, including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the New Testament, Philemon and Cornelius were evidently men of substance. The warning given in the Bible is against the love of money, not against money. "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*" (Prov. 30:8-9; cf. 1 Tim. 6:6-19).
 - c. As it is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, so it is impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Mark 10:24 makes the meaning clear: "Children, how hard is it for them that **trust in riches** to enter into the kingdom of God!" The rich man Jesus envisions is one who puts his trust in riches, and not in God. It is certain that no man can be saved, be added to the church, and go on to heaven who puts his primary trust in his money. The Lord is speaking literally in this passage. It is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of the needle; it is also impossible for one who trusts in his riches, instead of in God, to enter salvation.
 - d. Notice that the amount of money in question is immaterial: if one trusts his \$1000 to see him through difficult times, and does not trust God to give him deliverance, he is sure to fail. He cannot be saved in that frame of mind, and he cannot please God if he is already a child of God when that evil attitude arises. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). The rich young ruler was one who ultimately placed his trust in his riches more than in God. He departed from the Lord's presence with sorrow in his heart.
 - e. Peter may have been overly impressed with the young man dedication to keeping the basics of the Mosaic Law. Jesus was able to peer into the depths of his heart (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7). There was a keen fault within. Assessing the ruler from outward appearances, the apostle wondered aloud, "Who then can be saved?"
 - f. The Lord stated, that there are things which are impossible for men, but which the Almighty would have no difficulty in doing.
 - 1) "It is a human impossibility for one to save himself in the absolute; he can do so only by doing what God teaches him to do. It is God who saves. It is beyond human power for any to be saved, and especially those who are surrounded with the dangers and difficulties of wealth. The truth of God can break the spirit of covetousness, purify the heart by faith in the truth, and make the rich humble" (Boles).

- 2) But unless an individual will carefully learn the truth, and let the truth fill his mind, and come to believe it entirely, only then can that sinner obtain faith that will lead him sincerely to obey it.
 - 3) While it is impossible for one who trusts his riches instead of trusting God to be saved, it is possible for a wealthy man to be saved, although there is the possibility that he might develop an independent attitude and think he has no need of the Almighty. The Lord can still lead such a one as this through certain circumstances of life, and provide certain motivations through his word, to bring this rich man to repentance. Men cannot do this, but God, in his own way, can.
5. Verses 28-30: "Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."
- a. Mark's account: "Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first" (10:28-31).
 - b. Our brethren in the first century faced severe hardship because they were followers of Christ. The Lord himself suffered at the hands of his enemies. So did the apostles. Stephen was stoned to death by a vicious mob. What was his crime? He presented truth that they disdained. The apostles were beaten and imprisoned; James was executed.
 - c. A large number of Jews and proselytes obeyed the gospel in Judaea; at the death of Stephen, a great persecution was directed against these Christians, and they were scattered abroad. In this and other times of cruel treatment, how could these faithful ones survive? **They helped each other.** Some were able to provide shelter, food and other assistance to the many. And God used his Providence!
 - d. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:34-37).
 - 1) A man's foes shall be of his own household. William Tyndale was betrayed to his death by a "faithful" servant (Coffman, Matthew, p.147). Judas betrayed Christ. "In nearly all quarrels, except those about religion, the members of the same family stand together, but in religious feuds the family circle is often broken, and its parts arrayed against each other. When a man abandons the religion of his ancestors his own kindred feel more keenly than others the shame which the world attaches to the act, and are exasperated against the supposed apostate in a degree proportionate to their nearness to him" (McGarvey, p.94).
 - 2) Religious differences put the disciple's faith to a strong test. He must decide whether he loves the Lord or his family member more. Christ will not take second place. He that loves father or mother more than he loves Christ is not worthy of the Lord. This verse is parallel and thus explains Luke 14:26: To hate, as used in Luke, means to love less.
 - e. It would sometimes be the case that when one obeyed the gospel, even the members of his own family would turn against him, and force him to leave home. This could be the case of a wife, or son or daughter. A new Christian could lose his employment, his business or some other source of his livelihood, his own house, his own property—and be exposed to rejection and danger. His close relatives would turn against him, but because he was a faithful saint, there would be countless houses opened to him; although he was an outcast to his parents and siblings, there would be others in the household of faith who could more that replace those he had lost!
- E. Luke 18:31-34: Jesus Tells His Disciples About His Coming Death.

1. Verse 31: “Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.”
 - a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Matthew 20:17-19: “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.”
 - 2) Mark 10:32-34: “And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.”
 - b. The twelve apostles were shocked that Jesus intended to return to Jerusalem, the headquarters of his most violent foes. They not only feared for the safety of the Master, but their own lives were at risk. They were afraid! The truths of a former lesson had not taken root in their heart.
 - 1) “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28).
 - 2) “And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him” (Luke 12:4-5).
2. Verses 32-33: “For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.”
 - a. In this remarkable prophecy, Jesus described precisely what would later occur. He would be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes; they would condemn him to death; they would deliver him to the Gentiles who would mock, scourge, and crucify him; and on the third day he would rise again. The Romans occupied Palestine and had taken authority to carry out capital punishment away from the Jewish leaders, thus after condemning the Lord in their perverted conspiracies, he would be delivered to the Gentiles to be put to death.
 - b. Scourging was a cruel form of punishment involving a "terrible laceration by the severest thongs that could be devised, and inflicted only upon the lowest criminal; it was done by placing iron spikes or sharp stones in the lashes of the whips and applied to the bare back of the victim" (Boles, Matt., p.402).
 - c. He would be mocked—treated with derision (Cf. Judges 16:25; Jer. 38:19). Only the Lord could have predicted in such detail the events leading up to and following his death, including the type of death he would endure and his resurrection from the dead on the third day. He gave more than enough specifics to show that a genuine prophecy had been presented.
 - d. FourFold Gospel: This was the third and by far the clearest and most circumstantial prophecy concerning his death. For the other two see pp. 415 and 427. The details are minute even to that complicated arrangement by which the Jewish authorities pronounced sentence (Matt. xxvi. 66) and forced Pilate to confirm their sentence (Luke xxiii. 24).
 - 1) Since the evangelists honestly record an actual prediction, we may well pause to note how remarkable it is in that it gives seven details as follows:
 - a) Delivery or betrayal by Judas (Matt. 20:17-19).
 - b) Condemnation.
 - c) Delivery to the Gentiles.
 - d) Mocking, and the manner of it.
 - e) Scourging.
 - f) Death by crucifixion.

- g) Resurrection on the third day.
- 2) The announcement of these sufferings was made for the purpose of checking any materialistic hopes which the apostles might entertain as to the glories, honors and offices of the Messianic reign. That such hopes were present is shown by the ambitious request which immediately follows. Moreover, to prepare them that they might not be crushed either by the announcement or the accomplishment of his death he gives them the clear promise of his resurrection.
3. Verse 34: "And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."
- a. Our Lord here told the apostles in plain words what was in store for their Master after they reached Jerusalem. We are told that they did not comprehend what he said. Why did they not understand these plain words?
- b. At this time in their spiritual development, their notion about the coming kingdom was the common notion, that the Messiah would establish a worldly reign, which could not be done without a very hard confrontation with the Roman Empire. They would fight to retain their control over this territory.
- c. Therefore, the Lord would be required to exercise supernatural power against Rome. The apostles had witnessed the astounding might he had shown over the winds and waves, and even the resurrection of certain ones from the dead. Rome would represent only a minor obstacle!
- d. With these ideas in their minds, why would their Lord submit to the Jewish and Roman authorities? They could not presently grasp the nature of the kingdom. It was not literal or material, but spiritual; it was not to be seen by physical eyesight; it pertained to the spiritual part of man; the blessings of citizenship were eternal (Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36; Luke 18:28-30).
- e. They were still in a cloud regarding the nature of the kingdom in Acts 1:6-8: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." They were soon to learn all they needed to know about these things.
- F. Luke 18:35-43: A Certain Blind Man at Jericho.
1. Verses 35-37: "And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."
- a. Other accounts:
- 1) Matthew 20:29-34: "And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him."
- 2) Mark 10:46-52: "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."
-

-
- b. Luke 18:35 speaks of the healing of the blind as taking place when the Lord came nigh unto Jericho; Matthew says it occurred as he left the city; Mark 10:46 says that the miracle took place as Christ went out of Jericho. Logical explanations have been offered. The second of these appears to be the better explanation.
 - 1) Some have suggested that two separate miracles occurred: one as the Lord entered into the city and the other as he departed from it. This might also explain the difference in the number of blind men healed (Matthew says two, the other accounts mention only one); perhaps he healed one as he entered and the other as he left.
 - 2) "The discrepancy as to place, 'as he went out from Jericho,' or 'as he drew nigh to Jericho,' is best explained by the recent suggestion that the healing occurred after he left old Jericho, and as he was approaching the new Jericho which Herod the Great had built at some distance away" (Robertson, quoted by Coffman, Matthew, p.316).
 - c. Matthew speaks of two blind men. At this point in the journey toward Jerusalem, two blind men, who were sitting by the road, called out to Jesus for mercy. They had heard that Jesus was passing that way. They probably often positioned themselves on the roadside to beg alms (Mark 10:46), so the approach of the Lord was an added and unexpected benefit. They seized this one opportunity to ask for his aid. Perhaps the one of the two who was the primary spokesman, was named Bartimaeus.
2. Verses 38-39: "And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."
 - a. By addressing Jesus as "Son of David," they acknowledged their belief that he was the Messiah. By calling to him for mercy, they declared their faith in his ability to grant their request.
 - b. Jesus heard the cries, stopped, and asked what it was they wanted. This question does not imply that the Lord was asking for information. He wanted them to express in plain words their request, thus to show their faith to all.
 - c. Johnson:
 - 1) It was the confidence which the blind man cherished in the ability and benevolence of Jesus that induced him to seek aid from Jesus, and that induced him to persevere while the crowd sought to restrain him. Such confidence Jesus delighted to acknowledge and to honor. The faith of this man was great; because, being blind, he could not see the miracles which Jesus did. Faith came to him by hearing. He believed on the testimony and report of others; and so he inherited, in a manner, the promise of the Lord his Savior, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:20).
 - 2) Christ was always ready to heal. No one was ever refused who asked him. It rested with the man; the healing could not have its way and enter in, save the man would open his door. Hence the question, and the praise of the patient's faith. Made thee whole. Complete, sound, nothing wanting ... And followed Jesus. Glorifying God, as Luke adds (18:43), and joining the festal company of His Healer, who all likewise gave praise unto God for the miracle which they had witnessed. Compare Acts 3:8-10.
 - 3) Thus, as our Lord journeyed toward Jerusalem, he gathered in his train fresh monuments of his power. The march of earthly conquerors is tracked with blood; smoking villages and mangled corpses mark the way which they had trodden, while weeping captives are chained to their triumphal chariots. But the Savior left joy behind him wherever he went, and collected new trophies of his mercy.—Tyng.
 3. Verses 40-42: "And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight."
-

- a. They plainly stated that their keenest desire was to have their eyes opened. Indeed, this would be the constant wish any blind man would have. Mark identifies one of these blind men as Bartimaeus, and says he cast off his garment (the outer garment) and approached Jesus.
 - b. "Thus, naked, or nearly so, this poor beggar, blind, despised, and suffering the most abject shame and poverty, appeared as an object of the utmost pity as he stood trembling before the Lord of Life and heard the blessed words, 'What will ye that I should do unto you?'" (Coffman, pp.318f).
4. Verse 43: "And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."
- a. Brother Boles, an outstanding Bible scholar, offered this:
 - 1) "And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight:—It was a beautiful and impressive scene to see Jesus stop the dense crowd in order that the case of this beggar, smitten with unfortunate blindness, should be ministered to. With swift promptness Jesus said: 'Receive thy sight.' He then added: 'Thy faith hath made thee whole.' The faith of the blind man was such that he cried the more earnestly for mercy, believing that Jesus had the power to heal and would exercise his power in healing him. His eyes were opened because of his strong faith.
 - 2) "And immediately he received his sight—There was no delay; the promptness with which Jesus granted the request showed his interest in this unfortunate man. The multitude who witnessed this could know just what was done; they knew that the man was blind, and now they knew that he had received his sight. The man not only received his sight, but he 'followed him, glorifying God.' The multitude who at first rebuked the man now joined in his praising God for his great goodness and power in giving him his sight. At the very word of Jesus the man received his sight; he wished to be with Jesus, and mingle in the joyous procession as it moved on toward Jerusalem."
 - b. Notice the immediate actions of the blind. We might think that one who was suddenly given sight would want to go to his family and friends to report this great miracle. Maybe his family and friends were also present.
 - c. To survive to this time, he had to beg for a living. But now that he could see, certainly he would want to give up begging and seek employment. Indeed, now that he had eyesight, the need to beg was no longer necessary or possible.
 - d. What did the man do? Immediately he praised God and followed Christ! This man [both of them] were children of God since they were Jews. We would naturally think that now that he had been healed, his faith would lead him to be entirely obedient to the Law. Although we are not told about his later activities, does anyone think that he would later become a member of the Lord's church?
-

Luke Chapter 19

A. Luke 19:1-10: Zachaeus.

1. Verses 1-3: “And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: “And he entered and was passing through Jericho. And behold, a man called by name Zacchaeus; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.”
 - 2) NKJ: “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.”
 - b. This man is here said to be chief tax collector, and a rich man. Publicans were widely believed to be crooked in their assessments of taxes on the Jews. He showed himself to be an honorable man, at least after he had spent some time with the Lord.
 - c. It is probable that Zacchaeus was a sub-contractor under some Roman knight who had bought the privilege of collecting taxes at Jericho, or perhaps the privilege of all Judea. [Fourfold Gospel].
 - d. From Fausset:
 - 1) Archelaus in our Lord's days had irrigated the plain and planted it with palms. Herod the Great had previously founded a new town (Phasaelis) higher up the plain. The distinction between the new and the old towns may solve the seeming discrepancy between Matthew (Mat 20:30), who makes the miracle on the blind to be when Jesus was leaving Jericho, and Luke, who says it was when Jesus was come nigh unto Jericho (Luke 18:35).
 - 2) The Lord Himself, in whose genealogy Rahab the harlot is found, here was guest of Zacchaeus the publican, a lucrative office in so rich a city as the Roman Jericho was. The tree that Zacchaeus climbed was the fig mulberry or tree fig.
 - 3) The Lord's visit to Bethany appropriately follows His parable of the good Samaritan who relieved the man robbed between Jerusalem and Jericho, for Jesus was then traveling from Jericho to Jerusalem, and Bethany was only a little way short of Jerusalem (Luke10:25; Luke10:38; John_11:1). James and John's proposal to call fire down upon the Samaritans who would not receive Him in an earlier stage of the journey suggested probably His choosing a Samaritan to represent the benefactor in the parable, a tacit rebuke to their un-Christlike spirit (Luke 9:51-56).
2. Verses 4-6: “And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. Not being able to see through the crowd that separated him from seeing Jesus, somehow he was able to climb into the sycamore tree, to be higher than the multitude. The people may not have noticed what Zachaeus did, but our Lord knew.
 - c. He told the small man to descend from the tree quickly, and that he would stay with him that day. This implied that this publican would be honored to be host to the Messiah!
 - d. “Our Lord *invites Himself*, and that in right *royal* style, which waits not for invitations. **but**—since the honour is done to the subject, not the sovereign—announces the purpose of royalty to partake of the subject’s hospitalities. Manifestly our Lord speaks as knowing how the privilege would be

- appreciated. Accordingly, with an alacrity which in such a person surprises us, he does exactly as bidden” (Jamieson).
3. Verse 7: “And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.”
 - a. In Pharisaic style, the crowd murmured against Christ, alleging that he had gone into the house of man who was a sinner, to be hosted and honored by this corrupt individual.
 - b. Those Jews who collected taxes for their Roman overlords were despised by the population. Alas, this is a common attitude many have had for the tax-man, through the ages. [This preacher was given the job by the elders of meeting with IRS agents concerning a tax problem. These agents were pleasant and kind; the “problem” quickly disappeared].
 4. Verses 8-9: “And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham.”
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) “Probably Zacchaeus heard the murmurings, and bethought himself and the reputation that publicans had, so he at once began to make confession. Zacchaeus ‘stood’; that is, he took a’ posture as of one who is about to make a solemn declaration; he was like the Pharisee in attitude, but different in spirit, though the same word describing the Pharisee’s posture is used of the publican.
 - 2) “Zacchaeus, noting the murmuring of the people, seeks to justify Jesus in entering his house. He denies being an extortioner or unjust, and declares that he has given half of his goods to help the poor; that is, he had given half of his income to help the poor. Some think that Zacchaeus had not been so liberal, but that he now declares his liberality by saying that he would give half of his goods to feed the poor. It seems that he was expressing what he had done and that what he purposed to continue to do.
 - 3) “He was willing to restore according to the law anything that he had ‘wrongfully exacted’ of anyone, and restore ‘fourfold.’ The law of Moses required only the addition of one-fifth to the amount of which the person had been defrauded. (Num. 5:7.) Zacchaeus was willing to observe the extreme requirements of the law. (Ex. 22:1.)
 - b. Every Jewish infant was born into the family of Abraham; each Jew was a descendant of that great father of the nation. As such, each Jew was automatically a child of God. These had to be taught about God and instructed in the Law given from Heaven to them. That was the arrangement made for the Old Testament system. In the Christian Age, individuals must first be taught about God, Christ, and the Gospel, before they can become children of God (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Mark 16:15-16).
 - c. Zacchaeus had committed himself to giving half of his fortune to the poor; and if he had defrauded anyone, he would restore the amount by a factor of four. He was determined to do the right thing. This was a Jew who had genuinely repented.
 - d. Compare: “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).
 - 1) Some have misused this passage, and the other verses which place repentance before faith, to claim that the correct order is (1) repentance, and (2) faith. It is impossible for one to repent unless he believes, or else there would be no motivation for repentance (cf. 2 Cor. 7:10). The Pentecostians repented because they believed; without faith it impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6; Acts 17:30-31).
 - 2) If repentance precedes faith because of the order of the statement in this verse, then sanctification precedes faith because it is listed before faith in 2 Thessalonians 2:13. It would also mean that confession of faith must precede faith since they are given in that order in Romans 10:9. "The order of the words describing two actions proves nothing in reference to their occurrence, except

when it is made evident that it was the writer's intention to indicate the order of occurrence. No such intention is manifest here" (McGarvey, p.251).

- 3) "...Protestant parties contend that *saving* faith, as it is styled, must follow repentance. The mistake which they commit arises from a misconception of the nature of both faith and repentance. Regarding repentance as simply *sorrow for sins*, and faith as a *yielding up of the will to Christ*, they very readily reach the conclusion that the former must precede the latter. But in this conception the sorrow for sin which produces repentance is mistaken for repentance itself; while the yielding up of the will to Christ, which is really repentance, is mistaken for faith. Repentance, therefore, really covers all the ground usually assigned to both repentance and saving faith, leaving no room for faith to arise after it" (ibid., p.252).
- 4) All the Jews and proselyted Gentiles who attended the synagogue services already believed in God before Paul preached Jesus to them. They had all been guilty of sinning against God, for the Law of Moses could not take away sin (Heb. 10:1ff). His preaching called on them to repent of their sins and obtain forgiveness by means of an obedient faith in Christ (Jas. 2:14-26; Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21; Acts 2:36-41; 22:16). When the Gentiles learned the gospel, they were shown their guilt of sin, and thus were told to repent; of necessity, faith preceded their repentance.
- 5) The Jews of the first century had rebelled against God in many ways; they were required to see their sinful condition and repent. Before they could obtain salvation from the Savior, they must repent of their past sinful rebellion; having thus repented, then they could obtain faith in Christ, and blessings that obedient faith produces.

5. Verse 10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

- a. This great truth of the Messiah's work was not thrown out disconnected from everything else. It was given in connection with our Lord's meeting with Zacchaeus. Although this man was a child of God by natural birth, and since the Mosaic Law could not remove the guilt of sin, our Lord had power on earth to forgive sin (cf. Mark 2:1-12). Salvation had indeed come to this man's house!
- b. This verse lies at the heart of the work of Christ. The whole purpose of his coming to earth was to make it possible for the salvation of lost souls. The parables of Luke 15 have shown [illustrated] for us the importance of this great work. "That which" is "those who" are in a lost condition.
- c. "It was the great mission of the Redeemer to seek and save the lost; and that was to be done by the sacrifice of himself on Calvary; and there could be no other objective which would justify so great a sacrifice, except that of saving men from eternal damnation. Thus, in what it took to save the lost, one may read the pathetic nature of their state" (Coffman).

B. Luke 19:11-27: The Parable of the Pounds.

1. Verse 11: "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."
 - a. Jamieson:
 - 1) A different parable from that of the Talents (Mt 25:14-30). For, (1) This parable was spoken "when He was nigh to Jerusalem" (Lu 19:11); that one, some days after entering it, and from the Mount of Olives. (2) This parable was spoken to the promiscuous crowd; that, to the Twelve alone. Accordingly, (3) Besides the "servants" in this parable, who profess subjection to Him, there is a class of "citizens" who refuse to own Him, and who are treated differently, whereas in the parable of the talents, spoken to the former class alone, this latter class is omitted. (4) In the Talents, each servant receives a different number of them (five, two, one); in the Pounds all receive the same one pound, which is but about the sixtieth part of a talent; also, in the talents, each shows the same fidelity by doubling what he received (the five are made ten; the two, four); in the Pounds, each receiving the same, render a different return (one making his pound ten, another five).

- 2) Plainly, therefore, the intended lesson is different; the one illustrating equal fidelity with different degrees of advantage; the other, different degrees of improvement of the same opportunities; yet with all this difference, the parables are remarkably similar.
 - b. “Should immediately appear.—Better, perhaps, should be shown forth, or manifested. The Greek word is not used by any other New Testament writer. It is clear, from the tenor of the parable, that disciples and multitude were alike dwelling on the greatness to which they were to attain, on the high places in store for them on the right hand and on the left, rather than on their work and their duties in relation to that Kingdom of God” (Ellicott).
 - c. The appearance of the kingdom here refers more to the Jewish misconception of the kingdom, than the actual establishment of the spiritual kingdom. The common view of the coming kingdom was wrong; God never intended that his kingdom would be of a material, worldly nature. This expectation was entirely misguided.
 - d. The kingdom intended by God was in the offing. John, Jesus, the Twelve and the Seventy had all preached the approaching kingdom. But even the apostles of Christ misunderstood its nature: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:5-8; cf. Mark 16:14-20).
2. Verses 12-14: “He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.'
 - b. “Some have confused this parable of the pounds with the parable of talents recorded in Matt. 25:14-30. They are two different parables spoken at different times and different places. The parable of the pounds was spoken in Jericho or on the way from Jericho to Jerusalem; the parable of the talents was spoken on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem; the parable of the pounds was spoken before Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while the parable of the talents was spoken about the third day after his entrance into the city. The parable of the pounds was spoken to the multitudes as well as his disciples, while that of the talents was spoken to the innermost circle of his trusted followers. The scope of the parable of the pounds is wider and more complex than that of the talents. They differ in every essential and important point” [Boles].
 - c. The nobleman of the parable is the Messiah. It was never intended that he would be king on earth, ruling over an earth-bound government. God’s eternal plan was on schedule; his Son had come into this world, worked diligently among the Jewish nation, and was now nearing the time of his return to heaven.
 - d. Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - 1) In the vision, Daniel saw one who was like the Son of Man [*i.e.*, Christ], come with the clouds of heaven. The identity of this Great Personage is beyond doubt!
-

- 2) Luke described our Lord's departure from earth from the human witnesses' point of view: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).
 - 3) David prophetically pictured our Lord's near approach to Heavenly Jerusalem: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory" (Psa. 24:7-10).
 - a) This psalm may have initially have been sung in reference to the reception of the Ark of the Covenant, which had been captured from Israel during the days of Eli, and which later was brought into Jerusalem.
 - b) But like other Old Testament matters, this Psalm beautifully pictures the return of Christ from his earthly mission, coming back into the presence of the Almighty and the heavenly host. Only Heaven could be said to have *everlasting* doors. The King could be none other than the Son of God, who on that glorious occasion received the eternal kingdom.
 - c) In the twenty-fourth Psalm, we have an account of the actual entrance of Christ into heaven. When the King of England wishes to enter the city of London, through the Temple Bar, the gate being closed against him, the herald demands entrance. "Open the gate." From within a voice is heard, "Who is there?" The herald answers, "The King of England!" The gate is at once opened, and the king passes, amidst the joyful acclamations of his people. This is an ancient custom, and the allusion is to it in this Psalm. "The Lord ascended with a shout;" he approached the heavenly portal—the herald in his escort demanded an entrance, "*Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*" The celestial watchers within ask, "*Who is the King of glory?*" The heralds answer, "*The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.*"
 - e. Upon our Lord's return to heaven, the eternal kingdom was placed in his hands; he was established on the throne at the right hand of the Almighty and began to reign on his throne. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1-2).
 - 1) Since he endured the cross and was willing to undergo its shame, he was privileged to sit down at the Father's right hand, there to enjoy all the blessings and honors that attend that position. He was seated on that throne at the time Paul wrote this epistle. It was pointed out clearly in the course of the letter that Christ is now filling the role of High Priest. Zechariah 6:12-13 predicted accurately that he would serve as priest and king while occupying this throne. Therefore, it follows beyond successful denial that the eternal kingdom predicted in Daniel 2:44 has come!
 - 2) Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - 3) Acts 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - f. On his departure to the far country, the nobleman [Christ] gave certain gifts [abilities, talents, and opportunities] which his servants were to use profitably for the Lord. Each of these were required to be used until his return. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:19). Each was given one pound.
-

- 1) An old adage states that ability plus opportunity equals responsibility. If we have no ability (the means) to provide food or shelter to a needy person, we have no responsibility; if we have the means to make the provision, but there is no needy person available, we have no responsibility.
 - g. Paul recognizes this precept, thus states that we are to do good to others *as we have opportunity* [the ability to help is understood]. Opportunities are not always brought to our door; we must be alert to see opportunities. The talents [money] given to the three servants in the Lord's parable (Matt. 25:14-30) were distributed according to the "several ability" of the individuals. The talents represent the means and opportunities to serve the Lord. The Bible often speaks of opportunity.
 - 1) Acts 14:27: "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:9: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 2:12-13: "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."
 - 4) Colossians 4:2-3: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."
 - 5) 2 Thessalonians 3:1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you."
 - 6) Revelation 3:7-8: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."
 - h. We are told that there were citizens who refused to have the Lord to reign over them; they even sent a message to him declaring their repudiation of his authority to give them directions.
 - 1) This depicts the rejection Israel had for the Messiah. "But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:15).
 - 2) Pilate had insulted the crowd by referring to Jesus as their king, but this scorn did not improve the heart and fury of the senseless mob. Consider the physical condition and dress of Jesus after being scourged and mocked by the Roman soldiers! Him a king!
 - 3) Woods: "There was far more truth in their statement than they intended; they did indeed by this denial of Jesus shut themselves off from his kingdom and sealed their own doom. The Jewish system committed suicide on that fateful morning when it renounced its heavenly King for Caesar" (Commentary on John, p.399).
 - 4) It is of interest to note that when Israel, in the long ago, renounced the government of God, under Samuel, for a king, in order that they might be like the nations around them, they were warned of the hardships which would be theirs as the result of their foolish and senseless choice. Similarly: Jesus warned the Jews of their own destruction at the hands of Caesar (Luke 19:41-44; 23:27-31), the fulfillment of which, detailed by Jesus, reached its climax in the siege and fall of Jerusalem and the end of their civil and religious state" (*ibid*).
 - i. The ten servants represent the followers of Christ, from whom the Lord always requires faithfulness.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:2: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."
 - 2) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
-

- 3) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
- 4) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
- j. Analogies of the Parable of the Pounds:

Item in Parable	Represents	Passages
Nobleman	Christ	Luke 19:10; John 14:6
Going to Far Country	Ascension to Heaven	Dan. 7:13-14; John 14:1-3
Receiving Kingdom	Establishing His Church	Matt. 16:13-19; Acts 2
His Rejection	"No King But Caesar"	John 1:11-12; John 19:15
Ten Servants	Loyal Christians	1 Cor. 15:58; Phil. 2:12
Use of The Money	Work of Saints	1 Cor. 4:2
Ten Pounds	Talents, Opportunities	Rev. 2:10
One Who Gained 10 Pounds	Faithful Christian	Matt. 25:34
One Who Gained 5 Pounds	Faithful One: Less Ability	2 Cor. 8:12
One Who Hid His Pound	Slothful Christian	Heb. 10:26-27; 2 Cor. 5:10
Ten and Five Cities	Employment in Eternity	Rev. 22:3
Loss of the Pound	Punishment of Unfaithful	Rev. 20:12-13
Slaying of His Enemies	A.D. 70 and Gehenna	Matt. 24
Absence of the Nobleman	Time Following Ascension	Acts 1:9-11
Return of the Nobleman	Second Coming of Christ	1 Thess. 4:13-18

3. Verse 15: "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."
- a. This nobleman had gone to the proper authority to receive sanction for his reigning over a certain province or kingdom; while he was gone, the people of that kingdom sent to the authority from whence the nobleman was to receive sanction, and prejudiced him against the nobleman; however, the nobleman received "the kingdom," and returned. He then "commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money," to come before him and give an account of their stewardship. The day of reckoning had come for them. He first took account of his servants and afterward inflicted judgment on his enemies The reckoning was made to determine who had gained by trading and how much was gained. There is suggested here the stern character of justice. [Boles].
- b. Our Lord described the Judgment:

- 1) Matthew 25:31-32: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.”
 - 2) John 12:48-50: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.”
 - 3) Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...”
 4. Verses 16-18: “Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.”
 - a. The first man, who had increased the original amount by a factor of ten. This servant was exceedingly faithful and was commended and amply rewarded. He was given authority over ten cities—a great reward indeed.
 - b. The second man had increased his original one pound to a total of five. He was given authority over five cities.
 - c. These two servants were given different rewards, according to the use each had made of his pound. This teaches that there will be degrees of reward in Heaven. This being the case, we may also know that the punishment of the wicked will be in different degrees.
 5. Verses 19-23: “And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?”
 - a. Another of the servants came, but he only returned the single pound he had been given. He had only preserved that item; he had done nothing to bring an increase for his lord. He said that he had kept the pound safe by wrapping it in a napkin. Those of my generation, and earlier, frequently kept their coins safe by tying them up in a handkerchief. Pockets might have holes; the cloth would offer good protection against an accidental loss.
 - b. He described his master as being an austere man. “An austere man —Hard, severe, oppressive. The word is commonly applied to unripe fruit, and means ‘sour,’ unpleasant; harsh. In this case it means that the man was taking every advantage, and, while ‘he’ lived in idleness, was making his living out of the toils of others” (Barnes).
 - c. Compare: “Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury” (Matt. 25:24-27).
-

6. Verses 24-27: “And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”
 - a. NKJ: "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.'"
 - b. In the parable, the nobleman told certain others who stood near, to take the pound from this evil, unprosperous man and give it to the one who had the ten pounds. These others questioned whether the Lord should give this single pound to the first man, for he already had ten pounds. But deity always does everything well and right!
 - c. Boles: “No mention is here made of positive punishment inflicted on the unfaithful servant, such as we find inflicted on the man who buried his talent in the parable of the talents. The privation of all privileges and taking away of all gifts and subjecting the servant to such humiliation is punishment to him. The servant that should make good use of his master's property should be entrusted with greater honors; this one pound was taken away from the idle servant and given to the one who had ten pounds, because he had proved himself able to manage a larger share of his master's goods.”
 - d. Those wicked people who had refused to submit to the Lord were now to be dealt with severely; they were to be slain—they would receive the second death, which is eternal separation from God.
- C. Luke 19:28-35: Disciples Are Sent to Borrow a Colt.
 1. Verses 28-30: “And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.”
 - a. Compare: “And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go” (Mark 11:1-6). Other accounts are in Matthew 21:1-11 and Mark 11:1-11.
 - b. Making their journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, they came to Bethany and Bethphage unto the mount of Olives. These two villages were on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and were located close to one another. Lazarus, Mary and Martha lived at Bethany where the supper of John 12:1-9 was given. Some scholars maintain that this was the 10th of the month, the day on which the animals for the Passover were taken into the city to be kept there until Thursday when they were slain (Exod. 12:1ff).
 - c. Jesus selected two disciples and sent them into the village nearby, which was Bethphage. About one mile east from Jerusalem lay the ridge of the mount of Olives, so called from the great number of olive trees which grew upon it. (Acts 1:12.)
 - 1) “In leaving Jerusalem one must first pass across the valley of Jehoshaphat, called at its lower end the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna. Through it ran the brook Cedron or Kidron. (John 18:1.) One then passes by the enclosure of Gethsemane (meaning the place of the oil press) which lay along the west side of the hill nearest Jerusalem; ascending the Mount of Olives one could see Jerusalem, and trace the buildings, and especially the temple crowning Mount Moriah.

- 2) "Then passing over the hill or ridge, one first reached Bethphage on the eastern side, and further still, or two miles from Jerusalem, the village of Bethany, from which Jesus began this day's walk. The Mount of Olives is about a mile in length from north to south and with three peaks. The road to Bethany wound around the middle peak. Palm trees flourish on Mount Olivet, whence the name Bethany, the house of dates and figs, whence the name Bethphage, the house of figs. The oil of the olive was used in the tabernacle and temple worship. (Ex. 30:24-29)" (Boles, Mark, pp.409f).
 - d. These two disciples were sent to obtain a donkey and a colt upon which Jesus would make his entry into Jerusalem.
2. Verses 31-35: "And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon."
 - a. The Lord instructed them what to say in case someone questioned their taking these animals. They were simply to say that "the Lord hath need of them." Mark 11:5-6 also shows that they were called on to give this answer. Bringing the colt to the Lord, the two disciples put garments on it, as sort of saddle, to may the ride more comfortable.
 - b. After the animals had been brought to the Lord, garments were placed on the back of one of them, and the Lord mounted and rode toward Jerusalem. Matthew speaks of both the ass and her colt being brought; Mark and Luke speak only of the colt, while John says he rode on a young ass (12:14).
 - c. Matthew supplies an additional detail but does not say which of the animals Jesus rode. Evidently both animals were together for the short trip, but Jesus rode on the colt.
- D. Luke 19:36-40: The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem.
1. Verses 36-37: "And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen."
 - a. The Bible reports that a very great crowd of people went forth from Jerusalem to meet Jesus upon hearing of his approach. This was a momentous occasion; and the entry of the Lord was one fraught with the greatest of danger for the religious leaders had been conspiring to put him to death, as well as to kill Lazarus (John 12:10-11). They were much disturbed over the popularity of Jesus, for as his fame increased, their fortune waned.
 - 1) Matthew 27:18: "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him."
 - 2) John 12:17-19: "The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him."
 - 3) John 11:47-48: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation."
 - b. "The people were wild with delight and admiration. Only the most extravagant state of feeling could prompt them to make a carpet along the mountain path with their garments, and with the soft branches of the palm-tree. (John 12:13.) It was 'a very great multitude,' and their numbers enabled them to spread this carpet all the way from the mountain top to the gate of the city" (McGarvey, p.179).
 - c. Compare: "On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord" (John 12:12-13).
 - 1) The events we are now studying occurred during the last week of Jesus' life prior to the crucifixion. Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany (John 12:1).
-

- 2) “If the passover began on Friday, which is certain, though it has been questioned by a few writers, then six days before the passover fixes the arrival of Jesus at Bethany on Sunday. This follows from the universal custom of the Jews, in stating the number of a series of days or years, to include in the aggregate both the first and the last, even when only a small part of either was actually included. According to this method, a count of six days ending Friday must begin with Sunday” (McGarvey, *Biblical Criticism*, pp.405f).
 - 3) The next morning (John 12:12), Jesus made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when great multitudes spread palm branches and garments before him (Mt. 21:8). “It is palm Monday, if it is palm anything. Thus one of the Roman Catholic traditions, which is without foundation in fact, passes away” (ibid.).
2. Verse 38: “Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.”
 - a. This is similar to the statement made by the angel in Luke 2:14: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”
 - b. Compare: “And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest” (Mark 11:9-10).
 - 1) Hosanna: a shout of prayerful joy; it is derived from two Hebrew words meaning “be now propitious” and “save us now” (See Boles, p.412).
 - 2) Psalms 118:25: "Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity."
 3. Verses 39-40: “And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”
 - a. Some of the Pharisees, who were always trying to find fault, called on the Lord to rebuke the multitude for this tribute he was being shown. Christ replied that if they should stop this praise the stones would cry out immediately! This welcome was one of necessity.
 - b. Gill: “And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude,.... Who had placed themselves there, to watch and observe what was said, and done, that they might have something to reproach Christ with, expose him for, or bring as a charge against him: said unto him, master, rebuke thy disciples: not being able to bear such high encomiums of Jesus, and such open and public declarations of his being the Messiah; and would insinuate, that it was blasphemy in them to say what they did, and pride and vanity in him to allow of it; and that the consequence might be sedition, and tumult; and therefore it became him to check such a disorderly, noisy, evil, and dangerous practice.”
 - c. Matthew 21:3-5: “And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”
 - 1) Genesis 49:10-11: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.”
 - 2) Some scholars link Genesis 49:11 to the present text. Jesus foreknew the location of the animals in question, knew their gender and knew that the response the disciples were to give would suffice. This was done that the prophet's words might be fulfilled (Zech. 9:9). Solomon rode upon a mule (I Kings 1:38). See also Judges 10:4; 12:14; 1 Samuel 25:20.
 - 3) The horse was generally considered a weapon of war, and the multiplying of horses was forbidden of Israelite kings (Deut. 17:16).

- 4) Jesus entered Jerusalem as a picture of peace, not as a conqueror with battle gear, or on a fiery charger; rather he came as the Prince of Peace.
 - 5) "Foreseeing the strange figure of a king riding in triumph into the capital city of his kingdom, not on a richly caparisoned steed and surrounded by pomp and glory, but on the colt of an ass, the last animal which vanity would choose for a grand display, the ass without a bridle and with no saddle but a man's coat thrown across its back, the prophet exclaims, 'Behold, thy King cometh to thee meek, sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass'" (McGarvey, pp.178f).
 - d. Coffman: The stones will cry out ...; Habakkuk 2:11 has this: "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam of the timber shall answer it." Jesus may have referred to this. What he evidently meant was that such an event as God's sending his only Son into this world would be duly attested, regardless of the objections of the priestly hypocrites. His reply to the Pharisee had the effect of saying, "Look, Pharisee, there is no way for you to hide what is taking place right now!" If that vast multitude could have been stilled by some means, the very stones would have shouted the glory of God for what took place when God's Son entered Jerusalem.
- E. Luke 19:41-44: Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem.
1. NKJ: 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."
 2. Verse 41: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it."
 - a. Compare: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:37-39).
 - b. "The inimitable tenderness and pathos which breathe through this lamentation, following immediately the burning denunciations of the preceding speech, show plainly that the latter were not instigated by malice. They were judicial utterances wrung from a heart full of longings in behalf of the people denounced" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.202).
 - c. Their house was the temple. It was formerly called God's house, but they had made it into a den of thieves. It was to be left to them desolate—uninhabited.
 - d. When our Lord pronounced the various woes recorded in Matthew 23, he did so with a broken heart. It was not his wish for them to be punished: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation" (Matt. 23:36). The Jewish nation had been given more than sufficient reason to change their ways; they were on the threshold of the destruction of their nation and the loss of their souls!
 - e. The point is that they were going to suffer terribly for their rejection of God's word as delivered by his servants, from the first of them to the last. "This generation" would suffer.
 3. Verse 42: "Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."
 - a. "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:14-15).
 - b. The statements cited above are from Isaiah 6:9-10, and are also used by Paul (Acts 28:23-29) to describe the rebellious Jews who rejected Christ and his word. The Lord acted in full accordance with the ancient predictions concerning his work.
-

- c. "In these verses [Matt. 13:14-15] Jesus gives the fourth and final reason for speaking to the people in parables, and at the same time he points out the cause of those facts on which the preceding reasons were based.
- 1) "As Isaiah had written concerning his own generation (Isa. 6:9,10), this people's heart had 'waxed gross;' that is, it has become filled with earthly and sensual desires, and especially so with reference to the expected kingdom of the Messiah.
 - 2) "This state of heart made their ears dull of hearing; that is, it made them indisposed to hear with favor the words of Jesus. It led them also to close their eyes; that is, to refuse to see the evidences of his divinity. This closing of their eyes is treated (15) as the fatal act....
 - 3) "The evil state of the heart might have the result of having voluntarily closed their eyes against the light which had come into the world, causing parables and dark sayings to be as intelligible to them as the simplest lessons which Jesus taught; their ears were equally closed against both" (McGarvey, p.118).
- d. The Jewish nation was often characterized by this obstinate attitude. "The strong inference from the application that Jesus makes of it is that, no matter what he would do or say, they would not obey him or receive what he said. It was like casting the pearls of truth before swine to present his teachings to their sensual and prejudiced minds" (Boles, Matthew, p.289).
- e. Their heart was gross (fat: encased in fat); thus was insensitive to his words; his truth could not penetrate. Their ears were dull (deaf; unable to hear). They had closed their eyes (an individual, conscious action). This passage destroys the Calvinistic claims which assert that man came into this dreadful condition by inheriting it from his parents. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20).
- f. The truth was hidden from their understanding because they had closed their eyes so that they would not see it; they reached a point where they could not see the truth.
4. Verse 43: "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side."
- a. Compare: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh" (Luke 21:20).
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) Jesus now points out clearly the doom that awaited the city. Their enemies should "cast up a bank about thee." "Bank" here means stake, palisade, rampart; the ancient mound raised against cities was constructed of earth thrown up and set with sharp stakes or a palisade; the excavation made by the earth thus removed was called the "trench," and was on the side of the rampart next to the city.
 - 2) The enemy should "compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." The city was to be completely surrounded, there was no hope of escape. Those who are familiar with the description of the siege of Jerusalem as given by Josephus know how effectively the city was besieged. The manner of destruction was also described by Jesus; the enemies would dash them upon the ground; destroy their children; should not leave one stone upon another because they were ignorant of the time "of thy visitation."
 - c. Matthew 24: 15-16: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." Daniel spoke of this abomination of desolation: See Daniel 9:24-27.
 - 1) "God, through Gabriel, told Daniel: 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon the holy city.' The 70 weeks are divided into 3 sections: 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. The 70 weeks were determined with a view to six things: (1) to finish the transgression, (2) to make an end of sins, (3) to make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5)
-

- to seal up the vision and prophecy, and (6) to anoint or consecrate the Holy of Holies. “These six things obviously relate to the Christ—His being, His mission, and His church.
- 2) “He came to deal with the problem of sin, to make possible God's plan for man's righteousness, to establish His church. The 70 weeks would bring to a completion the development of the Scheme of Redemption. Likely, the 'anointing of the Holy of Holies' refers to the establishment of the church. The 7 weeks span the time from the decree of Cyrus to the end of Nehemiah's work. The 62 weeks span the time from the end of Nehemiah's work to the coming of the Messiah. The 1 week clearly is the personal ministry of the Christ. The 62 weeks come after the 7 weeks, and the 1 week comes after the 62 weeks (thus, after 69 weeks).
 - 3) “During the final week the Messiah would confirm the covenant with many. In the midst of the week He would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. In the midst of the week the Messiah would be cut off. In this connection the prophecy stresses that '...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined' (v. 26).
 - 4) “The Record further says, '...and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate' (ASV, v. 27). It should be pointed out that the prophecy does not say that the city would be destroyed within the span of the one week. Rather, it says that within that week the destruction of the city was determined. One could hardly read verses 26 and 27 without recalling our Lord's words: 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Mt. 23:38)" (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, June, 1977, pp.24f).
5. Verse 44: “And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”
- a. Coffman: “This Gospel was written before Paul's death, long before Titus destroyed Jerusalem; and there simply cannot be any intelligent doubt that Jesus prophesied the very thing that happened. Such is not only proved by the unanimous record of the holy Gospels, but is it likewise proved by the historical fact that not a Christian was lost in the siege of the Holy City. If Jesus did not predict it, how did that come about?”
 - b. The erection of the temple was described as the laying of stone upon stone (Hag. 2:15), hence the destruction of it is described as not leaving "one stone upon another." The utter ruin of the city and temple was predicted; this vivid description and prophecy of Jesus of the destruction of Jerusalem was so completely fulfilled that critics have denied the predictive prophecy, and said that Luke wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem (Boles).
 - c. Matthew 24:1-2: “And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”
 - 1) The Lord's terse and frightful reply to the disciples was that every one of these great stones comprising the temple buildings would be thrown down. These buildings are said to have been very impressive, and the stones massive in size, the base stones measuring about 37 feet in length, 18 feet wide, and 12 feet high (Boles, Matthew, p.457).
 - 2) The Rabbis asserted, "He who has not seen the temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building" (Coffman, p.381). Josephus described it as appearing from a distance like a mountain covered with snow, "the ungolded parts being exceedingly white. The golden facade reflected the rising sun with fiery splendor" (ibid.).
 - d. Information about the wailing wall, from the internet:
 - 1) It is all that remains of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple by the Romans, led by Emperor Titus, during the First Jewish War in 70 AD. King Herod's Temple began as a remodeling project in 19 B.C. and its construction continued long after Herod's death. The Second
-

Temple was finally completed only seven years before the Romans came and destroyed the Temple in 70 AD. Jews lament the destruction of the Temple and pray for its restoration.

- 2) The Wailing Wall, also referred to as the Kotel, the Western Wall, or Solomon's Wall, and whose lower sections date to about the first century BCE, is located in the Old Quarter of East Jerusalem in Israel. Built of thick, corroded limestone, it is about 60 feet (20 meters) high and close to 160 feet (50 meters) long, though most of it is engulfed in other structures.
- 3) The wall is believed by devout Jews to be the Western Wall of the Second Temple of Jerusalem (destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE), the only surviving structure of the Herodian Temple built during the realm of Herod Agrippa (37 BCE–4 CE) in the first century BCE. **The temple's original location is in dispute, leading some Arabs to dispute the claim that the wall belongs to the temple, arguing instead that it is part of the structure of Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.**

e. With the Lord's statement about the temple would be dismantled, and the highlighted statement above, it appears that we are to take the Lord's statement at face value.

F. Luke 19:45-48: The Lord Removes the Merchants From the Temple.

1. Verses 45-46: "And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves."
 - a. Compare Mark 11:15-16: "And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple."
 - b. The Law prescribed that doves could be offered by the poor in place of the more expensive animals; it also directed that a half-shekel coin be given each year for the upkeep of the tabernacle or temple (Matt. 17:24-27). "The only coin received in the sacred treasury was the Levitical shekel or half shekel; these money-changers were men who took pains to buy up all the legal coins and sold them again to the Jews, who had come to worship; they charged a high price for the exchange" (Boles, pp.413f).
 - c. The common currency of the day was Roman, which was unacceptable for the contribution indicated. The animals to be offered in temple worship could not handily be brought from afar by those making the pilgrimage. A bustling business was had by those who sold the doves and other animals, and who changed the money. The Lord's action in shutting down these businesses doubtless met with strong approval on the part of those who had to pay the exorbitant prices these businessmen charged. Any time there is a strong demand for some product or service which is not otherwise readily available, there are always those who will take advantage of the situation.
 - d. There was a degree of violence involved in the Lord's casting out the businessmen, and the overthrowing of their tables and seats. It is useless to speculate what the outcome would have been if these men had refused to leave. The approach the Lord took was more than sufficient to cause them quickly to depart. Perhaps they knew about his miraculous activities, and feared what he might do to them. Further, the huge crowd which had welcomed him into Jerusalem might be in agreement with Jesus.
 - e. Christ could clearly see that this merchandising was an affront to the Almighty; he took immediate and rightful action to end this sinful arrangement. At the beginning of his work, the Lord also cleansed the temple: "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:13-17).

- 1) Jesus cleansed the temple at this point early in his ministry and on a later occasion when he made his final trip to Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 21:12). Brother Woods offers this: "Moreover, the Jews came to worship from many lands and before purchasing these offerings they had to change their currency into that in use in Judea and this also afforded another opportunity to profit at the expense of the worshippers, since a fee was charged for each transaction. When Jesus observed this gross and materialistic misuse of the sacred precincts of the temple he was outraged. They had turned the house of prayer into a den of thieves" (p.54).
 - 2) Isaiah 56:7: "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."
 - 3) Mark 11:17: "And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers."
 - f. Finding material at hand, likely from the ropes used in handling the animals, the Lord made a scourge (a whip) from the small cords or ropes. Obviously, this weapon would not be dangerous but would be a means of moving the crowd of people. Does anyone doubt that the Lord's anger was stirred? Jesus would have been a stranger to these people, but his ire was certainly recognized. We do not know what size man the Lord was, but likely he would have been a person of considerable strength since he had evidently worked for a long time with his carpenter father. There assuredly was something about the Lord that struck fear in the hearts of these evil men. Lying in the immediate background was his mighty entrance into the city. This was "Jesus the prophet of Galilee!"
 - g. Being the Son of God, he had the right to cleanse the temple of these covetous merchandisers. He also issued stern warnings against such attitudes: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).
 - h. In the process of this effective work, he drove from the temple the animals, the merchants, and overturned the tables of the money exchangers. Jesus accused them all of being thieves, indicating that they were crooked in their dealings, cheating those who came from afar to worship God at the holy temple. Christ also interrupted the practice of carrying any thing through the temple; the was also a violation of the sanctity of this holy place. It may be that some were taking shortcuts in moving certain items and animals through some part of the temple to the altar.
 - i. Compare Matthew 21:13: "And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." The quotation is from Isaiah 56:7, and the latter part may be from Jeremiah 7:11, although it may be the Lord's personal comment. Thieves and robbers often inhabited dens and caves. It is reported that on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem there were many such places (cf. Luke 10:30-37).
 - 1) Christ describes the despicable merchants who operated from the temple courts hyperbolically as "thieves," and said they had turned the house of God into a "den of thieves." This is extremely critical language, and obviously condemns their sinful dealings as well as their choice of location. The place intended as a place where God met with men in a sincere and holy worship setting had been defiled with commercialism which was itself extortionate. Notice the antithesis of the verse: house of prayer -vs- den of thieves.
 - 2) Of course the Lord knew what awaited him there, and had even foretold exactly what would transpire. It was to that end that he had come to earth. He was not terrified of his enemies; he willingly went to their own territory, and fearlessly entered and "bearded the lion in his own den!"
 2. Verses 47-48: "And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him."
 - a. Coffman:
-

- 1) Note that it is not stated here that they "decided" to destroy him; that decision had already been made more than three years previously (John 5:18). Furthermore, Jesus, at the first cleansing, had associated his action with a veiled prophecy of his death and resurrection (John 2:19). Without doubt, Jesus' action in the two cleansings was a prime source of the motivation of the enemies who decided to destroy him. The principal concern of the chief priests, as revealed here, was exactly how they could bring about his death That they really preferred secret murder to any public act against him is plain from Matthew 26:4: "And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him."
 - 2) In addition to the reason for Jesus' leaving the city each night and staying either in Bethany or in some secluded place on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, which was cited under the above verse, there was also the evident purpose of our Lord to avoid identification, as much as possible, with any of the places previously accounted sacred. His sitting by Jacob's well (John 4:6) dignified a place not mentioned in the Old Testament, it being nowhere stated therein that Jacob ever dug a well. Nazareth, Cana, Bethany, Bethsaida-Julius, and the majority of the places made memorable by Jesus were simply not identified among the Jews as having any notability. Jesus' refusing to stay all night in Jerusalem was fully compatible with the obvious design of his whole life, which was to show that no place, or person, was so obscure or unimportant as to deny it or him a participation in the mercy which God sent to all.
- b. Boles comments on Mark's report: "And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine" (Mark 11:18).
- 1) This is the last week of the earthly life of Jesus; it appears that he spent each night in Bethany, returning to the city and teaching through the day, and then returning to Bethany at night during the last week of his ministry. He continued his teaching every day of that week up to the time of his arrest; it appears from Matt. 21:14 that he worked miracles also; he occupied the outer court of the temple. "Chief priests" were those at the head of the twenty-four courses, and probably included the high priest. (2 Chron. 36:14; Ezra 8:24; Neh. 12:7.)
 - 2) David had divided the priests into twenty-four courses, and had appointed a head of each course called a "chief priest." (1 Chron. 24:1-31; 2 Chron. 22:8.) "Scribes" were those who transcribed the law; after the Jews were carried into Babylonian captivity, they began to build synagogues, and each synagogue needed a copy of the law; this required somebody to write copies of the law; these men were called "scribes." They were also teachers of the law; as they transcribed the law they were supposed to know the law, hence became teachers.
 - 3) "The principal men of the people" included the elders and rulers of the people; all the dignitaries were thus determined to destroy Jesus. They sought to find a way that they might destroy him. They were afraid of the people, as the people believed in Jesus and "all hung upon him, listening."
- c. Mark tells that as evening came, he and his disciples left Jerusalem and returned to Bethany, to spend the night there. We are not told precisely where they stayed, but likely at the house of his friends, Lazarus and his two sisters.
-

Luke Chapter 20

A. Luke 20:1-8: Jesus and the Authority Question.

1. Verses 1-2: “And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?”
 - a. These men came to Jesus, demanding to know the authority behind his actions and words. "What authority to cast out the traders, as he had done on the previous day, to teach, and to allow himself to be called the Son of David. As he was neither priest nor a civil ruler, and had not been commissioned either by Caesar or the Sanhedrin, they denied that he had rightful claim to the authority which he exercised" (McGarvey, p.182).
 - b. These men were not sincere in their questions for they showed by their response to his question that truth was unimportant to them. They wanted to hold to their own positions of power and wealth. They might have been receiving financial gain from the merchants doing business in the temple.
 - c. The Lord's enemies were aware of his miracles, but closed their minds to the implications involved. "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation" (John 11:47-48).
2. Verses 3-4: “And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?”
 - a. The chief priests were the heads of the twenty-four courses (classes) of priests. David had made these classifications; each group had one of their number appointed as its chief priest. Hence the chief priests were the twenty-four heads of the twenty-four courses of priests; these were the spiritual leaders in Israel. The elders were the rulers of the cities, thus bore civil authority. Mark adds the scribes to the list. These were authorized teachers. Their job entailed making copies of the Law, and since they were considered learned men of the Law, they held positions of authority in religious instruction.
 - b. These men came to Jesus, demanding to know the authority behind his actions and words. "What authority to cast out the traders, as he had done on the previous day, to teach, and to allow himself to be called the Son of David. As he was neither priest nor a civil ruler, and had not been commissioned either by Caesar or the Sanhedrin, they denied that he had rightful claim to the authority which he exercised" (McGarvey, p.182).
 - c. The Lord merely asked them to source of John's baptism; did it originate with men or was it given from heaven? This was a simple question, but one which was fraught with difficulties for them.
3. Verses 5-6: “And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.”
 - a. Boles: And they reasoned with themselves,—They saw the dilemma and felt the clutches of it. It seems that they went aside and reasoned "with themselves." The original for "reasoned" is used only here in the New Testament, and it not only means "with themselves," or "together," but denotes a very close conference.
 - b. Luke 7:29-30: “And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.”
 - c. That the Lord's question cut to the heart of their problem is seen by the terrible quandary into which they were placed. They were quick to see their predicament and were able to know they could not give an answer. "If we say it was from heaven, he will demand to know why we rejected him; but if we say from men, the people are liable to stone us for they consider John as a true prophet."

- d. They were fairly trapped! Their hypocrisy would be seen by all who witnessed this exchange. Their only possible reply convicted them of hypocrisy, so they blindly and stubbornly had to hold to their course, or repent. These men were unable to have godly sorrow (2 Cor. 5:10), a prerequisite to repentance.
4. Verses 7-8: "And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things."
 - a. Their answer was: "We cannot tell." Those who love truth will recognize it and accept it. Those who have pleasure in their own wisdom, or in a system they love, or in unrighteousness, will try to escape the truth in some manner. Some will design some argument against it, which will always be contradictory to some other truth; some will change their arguments to suit the changing situations even though the latter positions contradict what they formerly affirmed; and some will try to plead ignorance.
 - 1) This is seen often when the truth on baptism, the identity of the church, the kind of music God has ordained for worship, faith, unity, etc., is presented. Cf Matthew 13:13-16; Mark 3:1-6; John 5:45-47; 8:43-45; 9:39-41; Acts 13:44-51.
 - 2) In our present society, there are political figures who cannot define what a woman is. They plead ignorant of this very basic truth, which should disqualify such a person for a prominent office.
 - b. They answered by saying that they did not know. This is a foolish position, for these were learned men; the common people who had little or no education could see that John was a prophet, but these of the educated elite did not know! Actually, they pleaded ignorance as the only "out" they could see; but their answer showed either they were dense or ignorant, or else they were hypocrites. They were neither stupid nor ignorant! They could not tell because they would not tell.
 - c. Having exposed their hypocrisy, Jesus saw no need to answer their question. He had demonstrated his identity many times by his miracles, which also revealed his source of authority; but they had refused to accept that positive, absolute proof. They could not disprove or logically deny his miracles; and his miracles proved his claims to be true. These men were not sincere in their question; they were trying to find fault with Christ, and to discover some basis on which to nullify his influence. Thus the Lord refused to give them an answer. Cf. Matthew 12:1-30.
- B. Luke 20:9-18: Parable of Vineyard Owner Going to a Far Country.
1. Verse 9: "Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time."
 - a. Compare: "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" (Matt. 21:33-40).
 - b. The Lord very efficiently set the stage for the story by detailing the essentials which were done by the householder in preparing the vineyard for producing harvests.
 - 1) He dug a winepress: "The wine-presses of the ancients were literally *dug*, for they consisted in an excavation in the solid rock a foot or two in depth and several feet square. The grapes were thrown into these excavations and mashed by young men tramping them with their feet. Another excavation lower down the hill side, whose top was on a level with the bottom of the press, received the juice as it ran from the mashed grapes through an orifice provided for the purpose" (McGarvey, p.184). See Nehemiah 8:15; Lamentation 1:15; Isaiah 63:2-3; Jeremiah 48:33.
-

- 2) The tower was for the purpose of stationing a watchman to keep out any one or any animals that might break through the hedge. "The Jews lived in cities and villages, knowing nothing of the farm life so common in America. They went to their fields in the morning and returned at night, except in times of harvest and vintage, when they sometimes slept in the fields. (See Ruth 3:1-7.)" (McGarvey, p.185).
2. Verses 10-12: "And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out."
 - a. At the time when the harvest should be ready, the owner sent certain servants to get the produce of the vineyard, either the fruit or the money from the fruit. The husbandmen were those who had rented the vineyard and cultivated it for a certain percentage of the yield.
 - b. The meaning of this parable was probably already beginning to make itself known to the Lord's enemies, for Isaiah had pictured Israel as a choice vineyard (Isa. 5:1-7). The husbandmen, not wanting to relinquish any of the fruits of the vineyard to the owner, beat one of the servants, killed another, and stoned another. [See Matthew's account above].
 - c. These servants represent the various messengers and prophets who had been sent by God to Israel through the ages:
 - 1) Hebrews 11:37-38: "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."
 - 2) Jeremiah 37:15: "Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison."
 - 3) Matthew 23:31-35: "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."
 - 4) Acts 7:51: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."
3. Verse 13-15: "Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him."
 - a. The householder sent more servants, but these were likewise mistreated. The owner lastly sent his son, thinking that they would have reverence for him, and would live up to their bargain. But these wicked men connived together, saying that if they killed the son they could seize the inheritance. So they caught him, cast him from the vineyard, and slew him. Since the household in the story represents God, and the servants the prophets, then the son represents the Messiah, God's only begotten Son.
 - b. Notice that the Son was sent lastly. This signifies that he will be the last effort made by God in behalf of man. The details fit the case also in the matter of the son being cast outside the vineyard where he was slain. Jesus was crucified outside the camp, the walls of Jerusalem.
 - 1) Hebrews 13:12-13: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

- 2) John 19:17: "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha."
4. Verse 16: "What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid."
- a. Matthew 21:40-41: "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons."
 - b. Jesus asked his auditors (cf. Mt. 21:23) what the householder will do to these wicked husbandmen when he returns. Their answer is clear and to the point: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard to others who will render him his due.
 - c. The Lord had accomplished what he set out to do: to get these men to see their sin by giving them a parallel case. Since they could see the sin involved in the story on the part of the husbandmen, they would be able to see their own sins. This is another case similar to that proposed by Nathan to David (2 Sam. 12).
 - d. Boles: "And they cast him forth out of the vineyard,—They killed the son. Their crime grew worse; they began by beating and shamefully treating the servants, but have ended in killing the son and the heir; they began by withholding the rent of the vineyard from its proper owner and ended by an attempt to seize the vineyard. 'What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do unto them?' Jesus answered this question; there could be but one answer to it; he would destroy them and take the vineyard away from them and give it to others who were more worthy. Jesus had asked the question to give point to his parable, and, according to Matthew, those who heard him answered his question. 'They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their seasons' (Matt. 21:41)."
 - e. Jamieson: "This answer was given by the Pharisees themselves (Mt 21:41), thus pronouncing their own righteous doom. Matthew alone (Mt 21:43) gives the naked application, that 'the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof'—the great evangelical community of the faithful, chiefly Gentiles. God forbid—His whole meaning now bursting upon them."
5. Verses 17-18: "And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."
- a. Compare: "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet" (Matt. 21:42-46).
 - b. Christ first refers to Psalm 118:22ff where a prophecy had been made of the Messiah, describing him as a stone which was rejected by the builders. The corner stone was the main part of the building for it was cut and placed perfectly so as to align two walls of the building. If it were imperfect or incorrectly placed the whole building would be out of alignment.
 - 1) A rejected corner stone was one the builders had inspected and found wanting. This is just what had happened with Christ: the Jews had a preconceived notion about the Messiah; when Jesus did not measure up to their expectation, they rejected him. Similar points are also made in Acts 4:11-12 and 1 Peter 2:4-8.
 - 2) "In the figure of the rejected cornerstone, the chief priests and Pharisees are represented as trying to build the walls of a house, but being unable to fit the stones at the corner because they rejected
-

- the only stone that was cut for that place. They were guilty of this folly in rejecting Jesus while trying to construct a conception of the kingdom of God" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.185).
- c. The Jews had largely rejected Jesus as the Messiah; only a remnant obeyed the gospel. Hence, the gospel would be presented to the Gentiles, who would, in a great many instances, accept it.
 - 1) Down through the centuries the church has been comprised almost entirely of Gentiles; the Jews still reject Christ and his gospel, even though there is more than sufficient evidence to prove that he is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, and his gospel is the will of Almighty God.
 - 2) Compare: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region" (Acts 13:44-49).
 - d. "This verse [Mt. 21:43] contains the application of the parable, and the key to its interpretation. The vineyard represents all of the religious privileges granted to the Jews who are the husbandmen, from the beginning of their history until the kingdom itself was offered to them by Jesus and afterward by the apostles.
 - 1) "The prophets, from Samuel down to John, are the messengers sent to demand the fruits of righteousness; the son who was sent last is Jesus; the destruction of the husbandmen is the final destruction of the Jewish nationality; and the transfer of the vineyard to other husbandmen, the transfer of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles.
 - 2) "The kingdom of heaven was chiefly Jewish before the destruction of Jerusalem, but it became, after that event, almost exclusively Gentile, both in its membership and in the predominant characteristics of its membership; and thus it was taken away from the Jews and given to a nation which would bring forth the fruits thereof" (McGarvey, Matt., pp.185f).
 - e. This stone, representative of Christ, would maintain great power. Anyone who would fall upon it would be broken, and any upon whom it shall fall would be ground to powder.
 - 1) "As Jesus is the stone, falling on it is coming into conflict with him; and being broken represents the injury which persons who thus fall will sustain. Jesus warned John the Baptist against this when he said to him, 'Blessed is he who shall not be offended in me' (11:6)" (McGarvey, p.186).
 - 2) "The apostle Peter, referring to this metaphor, quoted Isaiah 28:16 and added, 'A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient' (1 Pet. 2:7,8).
 - f. Thus our Lord's reference to the Pharisees' falling on that stone (himself) is a reference to their stumbling at his word. "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:11-12).
 - g. "This passage also suggests Daniel 2:45 and the 'stone cut out of the mountain without hands' which smote the kingdoms and broke them in pieces. Christ's virgin birth was 'without hands,' in the sense that it was not dependent upon human agency or upon the natural processes of procreation. That little stone, Christ, from such humble beginnings (in the earthly view) grew and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:34,35). This intriguing statement of our Lord (v.44) suggests another remark he made, 'The scriptures cannot be broken' (John 10:35). Men who think they break the scriptures only break themselves; those who stumble or fall upon Christ and his word do not break him but are themselves broken. Furthermore, there are two theaters of confrontation with that 'stone' which is Christ. In time, men may receive or reject him; but in eternity (the judgment) the stone will fall upon the disobedient
-

with devastating and total punishment for their sinful and obdurate hearts" (Coffman, Matthew, pp.339f). See also: Psalm 127:1; Matthew 7:21-29; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.

h. Compare: "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet" (Mt. 21:45-46).

1) The elders of verse 23 are now referred to as Pharisees. The chief priests are said by the scholars to be Sadducees. It was easy for these errorists to perceive that both of the parables (verses 28-32 and verses 33-44) applied to them. Rather than bring them to repentance, these men stiffened their necks even more.

2) "With a genius surpassing that of any mortal, Christ wove eternal truth into the fabric of the parables. He held the completed picture up before his enemies, as one might hold up a mirror; and at last, confronted with a likeness of themselves as plain as any photograph, they got the point! Their fury was unbounded....They probably would have rushed upon him to kill him then and there, but the Master had too carefully laid the plan for that to happen" (Coffman, p.340).

C. Luke 20:19-26: Tribute to Caesar.

1. Verse 19: "And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them."

a. Compare: "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way" (Matt. 22:15-22).

b. Coffman: "Before that week ended, those evil men would by falsehood, suborned and lying witness, political pressure, intimidation, and mob violence, accomplish his crucifixion, under Christ's permissive will, and with themselves and others as the instruments of Satan....They would disperse the vast concourse of people who loved Jesus and hailed him as the son of David. They would use their wealth, official prerogatives, social position, and political power to intimidate and frighten into silence all who disagreed with them....They would even stoop to take the part of loathed and hated Caesar in order to strengthen their presentation before the governor....Their every word and action would appear in full view and understanding of millions of men for all ages....The dark drama would soon move to its shocking culmination" (Matthew, p.341).

c. The Lord's parables were clear to the enemies, and they perceived that he was directing his message against them. Truth meant nothing to these evil men. They were entirely willing to cause an innocent man to suffer in order to maintain their positions of honor and wealth (John 11:47-48).

2. Verse 20: "And they watched him, and sent forth spies, **which should feign themselves just men**, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor."

a. Pulpit Commentary: "In their intense hatred, conscious that the populace were on the whole in sympathy with Jesus, the Sanhedrin, to carry out their design on his life, determined to avail themselves of the hated Roman military police. Their hope henceforward is to substantiate a charge of treason against him. This was, in those troublous times, when insurrection against the detested Gentile rule was ever being plotted, a comparatively easy matter. The incident of the tribute money, which immediately follows, was part of this new departure in the Sanhedrin policy respecting the murder they so longed to see carried out."

- b. Boles: "Matthew tells us that the Pharisees went and 'took counsel how they might ensnare him in his talk.'" (Matt. 22:15.) Mark states that the "Herodians" joined the Pharisees in this attempt to "catch him in talk.'" (Mark 12:13.) It is probable that the Pharisees took the lead in this. Though the Pharisees and Herodians hated each other, yet they hated Jesus so much more that they could unite in their opposition to him. They 'sent forth spies,' who hypocritically acted as though they were friends of Jesus; they desired in pretense to have a great regard for the law and to know how to reconcile their duties to it with respect to the Roman government. They sought by the expression of a single word to get something against Jesus that they might involve him in trouble with the Roman authorities.
3. Verses 21-22: "And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?"
- a. NKJ: 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?"
- b. Having softened the Lord up with this flattery, which was feigned since they came to ensnare him with his words, they now offered their question. "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?"
- c. "The Herodians ardently advocated Caesar's cause and favored a complete submission of Israel to Caesar's government. If the Christ made it unlawful to give tribute to Caesar, they would of course, have haled him into court on a charge of sedition, punishable by death. On the other hand, if Jesus had made it right to pay the tribute, they would have advertised it in order to diminish his popularity with the people who groaned under Caesar's yoke and longed to throw it off. They thought they had him impaled upon the horns of a dilemma" (Coffman, p.351). His enemies brought the charge against him in his trials that he forbade the giving tribute to Rome (Luke 23:2).
- d. Is it lawful—is it in keeping with the Law of Moses for Jews to pay tribute money to Caesar? "These Pharisees did not care how he answered the question; they thought that his answer would hang him on one horn of the dilemma. The Jews based their opposition to paying tribute to a foreign government on Deut. 17:14,15" (Boles, Matthew, p.432). "When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother" (Deut. 17:14-15).
4. Verses 23-24: "But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's."
- a. Matthew 22: "But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?"
- 1) Jesus was infinite in knowledge and understanding, and thus was able to discern their motives. Their efforts are described as "wickedness." He bluntly accuses them of tempting him (putting him on trial with their question), and calls them "hypocrites."
- 2) A hypocrite is one who feigns to be one thing when he is another. They tried to give the impression that they were very sincere in their question, and even complimented the Lord highly, but their purpose was to find a means to destroy him. They knew immediately that their subterfuge had been discovered.
- b. In a brilliant display of wisdom, the Lord called for a coin which was used to pay the tribute indicated. When they brought him a penny (*denarius*), he asked whose image did it bear and what was the superscription written on it. The coin "had a value of about 17 cents and bore an engraving of Caesar with a superscription making him the ruler of the land. The very prevalence of those coins in Israel identified the land as Caesar's. It showed his title and authority to be recognized there" (Coffman, p.351). Boles says that the inscription read, "Caesar Augustus, Judea being subdued" (*ibid.*,p.433).
-

5. Verses 25-26: "And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's. And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace."

a. Cambridge:

- 1) They thought that escape was impossible for Him; and yet He instantly shatters their deeply-laid plot to pieces by shewing that they—Pharisees and Herodians alike—had absolutely decided the question already (according to their own rule "He whose coin is current is king of the land"), so that there is no need for Him to give any opinion whatever about it. The point was this,—their national acceptance of Caesar's coinage was an unanswerable admission of Caesar's right. Tribute to them was no longer a cheerful offering, but a legal due; not a voluntary gift, but a political necessity. The very word He used was decisive.
- 2) They had asked "Is it lawful to give (dounai)?" He answers, 'Give back' (apodote). By using these coins they all alike admitted that 'they had no king but Caesar.' The Christians understood the principle perfectly (1 Peter 2:13-14) as the ancient Jews had done (Jeremiah 27:4-8). Yet these hypocrites dared to shout three days afterwards that Jesus 'had forbidden to give tribute to Caesar!'

- b. Jeremiah 27:4-8: "And command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand."

- c. Baffled and amazed, they left him. One can but wonder what they told the chief Pharisees who had sent them on this foolish errand.

D. Luke 20:27-38: Woman Married Seven Brothers One After the Other.

1. Verses 27-33: "Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother."

- a. Compare: "Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her" (Matt. 22:25-28).

- b. The situation was one that could have happened, but such was highly unlikely. They claimed to have known a case where seven different brothers, one by one, married the same woman, after the preceding brother who had married her, died. In each case, there was no child born to the marital union. Lastly, the woman, died. Their question, which propounded a dilemma for those who believe in the resurrection, was, whose wife shall she be after the resurrection.

- c. "The force of the question depended on the assumption that the marital relation would still exist in the resurrected state, and this assumption could be denied only by one competent to speak authoritatively of that state. On this account the Pharisees could not answer the objection satisfactorily. The case was strongly put; for not only were seven men supposed who would have equal claims on the same woman, but these seven men were brothers, between whom a wife in common, or a strife for possession of her, would appear more incongruous than if the seven were strangers to each other" (McGarvey, Matthew, pp.190f).

- d. The situation described was one which they had probably used with telling effect on their enemies, the Pharisees. Only the Lord could give a proper answer to the case presented. They probably thought

- that Jesus would be unable to answer, thus would his influence be diminished by this defeat. But they were doomed to the same fate suffered by the Pharisees and Herodians before them! (Matt. 22).
2. Verses 34-36: "And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."
 - a. Compare: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. 22:29-30).
 - b. The Lord smoothly pointed out three errors in their question. They erred in (1) not knowing the Scriptures, (2) not giving credit to God's power, and (3) in assuming that man will sustain the same marital relationships in the resurrected state. Only one with knowledge of the eternal state could have given this latter reply.
 - c. Many Old Testament passages teach the fact of the resurrection (Job 19:25-27; Ex. 3:6; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2). But men who have developed their own theology are adept at ignoring what the Bible teaches in contradiction to their positions. The Sadducees believed the truth about Deuteronomy 25:5, but rejected what it said about the resurrection. Their kinsmen are alive and active today!
 - d. They had shown their ignorance of God's power also. If they had rightly assessed the power of the Almighty, they would have recognized that he has the ability to raise the dead and give them bodies without the "propensities on which marriage is based" (McGarvey, p.191).
 - 1) Hebrews 11:19: "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."
 - 2) Romans 4:17: "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."
 - 3) Matthew 3:9: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."
 - e. In the resurrected state there will be no need for marriage, the primary purpose of which is the propagation of the race. Since there will be no death in heaven, there will be no need for physical procreation. Marriage also furnishes companionship for the members of that relationship; but in heaven, there will be constant and perfect companionship, between the redeemed on that blessed shore, and between the redeemed and heaven's primary residents. Thus, the Lord says, on his own authority, that "in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." The Lord's argument also assumes the reality of angels; he ought to know they were real for they had served him in eternity before his virgin birth brought him into earthly life, and had ministered to him while here (Matt. 4:11).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."
 - 2) Colossians 1:16: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."
 3. Verses 37-38: "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."
 - a. Compare: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine" (Matt. 22:31-33).
 - b. Brother McGarvey made some wonderfully perceptive comments:
-

- 1) "Having refuted the objection of the Sadducees, Jesus next furnished a proof of the resurrection. The major premise of his argument is the proposition that 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' Here the term *dead* is used in the sense attached to it by the Sadducees. If he had been disputing with Pharisees, they could have answered, He *is* the God of the dead; for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were dead when he said, 'I *am* their God.'
 - 2) "But to the Sadducees a dead man was *non est*—he had ceased to exist, he was nothing; and to say, in their sense of the term, that God is the God of the dead, is to say he is the God of nothing. It would be nonsense. But God did say, hundreds of years after the death of the three patriarchs, 'I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' (Ex. 3:6.) The conclusion follows, that these patriarchs were not dead in the Sadducean sense of the term; and as the conclusion applies only to their spirits, it proves that spirits continue to be alive after the bodies which they inhabited are dead.
 - 3) "The thoughtful reader may have observed that the conclusion of this argument falls short in its terms, of the demands of the subject. This subject is the resurrection of the dead, while the conclusion affects only the question whether the spirits of the dead are still alive. We can not escape the difficulty by supposing, as some have done, that the resurrection spoken of is that of the spirit, not that of the body; for there is no such thing as a resurrection of the spirit. The spirit does not die, and therefore it does not rise from the dead. It leaves the body as the latter dies, its departure is the immediate cause of death, and it departs in the full possession of life. Resurrection is always spoken of in the Scriptures with reference to the body.
 - 4) "How, then, does the Savior's proof that spirits continue to live apart from the body, include proof of a resurrection? It seems quite certain that the argument appeared conclusive to the Sadducees; for Jesus assumed that it was so, and they tacitly admitted the fact, while the bystanders who knew the view of the party 'were astonished at his doctrine.' (Verse 33.) In other words, the Sadducees admitted that if the existence of human spirits apart from the body were proved, the necessity for a resurrection would follow.
 - 5) "The argument, then, was conclusive at least to them; but was it no more than an *ad hominem* argument? We think not; for human spirits, having been originally created for the exercise of their powers through the organs of the body, must, unless their original nature be changed, which is an inadmissible supposition because unsupported by evidence, be dependent for their highest enjoyment on the possession of a body. This being so, the continued existence of spirits after the death of the body creates a demand for the resurrection of the body, and the Sadducees were philosophical enough to see this" (pp.191f).
- c. Many liberals of our time look on the Bible, not as a book which is to be studied and interpreted closely, but as a message of general principles. Many have the notion that one cannot so interpret the Bible as to reach a conclusion that is any more than an opinion. But the Lord had the highest confidence in the Bible, even the Old Testament, which he quoted.
- 1) His argument hinged on the difference between the present and past tenses of a verb: I am the God of...
 - 2) "Paul made similar use of Bible text in Galatians 3:16, his argument turning on the difference between the singular and plural of the word "seed."

E. Luke 20:39-47: Jesus Raised a Question.

1. Verses 39-41: "Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any question at all. And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?"
 - a. Parallel accounts are given in Mark 12:35-37 and Luke 20:41-44.
 - 1) Mark 12:35-37: "And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly."

- 2) Matthew 22:41-46: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."
- b. He does not ask them if they think that he is the Christ, but what did they think about the lineage of the Messiah—whose son is he? They replied accurately, "The Son of David." The Lord saw the need to raise this question concerning the Messiah.
2. Verses 43-45: "He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?"
- a. This second question was perplexing to the Pharisees; they were unable to answer it. The Lord pointed out that David had said "in spirit" (by inspiration, cf. 2 Sam. 23:2), that the Messiah was his Lord (the quotation of this is found in Psalm 110:1). The Lord asked, "How could the Messiah be called David's son and at the same time be David's Lord?" The two truths are inconsistent unless Christ is divine as well as human. "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psa. 110:1).
- b. "The reason the Pharisees did not recognize Christ (though some did) was that not all the Messianic prophecies were received by them. In the very nature of God's revelation to humanity of the coming of that Holy One who is both God and man at once, there were necessarily *seeming* contradictions. Thus, Isaiah hailed the Coming One as 'Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,' etc., while at the same time portraying him as a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, with no form nor comeliness, a root out of dry ground, bruised, chastised, and suffering death. They did the natural, human thing: they believed the more agreeable prophecies and rejected the others" (Coffman, pp.357f). They had access to Psalm 110:1 but were unable to explain it.
- c. "It seems in order to further confuse these Pharisees that Jesus added another question, 'If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son?' Here was the point for them to explain. They cannot admit it without acknowledging that while he is human as descended from David, so he is divine as the right Messiah sent of God; it shows that his royalty is not on earth, but in heaven. It also shows that the Messiah on earth was to have a twofold nature—fleshly and divine. They were unable to answer him; it is not recorded that they even attempted to answer" (Boles, p.440).
3. Verses 42-44: "And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?"
- a. "The astonishment of the multitude arose from two circumstances: first, that Jesus was at all able to answer the boasted objection of the Sadducees; and second, that he found the answer in the writings of Moses, where it was supposed then, and has been supposed since, that the doctrine of a future life is not taught" (McGarvey, p.192).
- b. Boles: "For David himself saith—Jesus now quotes Psalm 110:1 and makes three points in his argument. First, all the prophets hold that the Messiah is to be in the line of David. (2 Sam. 7:12-29; Isa. 11:1-10; 55:3, 4; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24; Hos. 3:5; Luke 1:69; Rev. 22:16.) Second, David himself calls this Messiah 'Lord' in the passage here quoted from Psalm 110:1. Third, "Lord" is a title of dignity, superiority, used appropriately by a son of his father, but never by the father of his son. How then is this enigma to be solved—that a father speaks of his son as his Lord? What sort of son must this be? All Jews held David in high honor, but what of this yet greater Son? The Jews referred this quotation to the Messiah, yet they could not tell how he could be a descendant of David, and yet be his Lord, not knowing that beside his human nature, which descended from David (Rev.
-

- 22:16), he possessed a divine nature as the Son of God (Rom. 1:3, 4). The deity and humanity of Jesus disturbed the Jews at that time and is still a matter of much discussion by critics today.”
- c. “The true answer to the question. AS GOD, Jesus is the Lord of David; and in the flesh, he is the Son of David. In God's great promise of the Saviour coming into the world, the GOD-MAN who would save from sin, it was mandatory that the prophecies reveal both natures of the Holy One. Implicit in such a revelation was the built-in necessity of apparent contradiction, due to the antithetical natures of God and man. He who was BOTH would naturally possess antithetical attributes. It is this which led to the Old Testament prophecies that Jesus would be Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, etc., and, at the same time, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This dual nature of the promised Messiah the Jewish leaders never understood. Their pride led them to dwell upon the more glorious qualifications of the Messiah revealed in prophecy and to rationalize the prophecies of Messiah's sufferings, rejection and death. They even projected two Messiahs, one the Conquering Hero and the other the Suffering Priest. This misunderstanding of holy prophecy was the undoing of Israel's leaders, for it led them to reject the Christ.” [Coffman].
4. Verses 45-47: “Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.”
- a. Cambridge: “[*In the audience of all the people*]. Rather, while all the people were listening. Here followed the final rupture of Jesus with the authorities—political, social, and religious—of His nation. They had now made their own condemnation inevitable, and had justly provoked that great Denunciation on which (as less intelligible to Gentiles) Luke here only touches. But he has given it in part before (Luke 11:39-52) in his account of the hostile banquet at the house of a Pharisee. In Matthew it occupies, with its rhythmic grandeur and awfully solemn condemnation, the whole of the twenty-third chapter.”
- b. Compare: "And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*" (Matt. 22:46).
- 1) "They were not able to answer because they believed not in the divinity of the Christ. They supposed that he would be only a man: they were Unitarians. By propounding the question, Jesus gained two important points: he showed that the promised Christ was to be divine, and he showed that his own claim to be the Son of God was in perfect harmony with his claim to be the Christ. If he is the Christ, then he is David's Lord" (McGarvey, p.194).
 - 2) "Reasons for the need to expose those men rise from the fact that, as the official representatives of Judaism, their failure to recognize and accept their Messiah would ever afterwards be used by Satan as an argument against the validity of Christ's claim upon all mankind as the true Messiah. If there had been, therefore, the least vestige of anything honorable or upright in the Pharisees *et al*, there could have continued through history some suspicion that since 'good men,' as they were supposed to be, rejected the Messiah, there must have been some reason for their doing it....Any fair-minded person can easily understand *why such men* rejected Christ" (Coffman, p.359).
 - 3) Christ had answered the questions so thoroughly and so well that no one dared raise any other such questions. The enemies of the Lord were so vanquished and driven from the battlefield, that they had to resort to lies, illegal judicial procedures, and murder!
-

Luke Chapter 21

A. Luke 21:1-4: The Gifts of the Poor Widow.

1. Verses 1-2: "And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites."
 - a. 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" (NKJ).
 - b. McGarvey: "The treasury was the chest or other receptacle into which the people cast the contributions which the law of Moses required all of them to bring when they came up to the annual festivals. (Deut. xvi. 16, 17.) Jesus was sitting opposite to this receptacle, and purposely 'beholding how the people cast money into the treasury,' in order that he might give a lesson on the subject" (Commentary on Mark, p.344).
 - c. Coffman: Mite denotes a small coin made of brass, the smallest in use among the Jews, and the value of which cannot be exactly known. Their farthing was of less value than the English farthing. It was worth about three mills and a half, or about one-third of a copper cent.[16]. Cranfield pointed out that the word that Mark used for MITE is related to quadrans, a term prevalent in Rome but not in Jerusalem; and from this he concluded that Mark was writing "in the west." [17].
2. Verses 3-4: "And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."
 - a. *Jesus Estimates Gifts Chiefly by What Is Retained.* "This principle alone accounts for the higher worth of the widow's gift. This estimate of gifts according to what is retained agrees with reason. Man's gauge of the moral value of a deed is the power of the doer. The child is not expected to put forth the strength of a man. Less force is looked for from the feeble than the strong man. A small gift from a narrow income is esteemed as much as a large gift from a vast income" [Johnson, Comm. On Mark].
 - b. Her contribution is thus contrasted with the sum total of the contributions of all who contributed on that occasion. Jesus knew how to evaluate gifts and he evaluated her gift as being "more than all they that are casting into the treasury." He tells the ground or basis of his evaluation; they cast in "of their superfluity," but "she of her want did cast in all the living that she had." Of their abundance they contributed a little, but of her meager and scant supply, she gave all. Hers was real self-denial; she felt what she gave; in love she devoted *all* to God, and trusted in his providential care. [From Gospel Advocate Commentary on Luke].
 - c. The Following is from Coffman:
 - 1) This teaches that a gift to be valuable in the sight of God is not solely determined by the face amount of it. The motive, attitude, and financial condition of the giver are taken into consideration. Christ did not condemn the widow for giving. His commendation of her gift dramatically underlines the Scriptural teaching that the poor should give, and that the exercise of this grace is not to be omitted by any person on the grounds of poverty. How is it that her gift was so great? The example she set in the faithful discharge of a religious duty incumbent upon all has inspired giving in all ages.
 - 2) Illustration: The City of New York was participating in a campaign among the immigrant poor of the great city to raise funds for the construction of the pedestal and supporting tower upon which Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty would be erected. The campaign was lagging until a poor woman sold her bed for \$13.00 and contributed the money. Inspired by that, the people quickly responded and gave more than was needed. In a similar manner, the poor widow of this text has constructed many a church house and subscribed many a budget all over the world.

- 3) This encourages the poor not to withhold their gifts to the Lord, because of thoughts that they would not do much good; here is an example of a very great accomplishment having been achieved by a gift of very small actual value. As Calvin said of the poor, "If they consecrate themselves, their offering, which appears to men to be worthless, will not be less valuable than if they had presented all the treasures of Croesus." [19]
 - 4) This convinces the rich that merely giving an amount of money is not enough. The element of sacrifice should be present in every true gift; and that which can be easily "spared" by the wealthy is not enough to fulfill God's requirement.
 - d. Boles: *And he said, Of a truth I say unto you,*—Mark records that Jesus "called unto him his disciples" (Mark 12:43), and said: "This poor widow cast in more than they all." He compares or contrasts what the widow cast in with, not what one rich man cast in, but with what all the rich men cast in. Her contribution is thus contrasted with the sum total of the contributions of all who contributed on that occasion. Jesus knew how to evaluate gifts and he evaluated her gift as being "more than all they that are casting into the treasury." He tells the ground or basis of his evaluation; they cast in "of their superfluity," but "she of her want did cast in all the living that she had." Of their abundance they contributed a little, but of her meager and scant supply, she gave all. Hers was real self-denial; she felt what she gave; in love she devoted all to God, and trusted in his providential care.
- B. Luke 21:5-24: The Coming Destruction of the Temple and the Associated Turmoil.
1. Verses 5-6: "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
 - a. Compare: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:1-2).
 - b. The Rabbis asserted, "He who has not seen the temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building" (Coffman, Matthew, p.381). Josephus described it as appearing from a distance like a mountain covered with snow, "the ungolded parts being exceedingly white. The golden facade reflected the rising sun with fiery splendor" (ibid.).
 - c. As cited earlier, **The temple's original location is in dispute, leading some Arabs to dispute the claim that the [Wailing] wall belongs to the temple, arguing instead that it is part of the structure of Al-Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount.** With the Lord's statement about the temple would be dismantled, we may take the Lord's statement at face value. This scribe had a discussion with a man of the premillennial view who alleged that since the wailing wall, which he thought was part of the temple of the first century, is still present, that the Lord's statement of this passage had never been fulfilled. His assertion is based on a very weak assumption!
 - d. The Lord's terse and frightful reply was that every one of these great stones comprising the temple buildings would be thrown down. "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:43-44). These buildings are said to have been very impressive, and the stones massive in size, the base stones measuring about 37 feet in length, 18 feet wide, and 12 feet high (Boles, Matthew, p.457).
 2. Verses 7-11: "And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom
-

against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.”

- a. Compare: “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matt. 24:3). The apostles wanted to know when this great destruction would come to pass. Christ's reply was astonishing to the disciples. When they arrived in the Mount of Olives, and after he had seated himself, some of the disciples approached him with certain troubling questions. Mark identifies the disciples as Peter, James, John, and Andrew (13:3).
 - b. In Matthew's account, "Their question is twofold, having reference first to the time, and secondly to the sign by which they might know that the event was near. He had said nothing about his own coming or the end of the world, but they inferred from the strength of the temple walls that the time when all these stones would be thrown down could not be sooner than the end of the world and the second coming of the Son of man. So much of this inference as was incorrect he corrected in the course of his answer: for he makes a very clear distinction, as we will see, between the time of his final coming and that of the destruction of the temple" (McGarvey, p.204).
 - c. The parallel account (Mark 13:4) indicates they were thinking of one great event: the end of the world: “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” That they were wrong in this assumption is seen in the fact that the Lord replied to their questions by discussing **two great events**: the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.
 - d. Matthew's account gives three questions: When will the temple be destroyed? What sign will forewarn of your return? And what sign will signal the end of the world? Jesus' reply answers two questions: When will these things (the temple's destruction) be? And, what sign do you give for your return (and the resultant end of the world)? He answers the first of these two in Matthew 24:4-35, and the second beginning in verse 36 and continuing through chapter 25.
 - e. The Lord first warned the apostles against being deceived. As the destruction of Jerusalem drew near, many errorists would proclaim that they were Christ, and urge people to follow them. These were all deceivers and must be avoided. “And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matt. 24:4-5).
 - f. Luke's account tells us there would be commotions [instability, disorder, confusion, tumult]. Matthew adds that there would be wars and rumors of wars, but that they were not to be troubled; when these disturbing development arose, that did not mean that the end of Jerusalem was immediate: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet**” (Matt. 24:6).
 - 1) The forty years (about) between the time Jesus uttered these words until the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. were filled with warfare and rumors of wars; there were also famines, pestilences and earthquakes. These were all general signs, for such events have pertained to many periods of human history. They are put before the disciples as fairly common occurrences but which would be present prior to the "end" he is discussing in this part of the chapter [Matt. 24]. When they saw these signs, the end would not be immediately forthcoming; this end would occur only after the details of verse 14 were fulfilled.
 - 2) It is significant that peace prevailed in the Roman Empire at the time the Lord spoke these words. But this peace would not be long-lived. The wars Jesus mentioned involved first century kingdoms, not nations of the twentieth century or later. "Between Olivet's discourse and Jerusalem's fall in A.D. 70 smaller nations warred against Rome. Jewish wars in that period cost numerous lives. In just one battle against the Syrians 50,000 Jews were killed. These were decades filled with wars and war rumors" (Taylor, *ibid.*, p.615). Another 20,000 Jews were slain at Caesarea.
-

- 3) The “end is not by and by” [directly, at once, immediately]. The general signs of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem would not mean that this end was to be right then. These signs would give his disciples advance warning of the Roman army’s arrival; they would have opportunity and time to escape from the city—if they did not delay.
- g. Other general signs of the approaching end would be reports of earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and fearful and great signs in heaven. Matthew records this in 24:29-31: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”
- 1) **Immediately after the tribulation of those days.** The tribulation was that which was forced upon the Jews when their holy city was besieged and taken by the Romans. The horrible circumstances that occurred there were greater than had ever been (or ever to be) experienced. Nowhere else has a people suffered so much in such a short period of time. Notice the plural "days." The coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the Judgment are spoken of in the singular—hour, day. The period of time in which the hardships of this passage occurred was described by the plural "days."
 - 2) Some writers think that the tribulation referred to is some period of severe hardship which will descend upon the inhabitants of earth just prior to the Lord's return. But this is not so because it would constitute a sign of the nearing end of time, a fact which Christ said would not be; there are no signs of the approaching end of time and the Lord's return. Matthew 24:36-39.
 - 3) The four images presented in the remainder of the verse all have precedents in Old Testament usages. By showing that "immediately" is used in other contexts with the same meaning as our use of it today, and by also showing that the phraseology of the rest of the verse is also used in the Old Testament to describe figuratively the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, it is reasonable to understand the present verse in the same light.
 - a) The same terminology was used in predicting the eventual destruction of Babylon: Isaiah 13:1, 6-11, 13-22.
 - b) In foretelling the overthrow of Idumea, God used similar descriptions: Isaiah 34:4-5.
 - c) The same kind of figures are used in the Lord's picture of Egypt's overthrow as given in Ezekiel 32:2, 7, 8, 11, 15.
 - 4) Since the Bible has already used this language in describing the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, and since the term "immediately" cannot logically be used to describe events at least two thousands years in the future (and possibly many thousands more than that), and since the context makes it difficult to place this passage after the destruction of Jerusalem (vs. 34), it is far more reasonable to apply this verse to the Lord's overthrow of Jerusalem by means of the Roman army in 70 A.D.
 - a) Therefore, immediately after the tribulation of the preceding verses, Jerusalem would fall. The sun, moon, and stars represent the Jewish nation, its laws, its rulers, and its influence as a nation. It is a matter of historical fact that Israel ceased to exist as a nation following the Roman victory over her. The Israeli nation of our modern time represents only a small portion of the Jewish race, and there is no certainty of its long existence as a nation. In 1948, when the Jews in Palestine, with the help of other nations, succeeded in establishing a foothold there, Premillennialists thought they saw in this evidence for the Lord's imminent return. Some went so far as to assert that a generation was about forty years, and that within forty years of the time Israel gained a foothold in Palestine, the second coming would occur; hence, Hal Lindsey said that 1988 would be the year! All such date-setters are proved wrong.
-

- b) The parallel accounts are given in these passages:
- (1) Mark 13:24-25: "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."
 - (2) Luke 21:25-26: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."
- 5) "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt. 24:30).
- a) If the preceding verse is to be taken as figurative, then this verse and the one following are also figurative. The statement in verse 34 is very clear, and thus limits that which goes before it in the chapter to events which are connected to the destruction of Judaism in 70 A.D. But is there any precedent of such language being used to describe a figurative coming of Deity? Is there a logical interpretation which permits this to be imagery?
 - b) Matthew mentions the sign and the coming of the Son of man; Mark and Luke only speak of the coming of Christ. Mark and Luke's accounts do not give an interpretation of the meaning of the sign. Matthew speaks of the coming plus the sign of the Son of man in heaven.
 - c) Concerning the sign, what is said in the text? The sign of the Son of man (Christ) would appear. Appear is from the Greek *phaino* which means "to be brought forth into light, to become evident...shown to be" (Vine, p.64).
 - d) This sign was to be brought forth into the light *immediately* after the tribulation of verse 21 (vs. 30). It was to become evident before *this generation* should pass from earthly scenes (vs. 34). The Son of man has not come for the second time as yet (Heb. 9:28; 2 Th. 1:6-9; 1 Th. 4:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:10; John 5:28-29).
 - e) Therefore, the sign must not be understood as the personal appearance of Christ in the sky. Notice that the location identified is heaven, not the "heavens" (the sky). Something (or someone) was to be in *heaven*. It is the Son of man who is to be in heaven. The sign would be of the Son of man in heaven. The sign would appear (become evident, be brought to light, shown) in connection with the sun being darkened, the moon not giving her light, the stars falling from heaven, and the powers of the heavens being shaken (the overthrow of corrupted Judaism). When this is done, THEN shall the sign be seen. The sign will be on earth; the sign is the destruction of Jerusalem; the sign would show that Christ is in heaven, and is behind all these frightful events, judging the nation which had rejected him as the Messiah.
 - f) "The destruction of Jerusalem would be the SIGN of the coming of the Lord, and would be conclusive evidence that He was reigning IN HEAVEN" (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, Volume XI, June, 1977, p.27).
 - (1) Matthew 23:36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."
 - (2) Matthew 23:38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
 - (3) Matthew 24:34-35: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - (4) Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - (5) Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
- 6) "Not wars in distant nations, but wars particularly affecting the Jews, as appears from the warning, 'see that ye be not troubled' (Matt. 24:6), and from the fact that the coming trouble of the Jews was the subject of discourse. The nations and kingdoms which were to rise up against each other were

- those whose military movements would affect the peace of Judea" (McGarvey, pp.204f). History shows that three threats of war were made against the Jews by three Roman emperors; three uprisings of Gentiles against the Jews are reported (ibid.).
- a) A severe famine is named in Acts 11:27-30, which occurred during the days of Claudius Caesar who died in 54 A.D. "One writer claimed it was the greatest the world had known up to that time" (Taylor, p.616). This famine is mentioned by Suetonius and Tacitus (Roman historians, unbelievers), and Eusebius. Josephus says that the famine was so severe in Jerusalem that many people starved to death. Four times during the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54) famines occurred in Rome, Palestine, and Greece (see Barnes, p.252).
 - b) Several great earthquakes are reported for that time period by ancient writers. "Tacitus mentions one in the reign of Claudius, at Rome, and says that in the reign of Nero the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown, and the celebrated Pompeii was overwhelmed and almost destroyed by an earthquake...Others are mentioned as occurring at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, and Samos" (Barnes, p.252). Josephus described in detail an earthquake in Judea during this same time frame.
 - c) The Lord said pestilences would occur. Epidemic diseases often follow earthquakes. Josephus speaks of a pestilence afflicted Babylonia in 40 A.D. (Antiq. 18. 9,8). And Tacitus describes one that took place in Italy in 66 A.D. One pestilence in Rome resulted in 30,000 deaths.
 - d) These awful tragedies would not be the end itself, but merely the beginning of sorrows. Worse things were yet to come!
 - e) These general signs would be from heaven; they would forewarn the Lord's disciples of the upcoming destruction of the city, giving them time to escape.
3. Verses 12-15: "But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."
- a. Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the apostles would come under harsh persecution; they would be brought up before the authorities in the synagogues, and before kings, would be put into prisons. All of this would be because they held faithfully to their Master.
 - b. A good deal is reported about this persecution: Acts 4:3; 5:27; 22:19, 25:23; 26:10. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - c. None of their enemies could resist the words of the inspired apostles: NKJ: "But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit." (Mark 13:11).
 - d. "The application of these verses through Luke 21:19 are primarily to the twelve apostles, this being implicit in the fact of four apostles being named by Mark as precipitating this prophecy; and when Jesus said to them, 'They shall lay their hands upon YOU, etc.' there can hardly be any way to avoid the inference that the Twelve are meant The Book of Acts, in its entirety, is an inspired comment on the prophecy here. These things all came to pass exactly as Jesus said It shall turn out unto you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand or gainsay. This promise of inspiration for the occasion was never to all Christians, nor was the recommendation that they should not meditate beforehand what they would say. The Twelve are clearly in view here" [Coffman]. [The Twelve would also include Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles].
4. Verses 16-19: "And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."
-

- a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. The reason for the hatred hurled against the apostles was the name of Christ. Men hate the name of Christ but they cannot attack Christ personally; they therefore vent their hatred at his followers. That the name of Christ is hated is evident (1) by the use of his name as a swear word, (2) by the rejection of the truth of his gospel on the part of the vast majority, (3) by the refusal on the part of most movie writers to appropriate his name in connection with movie "prayers," and (4) by the opposition we of the churches of Christ still face from our own liberal "brethren" and the sectarian religious world in general. Even some members of many congregations do not want to hear the "whole counsel" of the Lord. If one does not love the Lord's truth, he cannot love the Lord; if he opposes the truth, he opposes the Lord; and if he opposes the Lord or the truth, he hates both the Lord and his truth!
 - c. There is no blessing in being persecuted because of wrong-doing; only when we are persecuted because of the Lord's sake is there any reward. And even then, we must "endure to the end" (cf. Rev. 2:10). We are to persevere even though our lives are required: we must be faithful until death and unto death. "He that bears all these unspeakable sufferings, and who does not shrink and apostatize, will give decisive evidence of attachment to me, and shall enter into heaven" (Barnes, Matthew, p.113). This is quite an admission from a Calvinist! Calvinism teaches that it is impossible to apostatize, but even such a staunch Calvinist as Barnes, a fine scholar, had to admit that one must endure to the end of his life in order to go to heaven! This is exactly what the Lord here says.
 - d. ASV: "In your patience ye shall win your souls" (Luke 21:19). Patience is endurance [perseverance]; as we faithfully endure, we keep our souls safe. Our enemies may be able to harm us, imprison us, and even kill our body, but our soul is safe!
5. Verses 20-22: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."
- a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Matthew 24:16-18: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes."
 - 1) This command never applied to anyone who did not live in Judea; it was limited to a particular place, people, occasion, and time. The Christians in and around Jerusalem were to flee to the mountains, since there they would find greatest safety from the invading Roman army.
 - 2) Millennialism ignores these verses. These statements (verses 16-22) simply will not fit into the millennial theory! At the Lord's return, the saints will rise to meet him in the air (1 Th. 4:16-17). There will be no need, no time, and no way for anyone to flee to the mountains at **that** end. The mountains had many caves in which to take shelter, and passing through the mountains, escape to other regions could be effected.
 - 3) The houses of Palestine were so-constructed that one could walk on the roofs, and even from roof to roof. If one was on the roof when the Roman army appeared, he was not to take the time to enter his house to get clothing or provisions; he would not have sufficient time. He could escape from the city by walking from roof to roof, at least for a distance, thus avoiding the jammed streets and turmoil below. He must trust the Lord for the necessities of life as the journey was made. Modern houses are not constructed as in that day; the situation does not fit our time.
-

- 4) Those addressed are the Lord's people. If the "rapture" theory were true (and it is not true), they would not need to go back to their houses for clothes. There would be no reason for them to flee. They would suddenly be whisked away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. If this is the end of time, there would be no need to flee for there would be no place to go (2 Pet. 3:10).
 - 5) This passage is describing a local event, directly affecting only those who lived in Judea when the Roman army approached to lay siege to the city. There is no such thing as the "rapture" taught in the Scriptures! Farmers of that time would take to the fields only such clothing as were necessary. If the Romans came while they were working their crops, they were quickly to leave the area, trusting God to provide for their necessities, for they would not have time to go home and make normal preparations.
6. Verses 23-24: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
- a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Matthew 24:19-20: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."
 - c. They were to pray that the day of their flight would be on a weekday and in a time of good weather. The flight would be difficult for those who had small children and women who were pregnant. If they had to flee during winter time, greater hardships would be met, and difficulties in travel would be experienced due to cold and rain. If it were on the Sabbath, they would have difficulty escaping Jerusalem, for the gates of the city were closed on those occasions.
 - d. The Jews could even be expected to offer hindrance to their escape since they still enforced the rules limiting travel on the Sabbath. This detail shows that the time period involved was when the Sabbath would have been a problem for the Christians. Sabbath keeping was officially removed when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7). It was still practiced by the unbelieving Jews.
 - e. Today, even those who claim to observe the Sabbath do not enforce it on others and even they do not observe the limitations which were followed by the ancient Jews. A Sabbath day's journey was only about a half mile. This detail removes the event described from our day, and places it in the first century. See Nehemiah 13:19: "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day." At least part of their prayers was answered for the city fell during the summer (September). The siege began when many Jews were attending the feasts.
 - f. Notice that verse 23 plainly states that the wrath would be upon **this** people—the Jewish nation. There would be great distress in the land [Palestine].
 - 1) Matthew 24:32-34: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."
 - 2) Matthew 23:36-39: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
-

- g. The Romans would slay many of the Jews by the sword and many would be led away captive into other nations.
- 1) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
 - 2) Fall by the edge of the sword ... Josephus gives the names of the tribes and villages with the numbers put to death, arriving at the fantastic total of 1,100,000; and as Josephus was a Jewish historian, his record must be received as the most reliable that has reached us concerning this disaster. Led captive into all nations ... Titus alone deported some 97,000 at one time; and the scattering of Israel, as often promised by Jesus, was most thoroughly accomplished." [Coffman].
 - 3) Coffman also wrote: Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 24:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3).
- h. Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. Boles observed: "Jerusalem was captured again about A.D. 135 in consequence of an insurrection, which brought most terrible sufferings upon the Jews, who were utterly driven out from the land of their fathers. Judea was sold by Vespasian, and Jerusalem has been successively under the dominions of the Romans, Saracens, Franks, Mamelukes, and Turks. A temple of Jupiter was erected on the site of the temple; afterwards, A.D 635, the mosque of Omar was built upon the same site."
- i. Paul used a similar expression in Romans 11:25: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."
- 1) Paul writes that this hardness in part "happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Advocates of a future kingdom of Christ in which he will literally reign on earth make uncalled-for assumptions regarding this passage. They assume that the time will come when all the Gentiles who desire to obey the gospel will have done so. At that time, evangelistic efforts directed toward the Gentiles will cease, and all the Jews will turn to Christ. But the word *until* "does not tell what will follow the event or events mentioned in the phrase it introduces, or governs" (Whiteside, p.239).
 - 2) Whiteside gave this very plausible suggestion: "As the church became more and more made up of Gentile members, hardness among the Jews increased until the church became almost, if not entirely, Gentile in membership—until the fulness of the Gentiles came in; then the hardness among the Jews apparently became complete. If this is not what Paul meant, it is, at least, what really occurred. And aside from inspired interpretations, are not developments the best commentary on a prophecy?" (p.240).
 - 3) This view is fully consistent with everything the Bible says on the matter, and it does no damage at all to any passage; it meshes fully with all other statements that address God's manner of dealing with mankind, and it agrees with the usage of *until* in the passages cited above.
 - 4) The view of the millennialists is most assuredly wrong! The kingdom has come (Col. 1:13-14; Rev. 1:9; Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9; Mark 9:1; Luke 24:47-49; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4). The second coming of Christ will not be to set up an earthly kingdom, but to destroy the earth and the universe (2 Pet. 3:10), to raise all the dead (1 Th. 4:13-18; Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29), and to bring all humanity into the Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-14).
-

- 5) A different interpretation than the one which is forced upon this text by the millennialist is necessary, and the one suggested by Whiteside certainly fits the context.
- j. The times of the Gentiles.
- 1) Ephesians 3:1-11 discusses the great plan which God kept secret from the world through many ages, but which was revealed by the apostles and prophets of Christ. This *mystery* was, "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (3:5). Unbelief on the part of Israel would be the occasion for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles (see Acts 28:28).
 - 2) T. Pierce Brown gave this paraphrase of Romans 11:25-26: "God had hidden in many prophetic references that a part of Israel would be hardened and would reject Christ, and that he would therefore turn and offer salvation to the Gentiles so that they too could be 'filled with all the fulness of God' and be fellow-heirs and fellow partakers of the promise of the gospel. When the Gentiles accepted the gospel and obeyed it, their fulness had come in. And this is the exact way that all Israel that is saved will be saved" ("Firm Foundation," March, 1989, p.5).
 - 3) The "times of the Gentiles" and the "fulness of the Gentiles" are used to express a parallel to the "times of the Israelites." "For fifteen centuries the Hebrews had been Jehovah's special people—an era which might be appropriately termed "the times of the Jews." With their rejection of the Messiah, however, that reign (cf. Mt. 21:43) had ended. It was superseded by "the times of the Gentiles" or the Christian Age" (Wayne Jackson, "Christian Courier," Vol. XX, No. 6, p.22).
 - 4) Foy Wallace commented on Romans 11:25-26: "So, in Luke 21, verse 24, which is a parallel with Matthew 24, when Jerusalem is pictured as being trodden down 'until' the fulness, or times, of the Gentiles, it does not mean a restoration of Jerusalem afterward—it means that the trodding down of old Jerusalem is permanent. What then was the 'hardness in part' and 'the fulness of the Gentiles'? The hardness in part implies that later the hardening would be complete. The fulness of the Gentiles means conversion of the Gentiles. The gospel had first been preached to the Jews, then the Gentiles were gathered into the church. Until the fulness of the Gentiles, Israel was hardened "in part" then their hardening became complete. This is according to the fair construction of the language and the import of words, and it agrees exactly with what happened to Israel. Therefore it must be what Paul meant. The language certainly does not teach the national conversion of Israel after the gospel dispensation." (*God's Prophetic Word*, p.157).

C. Luke 21:25-33: Various Signs:

1. Verse 25: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring."
 - a. Compare Matthew's account: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (24:29-31).
 - b. The images presented in the verse have precedents in Old Testament usages. By showing that "immediately" is used in other contexts with the same meaning as our use of it today [see my notes on Matthew 24:29-31], and by also showing that the phraseology of the rest of the verse is also used in the Old Testament to describe figuratively the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, it is reasonable to understand the present verse in the same light.
 - c. Since the Bible has already used this language in describing the overthrow of ancient cities and nations, and since the term "immediately" cannot logically be used to describe events at least two thousands years in the future (and possibly many thousands more than that), and since the context makes it difficult to place this passage after the destruction of Jerusalem (vs. 34), it is far more

reasonable to apply this verse to the Lord's overthrow of Jerusalem by means of the Roman army in 70 A.D.

- d. Our Lord referenced the sun, moon and stars in distress figuratively to depict the convolutions taking place on earth, as great changes occurred. The Law of Moses was ending, the nation of Israel as God's chosen people was being completed, the separate nation of Israel itself was ending, the Levitical priesthood and the identification of tribes was to forever end. The roaring of the waves of the sea was used by Christ to add to this great focal point of human history.
2. Verse 26: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."
 - a. Other versions show that Heaven where God dwells is not meant, but the lower heavens (plural):
 - 1) ASV: "Men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of **the heavens** shall be shaken."
 - 2) NKJ: "Men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of **the heavens** will be shaken."
 - b. We suppose that heart ailments have plagued mankind since the Great Flood, if not sooner. People having this problem frequently died when experiencing some great, shocking event. Literally, this could have been common during the tragedy and hardships of the siege of and fall of Jerusalem. Starvation and death were certainly on hand.
 - c. When Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:
 - 1) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
 - 2) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - 3) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - 4) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - 5) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - d. Consider:
 - 1) Matthew 24: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
 - 2) Mark 13:19: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."
 - 3) Luke 21:23-24: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
 - e. Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to be is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of Matthew 24:34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's

flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).

3. Verses 27-28: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."
 - a. Matthew 24:30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."
 - 1) If the preceding verse is to be taken as figurative, then this verse and the one following are also figurative. The statement in Matthew 24:34 is very clear, and thus limits that which goes before it in the chapter to events which are connected to the destruction of Judaism in 70 A.D. But is there any precedent of such language being used to describe a figurative coming of Deity? Is there a logical interpretation which permits this to be imagery? Matthew mentions the sign and the coming of the Son of man; Mark and Luke only speak of the coming of Christ. Mark and Luke's accounts do not give an interpretation of the meaning of the sign. Matthew speaks of the coming plus the sign of the Son of man in heaven.
 - 2) This sign was to be brought forth into the light *immediately* after the tribulation of verse 21 (vs. 30). It was to become evident before *this generation* should pass from earthly scenes (vs. 34). The Son of man has not come for the second time as yet (Heb. 9:28; 2 Th. 1:6-9; 1 Th. 4:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:10; John 5:28-29).
 - 3) Therefore, as earlier noted, the sign must not be understood as the personal appearance of Christ in the sky. Notice that the location identified is heaven, not the "heavens" (the sky). Something (or someone) was to be in *heaven*. It is the Son of man who is to be in heaven. The sign would be of the Son of man in heaven. The sign would appear (become evident, be brought to light, shown) in connection with the sun being darkened, the moon not giving her light, the stars falling from heaven, and the powers of the heavens being shaken (the overthrow of corrupted Judaism). When this is done, THEN shall the sign be seen. The sign will be on earth; the sign is the destruction of Jerusalem; the sign would show that Christ is in heaven, and is behind all these frightful events, judging the nation which had rejected him as the Messiah.
 - b. As also noted earlier: "The destruction of Jerusalem would be the SIGN of the coming of the Lord, and would be conclusive evidence that He was reigning IN HEAVEN" (Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, Volume XI, June, 1977, p.27).
 - 1) Matthew 23:36: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."
 - 2) Matthew 23:38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."
 - 3) Matthew 24:34-35: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - 4) Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - 5) Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
 - c. All the tribes of the earth shall mourn. Luke's account gives this additional piece of information: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21:26). [In the Greek, "heaven" is in the plural, showing that God's abode is not the location where this shaking will take place.]
 - 1) The mourning would be the outgrowth of the terrible things included in this great tribulation. All the Jewish people, not only those who were present to face the terrible ordeal, but those who were living in many places throughout the Empire (Acts 2:5), would mourn over the evil which was

- befalling their nation. The consequences of this great tribulation would also have effects on other people and nations.
- 2) The suffering and the resulting sorrow of such a tremendous tribulation, in which well over a million people died under the most horrible of circumstances during a 3-5 five month span, would certainly cause terrible mourning on the part of many. The word "earth" of this clause can be either earth or land, including the occupied earth in the former case, or the land of Palestine in the latter.
 - 3) Those mourning would include especially those who were enduring the suffering and death, and extend to all the others who were sympathetic to them, or who also had to endure the consequences of Israel's great plight.
- d. The coming of the Son of man in (on, ASV) the clouds of heaven. Can this be properly construed figuratively? The same terminology is used in Isaiah 19:1 in the prophetic picture of Egypt's punishment: "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it." The Lord said he would come on a cloud against Egypt, but no one understands that coming as literal.
- e. Given the context in which the present statement was made, no one should understand the coming of Christ in this instance as a literal coming. In fact, as noted earlier in this study, there are only two literal comings of Christ (at his birth and at the end of time). But there are other representative, figurative comings.
- 1) He came in a representative manner when he established his church (kingdom)—Matthew 16:28 (cf. Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). He did not come literally on that great occasion but the power by which he set up his kingdom was present, working with his handpicked apostles (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:5,8; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14; Acts 2:1 ff; 2:23, 33). He set up his church (Matt. 16:18), but he was not literally present when he caused it to be established.
 - 2) He promised to come in judgment against the saints at Ephesus unless they returned to their first love (Rev. 2:5), against the saints at Pergamos if they did not repent (Rev. 2:16), and into the lives of the penitent saints at Laodicea (Rev. 3:20). These were representative comings, and were not literal. He came into their experiences only in the judgments against, or in bringing blessings for, the people involved.
 - 3) The context of the verse under consideration (Matt. 24:30) indicates that the coming on the clouds of heaven is another non-literal, symbolic, figurative coming. When the great destruction, suffering and loss of life are considered, the Lord's great power was brought to bear in the overthrow of Jerusalem. Indeed, the Roman general admitted that only with the assistance of God could the great walls of Jerusalem have been breached. Zechariah 14:1 ff speaks of this coming.
- f. "As sign after sign appeared, they were able to read it in the book as plainly as they saw it with their eyes. We are not slow, therefore, to believe the statement of Eusebius, that the whole body of the church at Jerusalem removed from the city before the final siege began. (Ec. Hist. B.iii, c. v.) Nor can we fail to recognize these fleeing Christians among those persons of whom Josephus speaks when he says that, 'Many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city as from a ship when it was going to sink.' (B. ii, ch. xx, 1.) This flight occurred at the very crisis at which Jesus had warned his disciples to flee to the mountains (verses 15-22); that is, after Cestius Gallus, having laid siege to Jerusalem, with every prospect of taking it, suddenly, as Josephus expresses it, 'retired from the city without any reason in the world.' (Book ii, ch.xix, 6,7.)" (McGarvey, p.210).
4. Verses 29-31: "And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."
 - a. Matthew 24:32-35: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know
-

- that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
- b. This discourse took place in the spring, at the Passover season, a time when the fig trees were beginning to put forth their leaves or were soon to do so. When these leaves began to appear, summer was near at hand. When robins begin to appear, we take that as a sign of the nearness of spring.
 - c. In the same way that the appearance of the fig leaves signaled the closeness of summer, so the appearance of the preceding signs were to be taken to mean that Jerusalem was soon to be razed. The marginal note says that "it" could be understood as "he." The American Standard translates it as "he." If "he" is taken as the correct rendering, then the reference is to the nearness of Christ; if the KJV is correct, the "end" (the overthrow of Jerusalem) is soon to be come. In either case, the meaning is the same: Jesus was to be present (representatively) in bringing about the overthrow.
 - d. At least some of the disciples would "see all these things." Because they would see them, they would thereby know of the nearness of the city's destruction, and so could flee to safety. The Lord is getting to the heart of his answer to their questions of verse seven [Luke 21:7].
5. If Matthew 24:29-33 describes his second coming, notice how shallow and superfluous it would be:
 - a. "When you see the sun and moon darkened, and the stars crashing down, then know that my second coming is at hand! When you see me coming in the clouds, I'm on my way! When you see angels gathering the elect, look for my appearance!"
 - b. Christ never engaged in such trite statements; he never uttered any mere truisms.
 6. Verses 32-33: “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”
 - a. “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matt. 24:34).
 - 1) "All these things" is a statement made several times during the discourse and in the context. "Verily I say unto you, **All these things** shall come upon this generation" (23:36). See also 24:2, 3, 8, 33, 34; Luke 21:19-33. The meaning of Matthew 24:34 is so crystal clear that it seems very strange that many overlook its significance, or else try to explain away its obvious point. Mark 13:30 and Luke 21:32 are parallel verses and they express the same truth.
 - 2) Mark 13:30: “Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.”
 - 3) Luke 21:32: “Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.”
 - b. Premillennialists try to explain away the statement by twisting "generation" to mean the Jewish race. So also does Coffman (pp.394f). This would have the Lord saying that, "All these things will come upon this race, and this race will not pass away until all these things come upon it." But Christ was never redundant, never uttered a mere truism, and was never guilty of speaking such shallow nonsense. "Generation" means here exactly what it meant in these other passages:
 - 1) Matthew 1:17: “So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.”
 - 2) Matthew 11:16-19: “But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”
 - 3) Matthew 12:38-42: “Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment

with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”

- 4) Matthew 16:4: “A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.”
- 5) Matthew 23:36: “Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.”
- 6) The same word that is used in these verses is the word used in Matthew 24:34. The reference is to the whole multitude of men who are living at the same time.
- c. "The true key to the interpretation of this much disputed passage is found in the expression 'all these things,' repeated from the preceding verse. It must here have the same meaning as there; for an identical expression repeated in consecutive sentences always has the same meaning, except when something is introduced in the new connection to force upon it a different meaning. There is certainly nothing of the kind here" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.212).
- d. All the things Jesus has discussed in the preceding verses (3-33) will have taken place by the time "this generation" passes from the earth into eternity. These words were spoken in the spring of A.D. 33; Jerusalem fell in A.D. 70, well within the time factor of one generation. The majority of the people who were living when Christ spoke these words were still alive in 70 A.D., even though many had died and many others had been born during that period of time.
- e. Many people have trouble with Matthew 24:29-31, but the same figures had already been used in the Old Testament to describe the overthrow of other nations and cities. Old Testament prophecies used these descriptions, and first century history verifies that events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem fit their similar use in these verses. And in view of the plain statement of Matthew 24:34 [and Luke 21:31-32], it would be most difficult to be consistent with its truth and understand the awesome pictures of verses 29-31 as still future from our day. As noted in the discussion of those verses, there are other passages which use similar terms in reference to the end of time, but in this context, they are used to depict the great tragedy of Judaism's demise. To be sure, the Jewish race will remain as a separate people until the end of time (Jer. 30:11; Num. 23:9), but Matthew 24 is not discussing that subject.

D. Luke 21:34-38: Other Statements.

1. Verses 34-35: “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”
 - a. NKJ: "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. 35 For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 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." 37 And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. 38 Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.”
 - b. ASV: “But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. And every day he was teaching in the temple; and every night he went out, and lodged in the mount that is called Olivet. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.”
 - c. Benson: “ Here our Lord cautions them against the security and sensuality, to which, if they should yield, they would unfit themselves for the trying times that were approaching, and would render those

- times a great surprise and terror to them; nay, and involve themselves in the ruin about to come on others of their countrymen. By this we learn, 1st, That Christ's promises of deliverance to his disciples and the first Christians were conditional, and only to be fulfilled, provided that, through divine grace, they made it their care to guard against those sins which would have exposed them to God's judgments: and, 2d, That there is a close connection between our duty and safety; between our obedience to God and the divine aid and providence, for our preservation, whether temporal or spiritual: and that we are not to expect preservation immediately from his hand, without the use of those means which he has put it into our power to use in order to it." [Bible Hub].
2. Verse 36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."
 - a. Compare: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:42-44).
 - b. Matthew shows that every Christian must be ready as he lives on the earth, to be prepared always since we do not know when our Lord shall come.
 - c. Luke emphasizes the necessity for the saints to watch for those signs, lest they be caught unaware. If they were to escape from Jerusalem and the surrounding area, they must be watchful.
 - d. The resurrection and the Judgment will occur when our Lord returns: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31-32).
 3. Verses 37-38: "And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him." The following information is from Boles:
 - a. This does not mean that Jesus taught in the temple after the delivery of this discourse; it simply means that up till this time that week, he had been teaching in the temple during the day and retiring to the Mount of Olives at night. Luke sums up the teaching of this day with the general statement of the program that he followed. After teaching during the day he went for rest at Bethany, which was less than two miles from Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. Matthew tells us that he went to Bethany. (Matt. 21:17.) Mark also records that he went to Bethany.
 - b. On the other days, Mark says: "Every evening," or whenever evening came, "he went forth out of the city." (Mark 11:19.) Some think that the Greek word for "abode" or "lodged" here means primarily "lodge" in the open air; hence the three nights of this week, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, Jesus and his disciples may have "lodged" in some place on the slope of Olivet, possibly in the Garden of Gethsemane. Hence, Judas would know where to find him on the night of the betrayal, for John says: "Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples." (John 18:2.) It was not unusual for people at that season of the year in that climate to sleep out of doors wrapped in an outer cloak, as Jerusalem and the villages near were crowded with people who had come to attend the Feast of the Passover.
 - c. No satisfactory exposition of this great prophetic discourse of Jesus as recorded by Luke can be given without a very careful and thorough comparison of it with Matt. 24 and Mark 13; these chapters are essentially parallel with Luke 21, and evidently are the same discourse, spoken on the same occasion, and having the same questions calling forth the discourse. The chief points of the report of the discourse given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke which are common may be summed up as follows: (1) The occasion was the calling of Jesus' attention to the magnificent stones and gifts of the temple; (2) the reply of Jesus that the day would come when not one stone would be left upon another; (3) the earnest and prompt questions, involving two main points—when? and what are to be the foregoing signs? (4) All agree that this discourse was spoken after they had retired to the Mount of Olives, where they were in full view of the city and temple. (5) The three statements agree substantially in making
-

up the first class of foregoing events—"Be not deceived," false Christs shall rise, rumors of war, actual wars, persecution of Christians. (6) A special sign is given, namely, Jerusalem encompassed and destroyed. (7) Each of the writers reports the parable of the fig tree to show that the signs were very soon to follow. (8) All three give admonition of constant watchfulness and being ready.

Luke Chapter 22

A. Luke 22:1-13: The Passover Draws Near:

1. Verses 1-2: “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.”
 - a. “Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. These words show that many of the readers for whom this Gospel was intended were foreigners, who were unacquainted with Jewish terms such as the ‘Passover.’ Passover (τὸ π σχα εσσπ) means, literally, ‘a passing.’ The feast so named commemorated the manner in which the chosen people were spared in Egypt when the destroying angel of the Lord passed over all Israelitish houses, which had been sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, without slaying the firstborn This greatest and most important of the Jewish feasts, which ever brought a great host of pilgrims to Jerusalem, was kept in the first month of the Jewish year (Nisan), from the 15th of the month, the day of full moon, to the 21st. Roughly, this corresponded to the end of our March” (Pulpit Commentary). [In Exodus 12:11, God said he would pass over the land].
 - b. Matthew 26:1-2: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”
 - c. Following the speech, he gave in answer to the apostles’ questions (Matt. 24:4—25:46), the Lord gave the fourth announcement of his impending death. The other three occasions of this prediction are found in the following:
 - 1) Matthew 15:21-23: “Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.”
 - 2) Matthew 17:22-23: “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.”
 - 3) Matthew 20:17-19: “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.”
 - d. He had been very plain and detailed in the previous statements, but had not announced the time of the crucifixion. Here he states that his death will be by crucifixion and that it would occur in connection with the Passover which was only two days away.
2. Verses 3-6: “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.”
 - a. Mark 14:10-11: “And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.”
 - b. Matthew’s account: “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him” (Matt. 26:14-16).
 - c. Judas went to the chief priests with his unholy proposal. It appears, from the placement of the story of the feast in which Judas had exposed his avarice, that he was upset over the stinging rebuke the

- Lord had meted out. This appears to explain his evil act reported here, which could have also been motivated by his greed.
- d. He knew about the desire of the chief priests to learn of the Lord's secret haunts: "Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show it, that they might take him" (John 11:57). Greed, wounded pride, and disappointment were involved in his betrayal. Judas asked how much they would give for the information he possessed. Luke's account (22:3-6) reports the gladness of the Jewish leaders on hearing from Judas. Luke also reports that Judas spoke with the chief priests and the captains. These captains "were the leaders of a guard of priests and Levites whose duty was to protect the temple and the sacred rites from being interrupted by riotous persons; they were at the command of the chief priests for such a work as this" (Boles, p.498).
 - e. "The pieces of silver were most likely the Jewish shekel, and the amount \$15.00. This was a low price for so base a deed: but Judas anticipated no personal danger; he shut out from his mind the thought of all other evil consequences to himself, and he expected his task to cost him but a few minutes of labor when the time should come" (McGarvey, p.225). He had no way of knowing that his secret covenant with the Lord's enemies would be made part of God's public record for all to see. The covenanted price was the rate for a common slave (Ex. 21:32).
 - f. How could these religious leaders, who supposedly knew the Old Testament intimately, have failed to see the connection between their wicked covenant and what Zechariah (11:12-13) had predicted? The prophecy contains an amazing number of details which were all present in the fulfillment. The sum was 30 pieces of silver; it was weighed out; it was cast unto the potter; it was thrown down ("cast"); the potter would get it; the recipient would do the casting; the transaction occurred in the temple (the house of the Lord); a haggling over the price is indicated by the prophecy: "If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear." (See Coffman, p.426). They "covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver," which implies bargaining.
 - g. From that time Judas sought an occasion and opportunity to betray the Lord. The words "deliver him" and "betray him" are used interchangeably (verses 15,16). The opportunity was not long in coming. When evil is contemplated, the devil often quickly provides the means. Jonah ran from his God-given obligation; the ship and passage money were available for a hasty flight (Jonah 1:1-3).
 - h. In the meantime, Judas continued his hypocritical pose as a loyal disciple, but sought opportunity to deliver Jesus to the rulers privately, when he was away from the multitude. His enemies could bring the Lord before the Sanhedrin, manufacture a charge, and put him to death.
3. Verses 7-8: "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat."
- a. On Thursday, the disciples asked Christ where they should prepare the passover. The Passover day was followed by seven days in which unleavened bread was to be used—called the feast of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12:14-20). The term "Passover" came to be used as a designation of the entire eight-day period of holy festivities: "Now the day of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" (Luke 22:1; Mt. 26:17). A major controversy has prevailed through the ages regarding whether the meal Jesus and his disciples ate on the night of his betrayal, specifically whether this was the passover meal or if it was a common meal, or was the passover eaten a day early. If the only information we had was that contained in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there would be no controversy. But John's account indicates that the Jewish leaders had not eaten the Passover (John 18:28), and the day of his trial and crucifixion is also called "the preparation of the Passover" (John 19:14).
 - b. If Jesus had eaten it a day earlier, his act would have been an act of disobedience to an Old Testament command which specified that the passover feast was to be eaten on the night of the 14th day of the first Jewish month (Nisan, formerly called Abib). An act of disobedience is an act of sin, and Jesus did not commit any sin (Heb. 4:15; 7:26; John 14:30; I Pet. 2:22). Did he have the authority to set
-

aside one of God's commandments prior to his death, when he brought to a conclusion the whole Old Testament system?

- 1) Barnes reports that in that day prior to the invention of modern calendars and more exact methods of determining days, the Jews "placed witnesses around the heights of the temple to observe the first appearance of the new moon; they examined the witnesses with much formality, and endeavoured also to obtain the exact time by astronomical calculations. Others held that the month properly commenced when the moon was *visible*. Thus it is said a difference arose between them about the time of the Passover, and that Jesus kept it one day sooner than most of the people" (p.279). This would be a logical way of explaining the difficulty. Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 make it very definite that the meal to be prepared was the Passover.
 - 2) John 18:28 might be explained also by understanding the statement as including the rest of the eight-day period of feasting: "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" (Luke 22:1). John 19:14 could be understood as pertaining to the preparations made for the Sabbath which was to start that very afternoon at sundown: "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he [Pilate] saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!"
 - 3) The Lord said: "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples" (Matt. 26:18). Matthew does not identify how many and which disciples were sent to make the necessary arrangements, but Luke 22:8 tells us that Peter and John were selected.
 - c. Mark and Luke report some detailed instructions by which these two disciples would locate the place where they could eat the meal. They would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water; they were to follow him and ask him about the guest-chamber "where I shall eat the passover with my disciples" (Luke 22:7-12; Mark 14:12-15). The procedure Jesus followed in locating the place and arranging for the feast would have kept Judas from learning about it, and thus disrupting the meal by having the enemy arrest Jesus prematurely.
 - d. "It was customary for all the residents of Jerusalem to open their houses for guests during this feast, and therefore Jesus might have presumed on the hospitality of almost any one; but the probability is that the man to whom he sent this message was an acquaintance and a friend" (McGarvey, p.225).
 - e. This is another case of the omniscience of Jesus. He could know about the man, that the disciples would meet him, that he would be carrying a pitcher of water, that he had a large upper room suitable for the feast, that it would be prepared with the proper furnishings, and that he would be willing to let the company use it. All of these details require his supernatural knowledge.
 - f. "The normal population of Jerusalem was something like two hundred or two hundred and fifty thousand people; but when the Jewish people who lived elsewhere came to the city for the feast days, the population was raised to some three million souls" (ALC, 1966, p.229). Josephus estimated that there were 2.7 million present in 70 A.D., not counting those who were "unclean."
4. Verses 9-13: "And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover."
- a. The law required the sacrifice to be made upon that day "between the evenings" (Deut. 16:5, 6) or "at the even." The Passover came on the fourteenth day of the first month, Nisan or Abib. (Ex. 12:2; 13:4.) This Jewish month corresponded to the last half of March and the first half of April. All leaven had to be removed from every Jewish house. The lamb was known as the paschal lamb; it had to be slain by the head of the family. (Ex. 12:6.) The controversy about the day when Christ ate the last Passover meal has given much concern to many; however, there is no valid reason for concluding that there were any irregularities with Jesus and his disciples. [Boles].
-

- b. Peter and John were to follow the man carrying the a container of water; when they came to the house in which this man entered, they were to speak to the “goodman of the house.” This is a reference to the head of the family, the householder, the master of the house.
 - c. Mark 14:13-15 “And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.” [This man clearly was a follower of the Lord and was ready to comply.]
 - d. Matthew 26:18: "And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples." The disciples did as the Lord directed. Obviously they found the man, he was agreeable to their use of his house, and the proper preparations were made. (See Num. 23:10-14; 28; 16-25; Deut. 16:1-6).
- B. Luke 22:14-20: The Passover Eaten and the Lord’s Supper Instituted.
1. Verses 14-16: “And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) Here Jesus expresses a very strong desire, an intense desire, "to eat this passover" with them before his crucifixion. The expression "with desire I have desired" is similar to rejoiceth with joy (John 3:29) and threatened with threatening (Acts 4:17) in the original. This was to be his last Passover with them, the time when he should institute the Lord's Supper.
 - 2) He would not eat again the Passover in its literal use any more, but in a spiritual sense he would eat it "in the kingdom of God." The law with all of its types and shadows found their fulfillment in Christ and his kingdom; hence he would not eat it "until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."
 - 3) The "until" does not mean that he would again eat the Passover after the establishment of the kingdom; but it does mean that the type was to vanish in the presence of the antitype; the type should be superseded by the antitype, by the sacrifice of the true paschal Lamb. Christ is declared to be our Passover. (1 Cor. 5:6-8.)
 - b. The Mosaic Law was removed as God’s operative system when Christ died on the cross.
 - 1) Ephesians 2:14-16: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” [The two peoples involved in this passage are the Jews and Gentiles who obeyed the Gospel of Christ].
 - 2) Colossians 2:14: “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”
 - 3) Compare: “Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” (Acts 15:10).
 2. Verses 17-18: “And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.”
 - a. We commune with the Savior when we eat the Lord’s Supper: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16). Our eating of the Lord's Supper binds us together with the Lord. To partake of the Supper cements us together as a unified body of worshippers who partake of the benefits of the Lord's body and blood. As we eat this Supper, we focus on the suffering of him who died for us; the lifeless bread we eat very fitly depicts his suffering body on the cross; the fruit of the vine likewise pictures to our minds the blood he shed in his sacrificial death.
-

- b. John's account gives an additional detail of importance. The Passover meal was over (13:1-2) when the preceding discussion was had [i.e., regarding being betrayed]. Immediately after Jesus had identified Judas as the traitor, that evil disciple left the room. Hence, Judas was not present for the institution of the Lord's Supper or for the detailed promises the Lord gave regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles (13:30). [Some might think that Luke's account implies that Judas did not leave until after the Supper had been instituted (22:18-20)].
- c. Matthew reports that the Lord took bread first: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body" (26:26; also Mark 14:22-24). Luke here places the cup first. We are discussing Luke's report.
- d. He took the cup and *gave thanks* (cf. "bless" in previous verse) for it [Mark 14:22-24]. He told them all to drink of it. Mark 14:23 says that they each drank of it. He did not tell them to drink it all, but for all of them to drink. The Lord here told them to divided the contents among themselves. It seems strange that modern ways withhold the cup from the ordinary folks; this practice directly disobeys the Lord's very plain command.
- 1) The thing they were to drink was the cup, meaning the contents of the cup. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). Matthew 26:29 calls the thing drunk the "fruit of the vine." In reference to the Lord's Supper, the word "wine" is not used in the sacred text.
 - 2) "The particular type of drink at the passover was not specified at the time of our lesson; but Bible students, such as Vincent, Edersheim, and others, say that it was wine, diluted with water, 'generally in the proportion of one part to two parts of water.' There can be no reasonable doubt about the use of unfermented grape juice on the Lord's table; and that should satisfy the most discriminating mind, and especially since Jesus spoke of it as the fruit of the vine" (ALC, 1966, p.231).
 - 3) The items the Lord used in the Supper are commonly found around the world. They are very appropriate. The pale, white loaf pictures the lifeless body of Jesus on the cross. The rich color of the fruit of the vine (grape juice), aptly depicts the shed blood of the Lord.
 - 4) The Lord's Supper, when properly eaten, gives each participant a backward look to the cross, a forward look to the return of Christ, an upward look to the glorified Christ and an inward look as we examine ourselves [See Cor. 11:20-30].
- e. The Lord declared that he would not drink the fruit of the vine (partake of the Supper) until such time as he did it in the kingdom of heaven. The Lord's Supper was intended to be eaten in the kingdom (Luke 22:18,29-30). Since the saints in the first century ate the Supper, the kingdom was present. Our eating the Supper today indicates that the kingdom is here. By virtue of the fact that the Lord's Supper is being eaten, this is absolute proof of the fact that the kingdom has been established. Yet many who eat the Supper deny the presence of the kingdom! If it is not here, neither they nor anyone else has the right to eat it.
- f. Notice that Jesus calls the contents of the cup "fruit of the vine," a clear statement that it was just that; it was not turned into his actual blood. The Lord's statement here is significant to the spiritually-minded. When we eat the supper today, he partakes of it with us, though not in a literal way. Hence, it is called "the communion of the blood of Christ" (1 Cor. 10:16; cf. Matt. 18:20).
3. Verse 19: "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."
- a. Matthew and Mark say that the Lord took bread and blessed it. Luke 22:19 says he gave thanks for it. Thus, to bless means to give thanks. The Greek term used is "*eucharisteo*." There is nothing in the statement which implies that we make it holy by our prayer or other action. The bread that was present was without any leavening whatsoever. The Jews were not permitted to have any leavening in their houses during this special time. To say the least, we know that unleavened bread is the kind
-

- to be used in the Lord's Supper today because it was the kind the Lord used. Specific mention is made of it as unleavened bread (Matt. 26:17).
- b. Denominational doctrines assert that when the priest "blesses" the bread, it is miraculously turned into the actual flesh of Jesus. This is called "transubstantiation." Others think that the flesh of Christ is joined with the bread, thus call the process "consubstantiation." Neither of these notions is in the scriptures.
 - c. When the Lord said, "This is my body," he was merely using a common figure of speech which he used in many other instances. He spoke of himself as a door (John 10:9), the way (John 14:6), the true vine (John 15:1), etc. No one understands these expressions as literal.
 - 1) The bread in the Lord's Supper is no more the flesh of Jesus than he is a literal door, vine, or road. We ought not allow denominational folly to drive us to any compromised position. The bread does *represent* the body of the Lord. It is bread before the prayer; it is bread after the prayer; it is bread while we eat it and digest it.
 - 2) "If, as Jesus spoke the words, 'this is my body,' he had suddenly disappeared, and the apostles had seen nothing but the bread, they would have understood that the body had been miraculously transformed into the loaf. But as his body was still there, and the loaf which he held in his hands was also there; and as his body still remained there after the loaf had been broken, and passed around, and eaten up, it is impossible that they could have understood him as meaning that the loaf was literally his body, and impossible that he could have intended to be so understood" (McGarvey, p.227).
 - 3) It is similar to his statement that "the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil (Matt. 13:38-39, 19-20, 22-23; Gen. 40:12; 41:26; Dan. 7:23; 8:21; 1 Cor. 10:4; Gal. 4:24).
 - d. As we today eat the Lord's Supper, we are to do it in remembrance of Christ. Compare: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:23-26).
 - 1) Paul sets before them the truth regarding how to observe the sacred feast. His information was not obtained from uninspired sources, but by the revelation he obtained from Christ (Gal. 1:11-12; 1 Cor. 14:37). This information was not something new to them; he had delivered it to them when he was with them.
 - 2) On the night in which Christ was betrayed, in the meeting with the apostles in the upper room, the Lord took bread, gave thanks for it, broke it, and instructed the apostles to eat it.
 - 3) This lifeless, broken bread represented the broken body of the crucified Savior. Foolish men have misapplied the Lord's words, and claim that the bread actually becomes the literal flesh of Christ after the priest "blesses" it. This error results from failing to recognize a figure of speech. One of the basic elements of sacred hermeneutics is knowing how to identify whether a statement is literal or figurative. That the bread is still bread can be learned from a simple examination of it: it looks like bread, it tastes like bread, and it has only such ingredients that are consistent with bread. When Christ instituted the Supper, his body was intact after the disciples ate; they did not consume his physical body. Paul called it *bread* (verse 26).
 - 4) The bread is intended to remind Christians of the suffering death the Lord accomplished on the cross. As we eat the bread, we remember his sacrifice.
 - 5) There is no contradiction between the two facts that (1) no bones of the Lord's body were broken during the crucifixion (John 19:31-37) and (2) Paul's statement about Christ's broken body. Although none of his bones was broken, his body was broken, in that he died. His body was
-

broken by the crucifixion and by the spear which pierced his side. [Some ancient manuscripts do not include *broken* in the verse].

- 6) The bread was unleavened. The Passover Feast, during which the Supper was instituted, was eaten with unleavened bread (Ex. 12:8,15; 133,7; Dt. 16:3). The feast of unleavened bread accompanied the Passover, in which leaven was not even permitted in Jewish houses.
- 7) The Lord took the cup, and likened it to his blood which was to be shed. As often as his followers partook of it, they were to do so in remembrance of him. It reminds us of his shed blood.
- 8) The life of the flesh is the blood. To say that Christ shed his blood for us, is equivalent to saying that he gave his life for us. Compare: Genesis 9:4-6; Leviticus 17:11-14.
- 9) The blood of Christ sealed the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:7-13; 10:29). His blood provided the means for salvation to the lost.
 - a) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - b) Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - d) That which we drink is not the cup, but the contents of the cup. *Cup* is used figuratively to represent that which is contained in the cup. There is nothing in this passage, or anywhere else in the New Testament, which requires Christians to drink from the same container. It is a matter of expedience that individual containers are used in serving the fruit of the vine.
- e. The Corinthians were reminded that they proclaim the Lord's death each time they partake of his Supper. The frequency of partaking of the Supper is not specified in the passage, but Acts 20:7 shows how often it to be eaten.
 - 1) The saints came together upon the first day of the week to break bread; since every week has a first day, they met to partake every first day of the week.
 - 2) God did not tell the Israelites, in so many words, to remember every sabbath day (Ex. 20:8), but they all understood that to be God's meaning. One who profaned even a single sabbath day, faced the prescribed penalty; he did not have to profane every one of them. Thus, God intended that *every sabbath day be remembered and kept holy*. [The Sabbath pertained to the Mosaic Law; it is not part of the Gospel of Christ].
 - 3) The Lord's Supper is to be eaten every Lord's Day until the return of Christ. The millennial theory asserts that the kingdom will not be established until the return of Christ. However, Christ said that the Lord's Supper was to be eaten in the kingdom (Luke 22:15-20); but the Supper is to cease when the Lord returns (*till he come*); therefore, the kingdom has come.
 - 4) As long as faithful Christians eat the Lord's Supper each first day of the week, they perpetuate the memory of him who died for us. It is important that we keep the death of Christ alive in our memories. Sometimes, sobs are heard when a dog dies, but when the Lord's Supper is being eaten, whispering might be heard. The occasion of eating the Lord's Supper ought to be a time of sober

reflection and gratitude. Mementos such as pictures, a lock of hair, or some personal possession, by which we remember some departed loved one, are very important to us. The Lord's Supper ought to be infinitely more so!

4. Verse 20: "Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Compare: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).
 - a. The Lord did not mean that the fruit of the vine *was* literally his blood, but as in the case of the bread and his body, representative of it. The reference to the New Testament is to the New Covenant which God had promised in the Old Testament that he would establish (Jer. 31:31-34). This indicates a change of his law. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12).
 - b. The fact is stated that the blood of Christ was to be shed. Notice that he speaks of it as if it had already been shed. So certain was the outcome that he could speak of it thusly. Notice further that he did not speak of his blood being "spilled." We often use that term, but it is the wrong word here for it implies an unintentional action. It was foreordained that the blood of Jesus be poured out; there was nothing accidental about it.
 - c. The Greek word "for" (*eis*) is used to show the purpose for his shed blood. He poured out his blood for the purpose of providing for the remission of sins. The same term is used with the same end in view in Acts 2:38: "Repent and be baptized ... *for the remission of sins.*"
 - 1) The blood of Christ is *for* the remission of sins in just the same way that repentance and baptism are "for" the remission of sins. Putting the two statements together, we learn that the blood of Christ brings about the removal of our sins when the man of faith repents and is baptized by the authority of Christ.
 - 2) In other words, we contact the blood of Christ when we repent and are baptized. Acts 2:38 says nothing about faith, but that is because those asking the question (vs. 37) which Peter is answering (vs. 38) were men who already believed on Christ; otherwise, they would not have been "pricked" in their hearts so as to ask their question.
 - d. His blood is said to be shed for "many." It was actually shed for all (Heb. 2:9; Tit. 2:11-12; 2 Cor. 5:14-15). However, only those who obey the gospel obtain the full benefits procured by his death. Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 7:26-27, Acts 15:20, and Leviticus 17:11 show that the life of the flesh is in the blood. Our spiritual lives depend on the blood of Christ. The sacrificing of animals throughout the Old Testament ages was for the purpose of furnishing the proper background for the shedding of Christ's blood.

C. Luke 22:21-30: Strife Among the Apostles.

1. Verses 21-23: "But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing."
 - a. As they were eating, he announced that one of them would betray him. He had previously told them that he would be betrayed but had been indefinite as to the guilty party. Now he plainly says it would be one of the twelve. John 13:18-21 reports that when Jesus made this announcement, he was troubled in spirit. Also, that he stated his reason for telling them about the betrayal ahead of time— that when it occurs, they would have greater reason for believing on him.
 - b. Matthew 26:21-25: "And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said."

- c. John 13:21-27: "When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."
- d. John 13:28-30: "Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."
- e. John 13:32-33: "Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, **Now** is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."
- 1) Judas received the sop [ate it] and went out immediately into the night. He may have been very angry over what the Lord had said to him. It was after the Passover meal was over that Judas left the room; it was after his departure that the Lord's Supper was instituted. The betrayer never had the opportunity to partake of this glorious feast. He was now on his mission to fulfill his wicked plan to lead the enemy to where he knew the Lord could be found.
 - 2) After Judas left the upper room, the Lord said "now" the Son of man is glorified. He was fully aware what was about to be transacted; he would be accosted by the posse, guided by Judas, and arrested in the garden; he would be then led into the city where his awful ordeal would be brought to its conclusion. The Lord would get no sleep that night; only cruelty, scourging, and execution lay ahead.
- f. But following his humiliation and agony of the night and the next day, his spirit would leave his mortal body in death; his body would be tenderly removed from the cross and placed in the new tomb, where it would remain until early on the first day of the week. His resurrection would begin his unending glorification. In completing his earthly mission, the Father would also be glorified.
- g. Think on these words:
- 1) Woods: "Now," in this very hour while Judas was pursuing his course of betrayal, Jesus and the Father were being glorified, i. e., made to appear glorious. The events preceding, including and following, the cross all served to glorify the Father and the Son in that they were a part of his mission to the world of sinful men and necessary to the salvation thereof. The cross for him came before the crown, and from it he was to go to the Father in the ultimate glorification which was to be his. His Father would share in this glory because it was the will of the Father that he should come into the world to suffer and to die and the glorification which came to him in these events was also to be characteristic of the Father. These facts were by him affirmed in connection with the exposure and departure of Judas because the betrayal initiated the events leading to his death, his resurrection, his ascension and his coronation. His work on earth would soon end. [John, p.296].
 - 2) Schaff: "I in the Father; the Father in me; I in the believer; the believer in me; I came from my Father in heaven; I fulfilled his will on earth; I now return to my Father, and prepare a place for my disciples in the many mansions of my Father's house that they may be where I am and share my glory."
- h. Until the Lord revealed the identity of the betrayer, the other apostles were bewildered about which of them would do this terrible deed!
2. Verses 24-26: "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise
-

authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.”

a. Brother Boles gave these excellent comments:

- 1) It is strange that this contention should be renewed at this time; it had frequently been raised among the apostles as to who should be the greatest in the kingdom. (Matt. 18:1-4; 20:20-28; Luke 9:46-48.) They were still at the Passover supper; Jesus had announced that one of them should betray him; yet at this late hour the apostles raised the question and argued among themselves as to who would be the greatest. Jesus had mentioned his kingdom in connection with the institution of the Lord's Supper; this mention of the kingdom gave the occasion for the old question to be raised. It shows that the disciples were still laboring under an erroneous conception of the kingdom; they thought that it would be an earthly kingdom, and there were still ambitious for positions of honor in that earthly kingdom. They were thinking of royalty, high positions, worldly states, and ranks in an earthly kingdom. At the supper John appears to have had a place next to Jesus; Peter was not very far from him; we do not know how the others were arranged. Possibly the arrangement at the supper renewed the old question and gave rise to the contention among them.
- 2) *And he said unto them,*—It seems that their contention was in the presence of Jesus; he gives them further instructions as to the nature of his kingdom. He calls attention to the fact that "the kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them"; this is the spirit of all human governments. Those who exercise the lordship over their subjects are puffed up by flattering titles such as "Benefactors." Jesus had given a similar rebuke in Matt. 20:25-26. The title "Benefactor" as used here means a "doer of good," or one who had brought a blessing to them
- 3) Jesus illustrates this principle by simply calling their attention to a common custom and courtesy among them. The one that sits at the table is honored by the one who serves; and since greatness is to be determined by service, the one who serves the most is greatest among them. He further emphasized this truth by stating: "I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." Evidently they ascribed greatness to Jesus; he was greater, in their own conception, than all the others; yet he was serving them in a way that others had not served them.

b. "Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3). Elders are warned against allowing their authority to cause them to become highhanded, arrogant, domineering, and autocratic. Such attitudes and practices are strictly forbidden by the Lord. Even the apostles were not to arrange themselves in an ascending scale of importance.

- 1) Matthew 20:25-28: "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
- 2) Matthew 23:8-12: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."
- 3) Instead of "lording it" over the flock, elders are to be ensamples to the flock. The word "ensamples" is from *tupos* (type). They are to serve as models for the saints to emulate. In verse two and the first part of verse three, Peter cautions elders against abusing their authority; in the second part of verse three, he calls on them to exercise their authority.

3. Verses 27-30: "For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my

- temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”
- a. NKJ: “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. 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.”
 - b. McLaren: “It was blameworthy, but only too natural, that, while Christ’s heart was full of His approaching sufferings, the Apostles should be squabbling about their respective dignity. They thought that the half-understood predictions pointed to a brief struggle immediately preceding the establishment of the kingdom, and they wished to have their rank settled in advance. Possibly, too, they had been disputing as to whose office was the menial task of presenting the basin for foot-washing. So little did the first partakers of the Lord’s Supper ‘discern the Lord’s body,’ and so little did His most loving friends share His sorrows.”
 - c. He states that the apostles [now eleven] were still with him as his trials [afflictions, denials, falsely charged, crucified] grew nearer. Judas was even now completing his plans to betray the Lord. Matthias would soon be appointed to fill the vacated place Judas once filled (Acts 1:15-26).
 - d. God had long planned to place his Son on the throne of the new spiritual kingdom promised through the prophets (Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14; Matt. 3:2). The twelve apostles would not be given high positions in an earthly kingdom, but the Lord would give them thrones upon which they would bear an onus of serious and dangerous responsibilities.
 - e. Matthew 19:28: “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”
 - 1) This is not a reference to literal thrones but to spiritual thrones of eminence and authority in Christ's kingdom, from which they should exercise influence, not over fleshly Israel but over the spiritual Israel which is the church (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 3:29). Note that no preference was given Peter. There was not to be one throne, occupied by Peter and his successors, but twelve thrones, implying the equality of the Twelve. The word of the apostles, that is, the New Testament, is the instrument through which they exercise the authority that Jesus granted them in this promise.
 - a) “*Times of the regeneration* refers to the times of the new birth, namely, the time of the present dispensation when men are hearing the gospel, obeying it, and being born again. Efforts to apply this passage to some kind of literal return of Jesus to the earth and which envisions Christ and the apostles actually occupying literal earthly thrones must surely be rejected in the light of the truth that Christ and the Twelve are *now* reigning in his kingdom.
 - b) “The reign will continue till all enemies have been put under foot (1 Cor. 15:24-28). When death, the last enemy, is destroyed, Christ will not initiate a reign but will end it, delivering up the kingdom to the Father” (Coffman, pp.300f).
 - 2) The apostles were to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5), which would bring back to their remembrance everything the Lord had personally taught them (John 14:26), teach them all things (John 14:26), guide them into all truth (John 16:13), and show them things to come (John 16:13). They would be empowered to act as ambassadors of Christ, binding and loosing his will as he thus guided them by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 16:16; 18:18; 2 Cor. 5:18-20).
 - 3) When this inspired message had been fully revealed and recorded as the New Testament, it formed the basis on which God deals with man in this Christian Age (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jude 3; Heb. 1:1-4; 10:9-10; Rom. 1:16; Acts 4:11-12; John 14:6; Jas. 1:18,21; 1 Pet. 1:24-25).
 - f. "The period designated by the term regeneration is further limited by the words, 'when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory.' He sat down on that throne when he ascended up to heaven, and he will still be seated on it in the day of judgment. (Acts 2:33-35; Heb. 1:13; Matt. 25:31; 1 Cor. 15:24-28.) 'The regeneration,' then, is contemporaneous with this period, and therefore it must be that
-

process of regenerating men which commenced on the Pentecost after the ascension, and will continue until the saints are raised...

- 1) "The statement of Paul that 'the saints shall judge the world' (1 Cor. 6:2), has led many to suppose that the judging here is to take place at the final judgment. But clearly the judging and the sitting on thrones are declared to be contemporaneous with the regeneration and with Christ's sitting on his throne; and therefore they must be regarded as now in progress...
- 2) "The judging consists in pronouncing decisions on questions of faith and practice in the earthly kingdom, and the twelve are figuratively represented as sitting on thrones, because they are acting as judges. During their personal ministry they judged in person; since then they judge through their writings. True, we have written communications from only a part of them, but judgments pronounced by one of a bench of judges with the known approval of all, are the judgments of the entire bench.
- 3) "The twelve thrones had reference, of course, to the original apostles, and the place of Judas was filled by Matthias. (Acts 1:26.) The apostle to the Gentiles is left out of view.... [The promise was given before the fall of Judas, before Matthias was appointed to fill his place, and a good while before the selection of Saul of Tarsus to become the apostle to the Gentiles—Bob Winton].
- 4) "Their work is with the true Israel, and not with Israel according to the flesh; consequently, we are to construe the terms metaphorically, the twelve tribes representing the Church of God of which they were a type" (McGarvey, p.170).

D. Luke 22:31-38: Satan to Try Simon.

1. Verses 31-32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."
 - a. NKJ: "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."
 - b. Harvested wheat was sifted to remove any chaff remaining and any other unwanted items. It would be then ready to be ground into flour, mixed with other ingredients, rolled out and baked.
 - c. Unknown to Peter, Satan had requested the right to put on this apostle a very strong trial. He was to be sorely tried by the devil, detail of which will be shortly announced to Peter, and a little later, to be done just as the Lord described.
 - d. Compare: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:8-11). God knew Job better than did Satan.
 - e. Parallel records of this trial are found in Matt. 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31; John 13:36-38. This is one of the few events recorded by all four of the writers of the gospel. This prediction to Peter was a forewarning that he would deny the Lord. Matthew and Mark, with Luke, locate it after the institution of the Lord's Supper and immediately before the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Some think that the record in John 13:31-38 was a prediction before this one, and that Jesus here foretells the second time the denial of Peter and the dispersion of the disciples. Jesus calls Peter "Simon" and repeats his name to emphasize that which he is predicting; he does not use the name "Peter" which signifies a more stable character. "Satan" had asked to have Peter; he had demanded Peter as he had demanded Job. (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6.) "To have you" is in the plural, and means "you all," or includes all the disciples. (Boles).

2. Verses 33-34: “And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.”
 - a. Christ knew the strengths and weakness of Peter much better than he knew about himself. We should carefully consider the effect of our Lord’s prayer in behalf of Peter: “I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail.” Undoubtedly, the apostle later perceived and appreciated this prayer of Christ!
 - b. Although Peter stumbled into sin in his denials of the Lord, yet his faith survived and grew to great strength—he became the stone of which the Lord had predicted of him (John 1:41-42).
 - c. Peter, at the time then present, thought too highly of his inner strength. He believed that he was able to follow Christ, even into imprisonment or to death. He stated these convictions.
 - d. As every Bible student knows, our Lord said that Peter would deny him three times before the passing of that day. We remember that Jesus was arrested in the garden that very night, brought back into the city, placed on trial before Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod; during this time, Peter was to be accosted by several people who told him that he was a follower of Jesus, charges which the apostle thrice denied.
3. Verses 35-36: “And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.”
 - b. Pulpit Commentary: “The Lord speaks one more word to his own before leaving the upper room, More occupied with the future trials of his disciples than with his own tragic destiny, which he knew was about to be fulfilled, he reminds his friends of the comparatively quiet and serene existence they had been spending during the last two years and a half with him. In that period, generally speaking, they had been welcomed and kindly entertained by the people, sometimes, they would remember, even with enthusiasm. But they must prepare now for a different life—cold looks, opposition, even bitter persecution, would be their lot for the future. They must order themselves now to meet these things. No ordinary prudent forethought must be omitted by them. He had more than hinted that this future lay before them in his words, ‘Behold I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves;’ now he plainly tells them what kind of life awaited them in the immediate future.” [This source alleges that the reference to a sword was an intended figure of speech].
 - c. Ellicott: The mention of the “sword,” however, introduces a new element of thought. Our Lord’s words to Peter (Matthew 26:52) show that the disciples were not meant to use it in His defence. It is not likely that He would teach them to use it in their own, as they preached the gospel of the Kingdom. True teachers felt afterwards that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal (2Corinthians 10:4). What follows supplies a probable explanation. The Master knew that two of the disciples (Peter and another) had brought swords with them, and with that acceptance of the thoughts of others which we have so often traced, He sadly, and yet, as it were, with the gentle sympathy with which a man speaks to those who are children in age or character, conveyed His warnings in the form which met their fears and hopes. If they meant to trust in swords, a time was coming when they would sorely need them.
 - d. Barnes thought that the Lord permitted their use of swords as they later traveled into Gentile lands: But now— The Saviour says the times are changed. "Before," he sent them out only for a little time. They were in their own country. Their journeys would be short, and there was no need that they should make preparation for a long absence, or for encountering great dangers. But "now" they were to go into the wide world, among strangers, trials, dangers, and wants. And as the time was near; as he was about to die; as these dangers pressed on, it was proper that they should make provision for what was before them.

- e. But compare: “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
 4. Verses 37-38: “For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.”
 - a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. Boles: The disciples understood Jesus to mean that they should be prepared to fight in his kingdom with carnal weapons. We do not know when his disciples obtained these swords. If they had been obliged to depend on swords for their defense, not a hundred would have been sufficient; but for the lesson of that awful night two swords were enough. It may be observed that the impetuous Peter had one of these. It seems that his disciples failed to understand his prediction of his death in the fulfillment of prophecy; although he had made the announcement several times to them. It is difficult to understand just what he meant by "It is enough."
 - c. Coffman has these remarks:
 - 1) The absolute pacifist tradition among Christians of all ages and the acceptance of it by many commentators make this verse "a real problem" for many. Most commentators view the passage as figurative, as did Geldenhuys, who said, "The Lord intended (these words) in a figurative sense." [19] But if the sword is figurative, what about the purse, the wallet, and the cloak?
 - 2) As Hobbs said, "It is impossible to tone down this statement; neither can we dismiss it as not being a genuine saying of Jesus." [20] The clear meaning of the passage is that "a sword" is the one thing needful, even surpassing in priority such an important item as a cloak. The two errors to be avoided here are (1) the supposition that the gospel should be spread by the sword, and (2) the notion that a sword should ever be employed against lawful authority. Before the evening was over, the Lord would have further occasion to demonstrate the proper and improper uses of the sword. Barnes was certainly correct in his view that "These directions (concerning the sword) were not made with reference to his being taken in the garden but to their future lives." [21]
 - 3) J. S. Lamar, an eminent Restoration scholar, expressed surprise "to find several of the ablest Protestant expositors interpreting (this passage) as a warrant for self-defense." [22] Nevertheless, the view maintained here is that self-defense is exactly what Jesus taught. Self-defense is a basic, natural right of all men, and there is no lawful government on earth that denies it. Just why should it be supposed that Jesus denied to Christians such a basic right has never been explained. "Resist not evil ... go the second mile ... turn the other cheek... give thy cloak also, etc." are not applicable to situations in which one's life is threatened, or endangered.
- E. Luke 22:39-46: The Agony in Gethsemane.
1. Verses 39-40: “And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.”
 - a. Mark 14:25 reports that they sang a hymn. At this point, the Lord and the eleven disciples left Jerusalem and went to the Mount of Olives. “Mount of Olives, also Mount Olivet, a limestone ridge, central Israel, east of Jerusalem, in an area which has been occupied by Israel since 1967. The ridge, reaching about 834 m (2,737 ft) at its highest point, is separated from Jerusalem only by the narrow Kidron Valley. Its name is derived from a grove of olive trees that stood on its western flank. The ridge has three summits. The northernmost, often called Mount Scopus, is the site of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1918). On the central summit is a village, once called Olivet, named at-Tur (Arabic, ‘the mount’). Around this central summit, generally regarded as the Mount of Olives proper, many events of Christian history took place. At the top stands a Muslim chapel, on the supposed site
-

of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, as described in Acts 1:2-12. On the slope is the site at which, according to tradition, Jesus wept over Jerusalem (see Luke 19:41-44) during his triumphal entry into the city" [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].

- b. When they arrived at the mount of Olives, the Lord cautioned them to pray, in order to avoid falling into temptation. There is no sin in being tempted; the danger is to submit, and thus commit sin.
2. Verses 41-42: "And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."
 - a. Matthew 26:36: "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." The name of this place means "a place of oil presses." John 18:1 describes it as a garden.
 - 1) "The word used by John means not properly a garden for the cultivation of vegetables, but a place planted with the olive and other trees, perhaps with a fountain of water, and with walks and groves; a proper place of refreshment in a hot climate, and of retirement from the noise of the adjacent city....
 - 2) "American missionaries were at the place which is commonly supposed to have been the garden of Gethsemane in 1823. They tell us that the garden is about a stone's cast from the brook of Cedron; that it now contains eight large and venerable-looking olives, whose trunks show their great antiquity.
 - 3) "The spot is sandy and barren, and appears like a forsaken place. A low broken wall surrounds it A recent traveller says of this place that it 'is a field or garden about fifty paces square, with a few shrubs growing in it, and eight olive-trees of great antiquity, the whole inclosed with a stone wall.'
 - 4) "The place was probably fixed upon, as Dr. Robinson supposes, during the visit of Helena to Jerusalem, A.D. 326, when the places of the crucifixion and resurrection were believed to be identified. There is, however, no absolute certainty respecting the places" (Barnes, pp.285f).

Pictures of Gethsemane From the Internet



After the ravages wrought on Jerusalem and its environs by the Roman army when they laid siege and assaulted the city, the Garden of Gethsemane was most likely greatly changed, if not largely ruined.

- b. On entering the garden, he left eight of the disciples at a certain place while he and the other three went farther into Gethsemane.
 - 1) "And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me" (Matt. 26:37-38).
 - 2) Peter, James and John accompanied him to a deeper place in the garden; Jesus began to be "sorrowful and very heavy." He stated that he was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The

- weight he was bearing was almost overwhelming. The Lord kneeled upon the ground to pray. Thus did he address the Father humbly and reverently.
- c. "He felt as if he could not survive the pressure that was upon his soul, and the utter helplessness into which he had sunk is seen in the request to the chosen three, 'Tarry ye here, and watch with me.' He who had been their comforter in every hour of trouble and danger, now calls on them for the help which their wakeful sympathy would give him in the hour of his agony. Wonderful sight! The Son of God longing for the sympathy of human hearts, and leaning in a time of weakness on the arm of human friendship!" (McGarvey, p.229).
 - d. "It is perhaps in vain to attempt an explanation of the extreme agony which Jesus endured in the garden. That it was not an unmanly fear of death is sufficiently proved by the entire course of his previous life, and is demonstrated by the fortitude with which he actually endured his cruel fate when it came upon him.
 - 1) "The natural fear of death, it is true, was saddening to his soul, and the remembrance of the world's cruelty in the past, mingled with the anticipation of their still greater cruelty and their base ingratitude yet to be developed, must have greatly increased the intensity of this sadness; but when we consider all this, and all that we may by imagination distinctly realize, we feel that we are still short of the reality.
 - 2) "There was something in the dual nature of Jesus which gave him an experience when about to die for the sins of the world into which the human heart can not enter. Even when Paul attempts a remark on the subject, he contents himself with these words: 'Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered.' (Heb. 5:7,8.) [*We must remember he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit* —Bob Winton].
 - 3) "Here let our attempts at explanation rest, and let us rather direct our thoughts to the everlasting bonds of love with which he has bound us by enduring agony so great in our behalf" (McGarvey, p.231).
 - e. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). The Lord knew full well the awfulness of sin and the blessedness of being in fellowship with the Father. Although he was guilty of no sin, yet he bore the sins of the world as he suffered on the cross. Since God can have no fellowship with sin (Isa. 59:1-2), he withdrew from his precious Son while he suffered alone on the cross.
 - f. In the face of the cruelty of his enemies, and the indifference of the majority of Israel, and the shallow conviction of his disciples, plus the awful prospect of bearing the sins of the world and being separated from the Father during that ordeal, we can clearly see reason for the Savior's extreme sorrow and heaviness of heart!
 - g. Compare: "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).
 - 1) He left the three to wait and watch, and went a little farther. They were to wait while he prayed, and watch for the approach of the enemy whom the Lord knew to be coming. Luke 22:41 says he went about a stone's cast from the disciples, and kneeled down to pray. Matthew's account says that he fell on his face. Putting the two pictures together we can visualize Jesus first falling to his knees and then prostrating himself upon the ground.
 - 2) This is a picture of reverence for God, humility in view of his forthcoming ordeal, and great sorrow over the entire prospect. Since the Savior saw the great need for the strength that can come only through prayer, how much more should we be aware of our need for continual prayer! Likewise with his humility and reverence.
-

-
- h. "If it be possible..." [Luke: If thou be willing." From one point of view, it was possible. He could have given up the rest of his earthly mission, renounced the cross, and thus disobeyed God. He could have called for the twelve legions of angels to deliver him from the enemy.
- 1) But such was impossible if he intended to obey his Father. "If that purpose, the salvation of men, could have been accomplished without it, the cup both could and would have passed from him" (McGarvey, p.230).
 - 2) It was the Father's will that his Son go through with the plan established from eternity; there was no other way possible for the purposes of God to be fulfilled.
- i. The devil was not privy to God's long-kept-secret plan of providing a way of escape from sin by the death of his Son. Satan worked feverishly to bring about the Lord's death, only to be thwarted time and again. But now he seemed to be successful; he later learned that he had been utterly defeated by the omnipotent, omniscient God. But for now he could take delight in the prospect of killing God's Son and gaining even greater ascendancy over the world. If Satan was privy to God's plan, why did God speak of it in such veiled language? Could Satan eavesdrop on the Lord's private conversations with the disciples in which he revealed that he would be betrayed and crucified? If so, why did not the devil work to prevent the crucifixion instead of promoting it?
- j. The word "cup" is a figurative description of the travail he was facing. In ancient times it was common to execute criminals by forcing them to drink a cup of poison.
- 1) The famous Socrates of history was compelled to drink hemlock. (See also Ps. 11:6; 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15).
 - 2) Rommel, the famous German general of the Second World War, was forced to imbibe poison, when Hitler thought this great man had been part of the group which attempted to assassinate the Chancellor in July of 1944.
- k. Christ stated his willingness that God's will be done in all things; in no way, and at no time, did he ever seek to usurp God's authority, or try to make the Father's will null and void (Cf. Rom. 15:1-3; Heb. 10:7,9). His agonizing prayers, followed by his acceptance of the "cup," show that his death was entirely voluntary (John 10:17-18).
- 1) Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:7, 9: "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."
3. Verses 43-44: "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."
- a. Compare: "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:11). After his ordeal in the long fasting in the wilderness, angels from heaven brought him help, including food.
 - b. In Gethsemane, an angel, in some fashion, strengthened him. "This was in keeping with the prediction: 'For he will give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' (Psalm 91:11.) The anguish was not removed, but Jesus was strengthened to bear it; he was made 'lower than the angels.' (Heb. 2:7.) We do not know how angels ministered to him, whether by sympathy, words of cheer, wiping away the sweat, or by worshiping him to signify recognition of his lordship. His human nature must be upheld so that a full atonement may be made; this angel assisted in doing this. 'Mine arm also shall strengthen him' (Psalm 89:21); the Father sent this angel to sustain him." [Boles].
 - c. His anguish was so severe, his sweat welled up on him and dropped to the ground. Luke's report declares that it as though great drops of blood thus fell down from his face.
-

- d. For scholars: "There is in the aorist participle a suggestion of a growing intensity in the struggle, which is not conveyed by the simple being. Literally, though very awkwardly, it is, having become in an agony: having progressed from the first prayer (began to pray, Luke 22:41) into an intense struggle of prayer and sorrow. Wycliffe's rendering hints at this: and he, made in agony, prayed. Agony occurs only here. It is used by medical writers, and the fact of a sweat accompanying an agony is also mentioned by them" (Vincent).
4. Verses 45-46: "And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."
- a. Jesus stood up from praying and returned to the three apostles. They were sleeping. He had told them to watch and pray: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). They were neither watching nor praying.
- b. Here he scolded them for being asleep; he again demanded that they pray to avoid entering "into temptation." They were soon to face a severe trial when the mob came to arrest Jesus.
- c. The Lord prayed three times:
- 1) Finished with his prayer, Jesus returned to the three disciples only to find them sleeping. Luke 22:45 attributes their slumber to sorrow. Adding to that, they had been very busy for several days and had been up all night. They had heard some very disconcerting statements from Jesus, including the fact that the temple would be cast down, that he would be betrayed and crucified, that one of the twelve would be the traitor, that they would all be offended because of him, and that Peter would deny him. Added to that was the unusual sight of seeing Christ in such a sorrowful state of mind. Under such conditions, we may well understand their inability to remain awake and alert. But the Lord had expected them to do so! He rebuked them for being unable to watch with him "one hour."
 - 2) "Though sinking under the weight of his own sorrow, he forgets not the danger which threatens his disciples. He exhorts them to watch for it and against it, and to pray that they 'enter not into temptation;' that is, into the power and dominion of the temptation which was coming. They, as they awaken full of self-reproach, he apologizes for them by the remark, 'The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak'" (McGarvey, p.230).
 - 3) "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy" (Matt. 26:42-43). He returned to his former location and prayed again.
 - a) "It should be particularly observed that Christ did not repeat this triple prayer over and over in rote fashion; but on the other hand, after each heart-breaking petition, he paused, sought companionship, and waited for God's answer....
 - b) "Repeated' prayers are indeed acceptable, provided they are *prayers*. Furthermore, there is absolutely no precedent for rote prayers, mumbled or shouted over and over, without intermission. Christ did nothing like that; and one needs a strong imagination to find any permission in the Lord's thrice-repeated prayer for any such thing as that exhibited in the Rosary....
 - c) "There is a definite progression in the prayers, and they were, in each case, separated by intervals of time sufficient for Christ to return to the sleeping disciples. Add to this the significant change in the second prayer from the first, and a probable further change in the third from the second, and this solemn triple prayer plainly refutes the type of glib, rote prayer it is alleged to allow" (Coffman, pp.440-442).
- d. He found the disciples sleeping once again, "for their eyes were heavy." Compare: "And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same word." (Matt. 26:44). He offered a similar prayer again, "saying the same words." That is, the tenor of the prayer was akin to those two which preceded it.
-

- e. Compare: "Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me" (Matt. 26:45-46).
- 1) He returned to the sleeping disciples a third time, telling them to sleep on and take their rest, in view of the awful experiences which they were soon to behold. They would surely need the rest to face the despair and danger of the next several hours.
 - 2) Some have supposed a difficulty in these two verses. There is a pause, or at least a change of circumstances, between verse 45 and verse 46. The former contains his statement allowing their rest; the latter reflects the Lord's seeing the approach of the mob sent to arrest him. He tells them to sleep, but then (apparently after a period of time had elapsed), he calls on them to awaken. Verse 47 shows the nearness of the mob.

F. Luke 22:47-53: The Arrest of Jesus.

1. Verses 47-48: "And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"
 - a. Compare: "While he yet spake,—A 'multitude' led by Judas at this hour of the night came into the garden. This 'multitude' consisted, first, of 'the band' (John 18:3, 12), or Roman cohort, which consisted of from three to six hundred armed men; they were kept in the tower of Antonia, overlooking the temple, and were kept ready to put down any tumult or arrest any disturber. It is not known whether the entire band was present. Then there were the 'captains of the temple' (verse 52) with their men who guarded the temple and kept order; it is not known how many of these were present. Also there were some of the chief priests and elders (verse 52), and finally some servants, such as Malchus and others (John 18:10), who had been commissioned by the Jewish authorities. 'Judas, one of the twelve,' led the company; he had agreed to betray Jesus into their hands; it is an ugly picture to see this apostolic criminal leading this mob at night into the garden of sorrow to arrest Jesus. Judas 'went before them' as their guide and leader. (John 18:3.) When they arrived, Judas 'drew near unto Jesus to kiss him'" (Cf. Matt. 26:47). [Johnson].
 - b. Compare: "Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons" (John 18:3).
 - 1) Matthew notes that the band who came with Judas was "a great multitude" (26:47). Johnson observed (p.261):
 - a) The priests, ignorant of the spirit and purposes of Jesus, expected resistance. The "lanterns and torches" show that they expected that he might hide in the dark shadows of the valleys and crags. Otherwise they would not have been required when there was the full passover moon.
 - b) It might have been the case that Judas and his posse checked the upper room first, for this was where the Lord had been when sinful disciple left to get his little army. But knowing that usual place where Jesus and the apostles often resorted to spend the night, he went on to Gethsemane.
 - c) It appears that Judas was now so perverted in his mind that he felt no pain of conscience at this time. Later, he became so overwhelmed with sorrow that he hanged himself (Matt. 27:3-5).
 - 2) The identifying sign by which Judas would reveal Jesus to his mob was a kiss. "Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him" (Matt. 26:48-49).
 - c. Woods: "The participation of the Roman cohort along with the Jewish council (the Sanhedrin) in the arrest of Jesus, thus involved both Jew and Gentile in this wicked scheme to destroy him who alone could give the world the peace and joy for which it yearns but will not seek in the proper way" (p.370).
 - 1) In this world, an especially stubborn and committed man, might be able to generate within himself enough strength of fatalism to be indifferent to certain hardships and pain. This scribe read many

- years ago of a very strong and vicious man from Kentucky, who went out west. His criminality came to the fore, and he was found guilty of murder. With the rope around his neck, he shouted out, “Goodby world and hello Satan”—and he jumped from the platform to his death! Evidently he understood what his eternal fate would be. He could not have had any peace or joy, present or future.
- 2) It is different for a faithful Christian. The worst that any worldly enemy can force upon us is death; but saints are not terrified of dying; they know of the inexpressible reward awaits them. They can face death with confidence and poise, happily anticipating what lies beyond their demise. They live with peace and joy, and look forward to their happy future!
- d. Calling the traitor by name, he asked about his betraying his Lord with a kiss, normally a greeting of love and companionship.
- 1) Since Jesus might not be recognized by the members of the multitude, and since it was dark in the garden, Judas had arranged to identify the Lord to them by means of a kiss. He thought that this token of affection would deceive the Lord, and perhaps give the men with him an opportunity to suddenly lay hands on him before he could resist by fleeing or by use of miraculous powers.
 - 2) "Judas forgot the superhuman knowledge of Jesus, and in the act of kissing him gave the finishing touch to the picture of his own infamy. Little did he think that the kiss of Judas would become a proverb in every nation" (McGarvey, p.232).
- e. John adds more information in John 18:4-6: “Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.:
- 1) Our Lord was fully appraised of what was about to befall him. He knew it before he left Heaven for his earthly mission. He had asked the Father whether this ordeal could be avoided (Matt. 26:39), but was perfectly committed to doing the will of the Almighty, since there was no other way that lost humanity could be reclaimed.
 - 2) He did not try to conceal his identity from Judas and the unholy mob. He stepped forth so he could be seen and asked, “Whom seek ye?” The Lord was not caught; he rather exposed himself to the will of the cohort.
 - 3) “Knowing their objects and all that he had to endure on the morrow. He submitted of his own will, and after the troubled hour of Gethsemane, is as calm as the unruffled sea. Jesus "went forth" from the shadow of the trees into the moonlight, or from the garden walls, advancing in front of his disciples, in order to save them from arrest (verse 8), and asked whom they sought” (Johnson pp.261f).
 - 4) The spokesman for the mob answered, that they were looking for Jesus of Nazareth. Notice that the Lord did not try to hide his identity; he stepped forth and identified himself. In fact, there would have been no need for the kiss from the depraved betrayer.
- f. Jesus fearlessly acknowledged that he was the one they sought. He showed not the least particle of fear! The Lord’s supernatural powers were not unknown to this multitude; this would explain the terror that caused the men to go backward and fell on the ground. We are also told that Judas was standing there with them.
- 1) “Was standing with them ... suggests that John could still remember, over the gulf of years, the traitor, standing there in the flickering torchlight, his very presence with the Lord's enemies stabbing the hearts of them who had been his friends” (Coffman).
 - 2) Because inspiration placed him directly on the scene, as the guide to them who came for the Lord, he could not cut himself off from his complicity and guilt!
 - 3) The strength of the reputation of Jesus likely contributed to the fear with which the men were overcome. Judas certainly knew of the miraculous powers the Lord had shown on many occasions. He may have expected the Lord to defend himself with some powerful miracle.
-

- 4) Then follows a scene designed to show all the world that the Lord laid down his own life. His foemen were powerless in his hands. As he answers, either his majesty and their own terror so impressed them, that, awed, they fell backward to the earth, or his divine power was exerted to prostrate them. Then the Lord submitted himself "as a lamb to the slaughter," and his power is not again exerted until he rises from the tomb, except to heal the smitten servant of the high priest. [Johnson, p.262).
- 5) We must not overlook the wise comment by Brother Woods in this place: "The divine demeanor, the simple majesty of his bearing, his bold exhibition of innocence filled their hearts with terror and they instinctively shrank from him, the entire group swaying backward and then falling to the ground. The darkness of the night, the deeper shadows of the trees and of the overhanging mount contributed to the awesomeness of the scene."
- g. Further from John: "Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way. That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none" (John 18:7-9).
 - 1) The Lord asked the company who it was they were seeking. They answered again that they sought Jesus of Nazareth. This would not be a case of mistaken identity! Jesus reminded them that he had already identified himself as Jesus of Nazareth. There would be no need for further investigation.
 - 2) Christ asked the mob the same question, which revived them to a consciousness of the moment. Their terror had given them a hard shaking!
 - 3) Jesus next made an effort to shield his apostles from arrest. "You have the person you were seeking; therefore, let these men go away without any harm." The identity of those the Lord is speaking about is clearly shown in this passage. It was the group of which Judas was a part—the original Twelve. Eleven of these apostles were kept, they did not fall into temptation and apostasy, as Judas did. This one is described as "the son of perdition."
- h. God never left any particle of prophecy unfulfilled. The fact that the apostles were not taken into custody in the present circumstances is such a case:
 - 1) John 17:12 : "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."
 - 2) Matthew 5:18: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Christ did abolish the law when he died on the cross (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Rom. 7:1-7). Not one iota of the law was annulled "until all of it reached fulfillment, till the whole purpose of the law had been accomplished. And this was done at the cross" (Wallace, p.30). "...The necessary inference is that when the law was fulfilled every jot and every tittle did pass—the whole law ended" (ibid.).
 - 3) Luke 16:17: "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail."
2. Verses 49-51: "When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him."
 - a. Compare: "Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear" (John 18:10).
 - b. Other passages contribute more information.
 - 1) Luke 22:33: "And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." This was Peter speaking.
 - 2) Luke 22:38: "And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough" Peter had one of these weapons.
 - 3) Prior to the events on the Pentecost day following the Lord's resurrection, Peter was known as being forward and impetuous, quick to speak and to act.

- c. Woods:
- 1) From Luke we learn that following the deceitful kiss of Judas the question was raised, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" and very likely before the Saviour replied Peter promptly slashed out with it thus severing the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. Peter's purpose is clear; he intended to cut the man's head off and would have but for the fact that Malchus dodged to the left thus causing the sharp blade of the weapon to come between the head and the ear.
 - 2) The detail of this narrative is remarkable, rendering it impossible to have been contrived. In undesigned coincidence, the possession of the sword is explained; the name of the apostle who wielded it given; the identity of the person Peter struck is mentioned; his relationship to the high priest is included and the fact that it was the right ear which was cut off is not overlooked. This is the report of an eyewitness
 - 3) Jesus quickly acted to counteract its effects. Luke informs us that Jesus touched the ear of Malchus and "healed him," thus replacing it. There is some reason to conclude that the ear, though severed, was still attached by the skin to Malchus' face from the fact that Jesus, in performing the miracle, is said to have touched it in the act of restoring it.
- d. We are not inclined to speculate about what happened to Malchus in the time following this important event in his life. We are not told any more about his life going forward than we are told about Barrabas after he was released from custody by Pilate (Matt. 27:20-26). We would have been told about these matters if there was anything important for us to know.
- e. "Abbott surmises that the attack on the guard followed their sudden terror. All the disciples were eager to make it (Luke 22:49), though Peter was the only one who carried the will into action. In Luke 22: 49, Peter first asks if they shall fight. He waits not for the answer, but impelled by the natural courage of his heart, and taking no heed of the odds against him, aims a blow at one, probably the foremost of the band, the first that was daring to lay profane hands on the sacred person of the Lord" (Johnson, pp.262f).
- f. "The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11).
- 1) We are given the name of the high priest's servant—Malchus. John reports that it was this man's right ear that was injured, which Luke tells us the Lord healed.
 - 2) Instead of receiving a commendation from Jesus, Peter was rebuked for his impulsive act. He did not tell the apostle to destroy or throw away the sword, but to return it to its sheath.
 - 3) Matthew adds this: "And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (26:51-54).
- g. McGarvey:
- 1) "As it is not true in history that all *individuals* who take the sword perish with the sword we must understand this remark rather of organized communities of men, both political and religious. In this sense the statement has proved true, so far as history has had time to test it. Every kingdom which was built up in ancient times by violence has perished, and doubtless those of modern times will. Popery, also, which established itself by the sword and the fagot, has been compelled at last to succumb to military power, and will probably be eventually overthrown by the same instrumentality. So with Moham-medanism.
 - 2) "It should be further observed here, that the reason for commanding Peter to put up his sword, was not drawn from the circumstances of the case. It was not because the use of the sword would prevent Jesus from dying for the world; nor because its use was wrong in the cause of Jesus but innocent in other causes; but because '*all* who take the sword shall perish with the sword.' The
-

universality of the proposition made it applicable to the case of Peter. The statement has the form of a prediction, and the force of a prohibition in reference to appeals to the sword, whether by churches, nations, or other organized bodies of men" (McGarvey, pp.232f).

- h. The Lord never intended for his cause to be propagated or defended by carnal weapons; he never intended that his people avenge themselves on their enemies by the use of such means (Rom. 12:17-21; 2 Cor. 10:4-5). But notice that the Lord did not tell Peter to throw away the sword; he simply told him to put it back in its place. This suggests that there is a proper place for the sword (Rom. 13:1ff; 1 Pet. 2:13-17).
 - 1) Romans 12:17-21: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
- i. Woods:
 - 1) "Rivers of blood have been shed by great armies in defense of religion and in defiance of this edict of the Saviour. His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36); and it is, therefore, not to be propagated by worldly means.
 - 2) "This includes, but is by no means limited to the use of the munitions of war; it embraces every human device to which men may resort as substitutes for the gospel which alone is God's power to save. (Rom. 1:16.) Ornate and expensive church buildings, detailed and complex organizational efforts and psychological schemes are all under the ban of him who ordained that it is by the preaching of the gospel that men are to believe. (1 Cor. 1:21)" (p.373).
- j. The Lord mentioned here the "cup" of which he shortly before prayed to the Father, that it might be removed—if it was God's will. Brother Woods wrote:
 - 1) The "cup" to which the Saviour refers was the suffering he would experience in order to accomplish the atonement he would make for the sins of the world. It is represented as a bitter potion put into a cup he would be required to drink. The question, "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" is rhetorical and says, in effect, "Shall I oppose the will of my Father and refuse to carry out his plans in the world?"
 - 2) It was the Father who gave it to him; it was therefore the Father's will that he should suffer; any effort to avoid this, such as the physical defense Peter foolishly attempted, would contravene that plan.
 - 3) There were at least four reasons assigned by the Lord why Peter's method was inappropriate:
 - a) It was the Father's will that he should go "by way of the cross."
 - b) The use of violence prompts to opposing violence and they that take the sword shall perish by it.
 - c) Peter's pitiful effort could not possibly achieve its purpose; were such a proper defense Jesus could call twelve legions of angels to his side.

- d) The plan must proceed so that the scriptures may be fulfilled since in them is revealed the immutable counsel of God. [*ibid.*].
- k. "This remarkable out-flashing of Jesus' power explains why the arresting party so readily consented to permit the apostles to leave without being arrested. It was perfectly clear to that entire company that Jesus could do anything, and therefore they allowed his arrest upon his own terms, not theirs. Can there be any other possible explanation of why the whole group was not arrested? It will be further noted that Jesus referred to his prevention of their arrest as a fulfillment of his prophetic words in the great prayer (John 17:12); and from this the deduction stands that if the apostles had been arrested they might have been killed also" [Coffman].
3. Verses 52-53: "Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."
- a. NKJ: 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."
- b. Compare: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him, and fled" (Mark 14:48-50).
- 1) We are told by John (18:12) that they bound the Lord, although he had offered no resistance. Christ remonstrated with the large group, that they came out against him with swords and staves, to arrest him. He was no criminal. He represented no threat to the Jewish or Roman authorities.
- 2) Why did they not arrest Jesus as he taught at the temple? The Jewish enemies of Christ feared that this would cause a popular uprising; the people perceived the Lord to be a prophet.
- c. Benson: "*Jesus said unto the chief priests, captains, &c.* — The soldiers and servants were sent to apprehend Jesus, but these chief priests, &c. came of their own accord; and, it seems, kept at a distance during the scuffle, but drew near when they understood that Jesus was taken. *Be ye come out as against a thief?* This is your hour — Before which you could not take me; and the power of darkness — The time when Satan has power."
- d. "The last week had been spent by Jesus in the temple teaching; at night he would retire to Bethany or to the Mount of Olives. This was a rebuke to them for coming secretly by night, when they could have come to him while he was in the temple teaching daily; this was an indictment against them for their cowardice. They made no attempt to arrest him while he was in the temple; they feared the multitude. 'But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.' The time predicted had arrived; it was now permitted of God that the powers of evil should vent their rage against Jesus, and for a time triumph in the apparent success of their plans to crush Jesus and his disciples. Some think that Jesus had reference to the time of night, but this inference does not justify the statement. [Boles].
- e. Compare: "In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled" (Matt. 26:55-56).
- 1) Jesus rebuked the guard for coming after him as against a thief; they had done nothing toward arresting him even though he had taught them openly. He was not a thief or any other kind of criminal; there was no need for them to use such devious means in taking him into custody. By making this point, Christ called the attention of the posse to the underhanded means the authorities used in his arrest.
- 2) The disciples saw that nothing was to prevent his arrest. He had forbidden their defending him by carnal means, and had even healed the ear of Malchus (Luke 22:51). "In their alarm the disciples forgot the prediction about their dispersion like sheep when the shepherd is smitten (verses 31,35), or else they thought it was best to fulfill it; and Jesus had himself demanded for
-

them the privilege of retreat, by saying, 'If you seek me, let these go their way.' (John 18:8)" (McGarvey, Matthew, p.233).

- 3) Notice that Matthew included himself in the report that *all* the disciples forsook him and fled. (26:56). This is another of the many evidences that the Bible is inspired, for what man would have written a record in which he convicted himself of such a cowardly act? Subsequent records show that Peter and John recovered enough to be near the Lord during some of his forthcoming trials (cf. John 18:15). Mark tells of an unidentified young man who fled this garden scene and eluded the efforts of the guards to apprehend him (14:51-52). It has commonly been postulated that this young man was Mark himself.
 - f. "If Jesus had been put to death after violent resistance, or after exhausting all means within his reach to escape death, he could not have been preached to the world as a voluntary sacrifice for sin; and his cross, if robbed of this element, would have been robbed of the chief part of its power over men. In the preceding section,
 - 1) "Matthew has exhibited more fully than before the fact that his death was voluntary. Again and again, within the section, have we seen Jesus referring to it as an event about to take place; the symbols which are to commemorate it throughout all time had been appointed; the final consent of his soul, after a protracted struggle in prayer, had been given; all aid looking to his release, whether from earth or from heaven, had been declined; and he now extended his hands to receive the bonds which were to be loosed only at the foot of the cross.
 - 2) "The second object of the section is to show that the death of Jesus, which was thus voluntary on his part, was brought about by malice and corruption on the part of his enemies. It shows that the plot for his arrest was instigated by malice and tainted with hypocrisy (3-5); that it was rendered practicable by bribery and corruption, as exhibited in the covenant with Judas; and that its execution was marked by that cowardice which usually attends corrupt transactions. All of these circumstances constitute an argument for his innocence, by proving the malice, the hypocrisy, and the cowardice of his enemies" (McGarvey, pp.233f).
 - g. Our Lord plainly affirmed that he willingly accepted the cross, with all that was entailed in it: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17-18).
- G. Luke 22:54-62: Jesus is Taken to the House of the High Priest Where Peter Denies His Lord.
1. Verse 54: "Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house."
 - a. Compare: "So the band and the chief captain, and the officers of the Jews, seized Jesus and bound him, and led him to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year" (ASV).
 - b. John 18:12-14: "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away **to Annas first**; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."
 - c. "The disciples 'all forsook him and fled' (Mark 14: 50), probably at this moment, and the soldiers of the Roman band, and the Jewish temple officers, rough, cruel men, seized and bound the Son of God. The terror inspired by the gentle but mighty Jesus is shown in the fact that all unite to seize him and to bind him. While they were binding him the disciples had an opportunity to escape" (Johnson, p.263).
 - d. The large group seized the Lord, not knowing whether he would personally resist. Their puny bonds could not keep him under their control any more than the various bonds were able to control Samson.
 - 1) Judges 16:9: "Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known."
-

- 2) Judges 16:12: “Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.”
 - 3) What kept Jesus bound as he was led into Jerusalem was the same thing that kept him on the cross: His determination to do the will of the Father!
 - e. Though not mentioned by John, and for the details of another tragic action we must look to Matthew and Mark, it was at this point that not only Peter, but the rest of the disciples, with the possible exception of John, took to their heels and fled.
 - f. Notice this depiction of Annas from Edersheim’s *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*:
 - 1) “No figure is better known in contemporary Jewish history than that of Annas; no person deemed more fortunate or successful, but none also more generally execrated than the late High-Priest. He had held the Pontificate for only six or seven years; but it was filled by not fewer than five of his sons, by his son-in-law Caiaphas, and by a grandson. And in those days it was, at least for one of Annas' disposition, much better to have been than to be High-Priest. He enjoyed all the dignity of the office, and all its influence also, since he was able to promote to it those most closely connected with him. And, while they acted publicly, he really directed affairs, without either the responsibility or the restraints which the office imposed.
 - 2) “His influence with the Romans he owed to the religious views which he professed to his open partisanship of the foreigner, and to his enormous wealth. The Sadducean Annas was an eminently safe Churchman, not troubled with any special convictions nor with Jewish fanaticism, a pleasant and a useful man also who was able to furnish his friends in the Praetorium with large sums of money. We have seen what immense revenues the family of Annas must have derived from the Temple-booths, and how nefarious and unpopular was the traffic. The names of those bold, licentious, unscrupulous, degenerate sons of Aaron were spoken with whispered curses.
 - 3) “Without referring to Christ's interference with that Temple-traffic, which, if His authority had prevailed, would, of course, have been fatal to it, we can understand how antithetic in every respect a Messiah, and such a Messiah as Jesus, must have been to Annas. He was as resolutely bent on His Death as his son-in-law, though with his characteristic cunning and coolness, not in the hasty, bluff manner of Caiaphas.
 - 4) “It was probably from a desire that Annas might have the conduct of the business, or from the active, leading part which Annas took in the matter; perhaps for even more prosaic and practical reasons, such as that the Palace of Annas was nearer to the place of Jesus' capture, and that it was desirable to dismiss the Roman soldiery as quickly as possible, that Christ was first brought to Annas, and not to the actual High-Priest.”
 - g. Although Annas was the official high priest, he had incurred the anger of the Romans, who replaced him with Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. Our Lord was first taken to Annas, and this ruler sent him on to the Roman-appointed High Priest. This man held the office as High Priest during this momentous time. Caiaphas had berated the rest of the council, saying they were totally ignorant!
 - h. The apostle John reminds us that Caiaphas was the one who gave certain counsel to the Jews: “If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not” (John 11:48-50).
 - 1) If such a condition of religious unrest developed, their Roman overlords might take harsh steps that could cause these religious and civil leaders to lose their places. Conditions might reach such a state that their whole nation might be dismantled. Their final decision was to remove Jesus by execution.
 - 2) Their great fear was in losing their positions and their nation. By removing Jesus from the equation through chicanery, they sought to eliminate this danger. But in a few years, in 70 A.D., the
-

Romans invaded Palestine with a great army, besieged Jerusalem, destroyed its walls, its great houses, and the great temple. The scheme these Jewish rulers was faulty; they suffered the greatest disaster of their long history as a nation.

2. Verses 55-57: “And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.”
 - a. There was an obvious method to Peter’s plan: he would be far enough from Jesus that he was not likely to be recognized and taken into custody, but close enough if the Lord should use supernatural means to effect release.
 - b. Compare: “But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself” (John 18:16-18).
 - 1) At first, Peter stood outside until John went to the entrance and spoke to the lady at the door, who permitted Peter to enter the courtyard where the servants and officers were gathered. They were all assembled around a fire for it was cold. Peter was convinced that the Lord's end was imminent, but at least he was willing to be in the near vicinity of the trial to see the end.
 - 2) Matthew 26:69-72: “Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.”
 - 3) Matthew says a damsel came to Peter and asserted that he was with Jesus of Galilee. Mark says that a maid of the high priest saw Peter warming himself, looked at him, and stated that he was with Jesus of Nazareth; and that the cock crew when Peter denied the allegation.
 - 4) Luke writes that a certain maid looked at Peter and announced, "This man was also with him." John merely states that some of those around the fire asked Peter whether he was one of the Lord's disciples. Our present text reports that the young lady who kept the door was one of those who charged him with being a disciple of Jesus. John states, “Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not” (18:17).
 - 5) Luke 22:56-58: “But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.”
 - 6) John 18:25-26: “And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?”
 - a) At this point, the Holy Spirit reverted to the matter that had been mentioned in verse 18, about the apostle Peter warming himself by the “devil’s” fire.
 - b) “One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter therefore denied again: and straightway the cock crew. The additional element provided by John in this episode is that of the introduction of an eyewitness of Peter's association with the Lord in the garden. The synoptics mention the Galilean accent; but, in the circumstance of one of Malchus' kinsmen having actually seen him with Jesus, there was hardly any way Peter could deny it. Therefore, he did so with an oath, which has ever been the support of lame propositions. John softened the account of Peter's denial by leaving out any mention of the oath.” [Coffman].

- 7) “Art thou also ... [indicates that John was openly known as a disciple of Jesus,] and there is no evidence that Peter would have suffered any inconvenience by an open admission of his discipleship. However, it should be remembered that Peter had cut off Malchus' ear a little earlier; and, if his identity as the perpetrator of that act had been known, there would have been solid grounds for his arrest. If this entered into Peter's thinking, it would show how one wrong act inevitably leads to another wrong act” (Coffman).
- c. Johnson:
- 1) As we learn from Mark 14:66, the fire was made in the court, the open space "oft in the center for light and ventilation around which the building was constructed, and which was reached by an arched way called (Matt. 26: 71) "the porch."
 - 2) The court within, which was a common feature of great houses, was paved. The fire was of charcoal. As a general rule the nights of Palestine at the season of the passover were warm throughout, and the cold is named as unusual. Peter, having denied his Master, probably thought he was less likely to be suspected if he threw himself in the midst of his enemies and hence he "stood and warmed himself," while John seems to have pressed on after his Lord” (p.266).
- d. “It was now about midnight, growing cold, and the servants of the priests and those who waited in the court had built a fire to warm and Peter stood with them warming himself” (Lipscomb, Mark).
- e. John 18:25-27: “And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.”
3. Verse 58: “And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, **Man**, I am not.”
- a. Cambridge:
- 1) After his first denial “before them all” (Matthew 26:70) he probably hoped to shake off this dangerous curiosity; and, perhaps as his guilt was brought more home to him by the first crowing of the cock (Mark 14:68), he stole back out of the light of the brazier where he had been sitting with the servants, to the gate or vestibule (*pulona*, Matthew 26:71, *proaulion*, Mark 14:68).
 - 2) Of this second denial John says, “they said to him” (Luke 18:25); and as the portress was sure to have gossiped about him to the girl who relieved her at her post, the second denial was due to his being pointed out by the second maid to the group of idlers who were hanging about the door, one of whom was prominent in pressing the charge against him. Matthew 26:71 (*ἄλλη*); Mark 14:69 (*ἡ παιδίσκη*); John 18:25 (*ε πον*); here *ἕτερος*.
 - 3) What discrepancy then worth speaking of is there here? Doubtless the second and third charges became more and more general as the news spread among the group. It is much more important to notice the moral law of “linked lies” by which ‘once denied’ always has a tendency to become ‘thrice denied.’ “Whom,” asks Augustine, “have you ever seen contented with a single sin?”
 - 4) Man: A mode of displeased address, Luke 12:14.
- b. Peter’s response to this charge was a direct lie; he had been a disciple of Jesus for as much as three and a half years, the estimate of the Lord’s public ministry. His denial of Christ was a falsehood, even though it was made under duress.
4. Verses 59-60: “And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.”
- a. This second charge was made about an hour later. It was based on the perception that Peter was from Galilee. There must have been many from that province in Jerusalem at this season, so that was not enough to make the allegation true. It was evidently known that the followers of Jesus were from that part of the country.

- b. What was it about Peter that suggested that he was from Galilee? There was something about his speech, his accent perhaps.
 - 1) Matthew 26:73: "And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee."
 - 2) Mark 14:70: "And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto."
 - c. The apostle alleged that he did not know what the man was saying. The sound of the rooster was then heard. [See the list at the end of this chapter of the three denials].
5. Verses 61-62: "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly."
- a. Compare: "And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And **the second time the cock crew**. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept" (Mark 14:66-72).
 - b. Henry: "Peter's fall was his denying that he knew Christ, and was his disciple; disowning him because of distress and danger. He that has once told a lie, is strongly tempted to persist: the beginning of that sin, like strife, is as the letting forth of water. The Lord turned and looked upon Peter. 1. It was a convincing look. Jesus turned and looked upon him, as if he should say, Dost thou not know me, Peter? 2. It was a chiding look. Let us think with what a rebuking countenance Christ may justly look upon us when we have sinned. 3. It was an expostulating look. Thou who wast the most forward to confess me to be the Son of God, and didst solemnly promise thou wouldest never disown me! 4. It was a compassionate look. Peter, how art thou fallen and undone if I do not help thee!"
- H. Luke 22:63-71: Jesus Mocked, Afflicted and Questioned.
1. Verses 63-65: "And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him."
 - a. Their behavior now degenerated to show their true condition of heart: They began to spit upon him, to mock him, and to strike him. What a disgrace by the highest court in the land! To appreciate just how perverse these men were we need only to imagine such conduct by our own U.S. Supreme Court. If not personally done by the Sanhedrin, this cruel treatment of Christ was at least condoned by this haughty assembly.
 - b. "The spitting and buffeting were done, not by the members of the court, but by 'the men that held Jesus.' (Luke 22:63-65.) Matthew speaks indefinitely, not using the pronoun in close connection with the preceding context. He also omits the blindfolding mentioned by Luke; about his statement that they demanded, 'Prophesy unto us; who is he that smote thee,' implies the blindfolding. Had he not been blindfolded he could have seen who smote him. Here one of the sacred narratives incidentally supplements the other, and furnishes evidence for the truthfulness of both" (McGarvey, p.236).
 - c. To give a semblance of proper procedure, the Sanhedrin held another session in the morning before sending the Lord to Pilate for their sentence to be executed: "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death" (Matt. 27:1; cf. Luke 22:66-71; Mark 15:1). This was the official pronouncement of their verdict, but they did not have authority to execute anyone (John 18:31).
-

- d. "The word *prophesy* does not mean only to foretell future events, although that is the proper meaning of the word, but also to declare anything which cannot be known by natural knowledge or without revelation. Luke adds, 'And many other things blasphemously spake they against him'" (Barnes, p.296).
2. Verses 66-68: "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go."
- a. The authorities sought for false witnesses to bring some serious charge against the Lord; even in their depravity, they did not try to murder him without a semblance of legal procedure. By their seeking out false witnesses, they admitted that they were merely disposing of an enemy, not seeking justice. But they found no false witnesses *whose testimony agreed* (Mark 14:56). They were looking for some kind of testimony affirmed by two or more witnesses on some charge that would give them the right to demand the execution of Jesus.
- b. The members of this August court were to be defenders of the accused as well as judges, and under no circumstances could they originate charges against the defendant. Yet these men acted more the part of prosecuting attorneys than judges: "The chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death."
- c. The Great Sanhedrin had already hurriedly assembled in the palace of Caiaphas (Mk. 14:53). Luke 22:66 says that they had come together as soon as it was day (but this is a reference to their second gathering as in Matthew 27:1: "When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.")
- d. John reports that it was very early when this trial was over (18:28), so the trial was held in violation of the Jewish legal system since it took place before the morning sacrifice. It was held at a location unauthorized for the Sanhedrin to meet, the palace of Caiaphas. The scribes, elders, chief priests—the entire Sanhedrin was present.
- e. They demanded that Jesus plainly state whether he is the Christ. American law does not require a man to incriminate himself [Fifth Amendment]. His teachings and his supernatural works had identified him as the Messiah, but these wicked men were determined to have him slain, to remove him as an irritant and danger to their positions. Truth meant nothing to them; truth has become of very little consequence in our world today. Christ said if he gave them a plain statement, they would not believe him and would not release him from their control.
- 1) Jesus wisely refused to respond to these questions. To have answered would have been to give up his legal rights. The Hebrew legal system said a man could not be required to give evidence against himself. The High Priest demanded whether Jesus were the "Christ, the Son of the Blessed" (Mark 14:61-62).
- 2) Matthew reports his use of the word "adjure." This meant "to strongly demand an oath." The high priest understood correctly that Jesus had made claims about being the Son of God. The demand of Caiaphas made it imperative that the Lord give an answer. If he had remained silent he would be admitting to being an imposter. But to confess the truth would mean to be condemned to death. The Lord courageously confessed the truth.
- 3) What a show the high priest put on! He claimed to be utterly shocked and dismayed over the claim Jesus made, but actually he was delighted to hear the Savior say it.
- f. Compare: "But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. 26:63-66).
-

- g. Nothing was said or done about the Lord's claim; he could have fully vindicated his statement, but these men had no interest in truth; they had already been given more than ample evidence to prove that Jesus is the Christ, which they had rejected out of hand. They had known of, and probably some of them had personally seen, the miracles of Jesus. By this time in the Lord's ministry, even his avowed enemies did not deny the reality of his miracles; they simply ignored the evidence, or attributed the power behind them to the devil! They have many kinsmen in our generation!
3. Verses 69-71: "Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth."
- a. His accusers had twisted one of his statements [John 2:19-22]. "Had Jesus answered, and explained what he really meant by the speech about building the temple in three days...it would have made his cause appear no better in the eyes of his judges, and it would have given his enemies a fresh notice, which he did not wish them to have, of his intended resurrection. He wisely chose, therefore, to hold his peace" (McGarvey, *ibid.*).
- b. The Lord responded first by plainly saying, "Thou hast said" (Matt. 26:63-64). This was the Hebrew way of an affirmative reply. Mark 14:62 has Jesus stating, "I am." He further announced that the time was coming when they would see him sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.
- c. "Not content with answering the question, Jesus announces another meeting between himself and the assembled elders, in which their relative positions will be reversed; then he will be on the right hand of power, and they will be the prisoners before his bar" (*ibid.*). "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (Rev. 1:7; cf. Acts 17:30-31; Mt. 25:31ff; 2 Cor. 5:10).
- d. Matthew shows that the high priest quickly changed the charge from sedition (destroying the temple, taking over as king, uprooting the established order) to blasphemy. "Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death" (Mark 14:63-64). There was immediate, unanimous agreement that he be put to death. They were perverting justice by going against the legal principle. The Talmud provided that a "simultaneous and unanimous verdict of guilty, rendered on the day of trial, had the effect of an acquittal."
- e. They had also originated the charge of blasphemy, and had compelled the Lord to offer testimony that was self-incriminating, both of which violated the Hebrew Law of Jurisprudence. This was not a court of justice, but of injustice. "Here Caiaphas acted the hypocrite. He was glad to hear the statement of Jesus; it was the answer he was trying to extort from him; and yet he pretended to be exceedingly shocked when he heard it" (*ibid.*).
- f. "Amazingly, if Christ's claim as the divine Messiah was untrue, that verdict was altogether proper and correct [that he was worthy of death]....Without calling further witnesses, not even Christ; without waiting for an instant, let alone the legally required three days, the judge put the question to the court, and the predetermined verdict was promptly given....In all history, the Hebrews were the leaders in religious thought, and the Romans were leaders in the fields of law and government. How unspeakably tragic that humanity could so wretchedly fail that Roman justice and Hebrew religion should alike concur in sentencing the Son of God to die for testifying under oath to the truth of that sublime fact that he was actually the Son of God" (Coffman, pp.455f).
- g. "The law under which they condemned him was that recorded in Le. 24:10-16, which sentenced him that was guilty of blasphemy to death by *stoning*. The chief priests, however, were unwilling to excite a popular tumult by stoning him, and they therefore consulted to deliver him to the Romans to be crucified, *under the authority of the Roman name*, and thus to prevent any excitement among the people" (Barnes, p.295).
-

- h. This was the point when “they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”

Peter’s Three Denials

See Boles

1. The First Denial:

Luke 22:56- 57: And a certain maid seeing him—This maid appears to have been the one who let him in. (John 18:17.) Mark tells us that this maid was a servant of the high priest. (Mark 14:66.) John speaks of her as the one who kept the door of the porch; she seems to have observed Peter as he came in, and afterward, when he was seated with the servants of the high priest she recognized him; something about his appearance or manner excited her suspicion; again she thinks that she remembered seeing him with Jesus. She approached him and looked intently upon him and said: "This man was also with him." Matthew and Mark both record that she told Peter that she recognized him as one of the disciples of Jesus, while John records that she asked Peter if he were not one of the disciples of Jesus. (John 18:17.) Peter very bluntly denied and said: "Woman, I know him not." This was Peter's first denial.

2. The Second Denial:

Luke 22:58 And after a little while another saw him,—This is Peter's second denial. At this time a man identifies Peter. Matthew and Mark mention a maid who charged Peter with being one of the disciples of Jesus, while John says: "They said." At this time Peter had gone from the light to the gate or entrance. (Matt. 26:71.) It is easy to understand the harmony of all of the writers; that a maid, a man, and others of the crowd in the palace court joined in the charge almost simultaneously; this would be a natural thing at such a time. Peter's denial is emphatic: "Man, I am not." Peter denies as though he was just one of the company who had come through curiosity to learn the cause of the excitement. This denial is stronger than the first, and is a step in advance of the first denial. At the first Peter was probably surprised and possibly somewhat confused; but now he had reflected somewhat and his denial is more emphatic. Possibly the number of those who accused him prompted him to make this denial more emphatic.

3. The Third Denial:

Luke 22:59-60: And after the space of about one hour—Matthew says, "After a little while" (Matt. 26:73), so also Mark (Mark 14:70) ; Matthew and Mark both state that "they that stood by" accused Peter of being one of the disciples of Jesus; but Luke says "another confidently affirmed" that Peter was with Jesus, "for he is a Galilaean." John states that a servant who was a kinsman "of him whose ear Peter cut off" made the charge. (John 18:26.) This is the third charge made against Peter, and it was "about an hour" after the other charge; someone recognized that Peter was a Galilean; they said that his speech betrayed him. The peculiarities of the Galilean dialect are shown and example given by Peter; these help to identify Peter as one of the disciples. He could not hide his speech if he talked. This time Peter's denial was still the more emphatic. He said: "Man, I know not what thou sayest." He meant: "What are you talking about?" He claimed to be totally ignorant of the man and the matter. Peter not only denied and thus lied, but began to curse and to swear, saying: "I know not this man of whom ye speak." (Mark 14:71.) Peter solemnly invoked curses on himself, taking solemn oaths in confirmation of his previous assertions that he did not know who the prisoner was.

Luke Chapter 23

A. Luke 23:1-7: Our Lord is Brought Before Pilate;

1. Verses 1-3: “And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.”
 - a. Mark and John report that it was early in the morning when these events took place. The trials before Annas and Caiaphas had occurred previously during the night, and when daybreak came, they assembled the Sanhedrin for formal deliberations. However, they had already decided on the fate of Jesus; this present consultation was for the purpose of deciding just how they should approach Pilate to obtain his agreement to execute the Lord.
 - b. According to John 18:31, the Romans had taken away from the Jews the power of execution; that power was retained by the Roman authorities. Thus, they must convince the Roman governor Pilate that Jesus ought to be executed. "And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor" (Matt. 27:2).
 - c. The pagan Romans would not recognize their charge of blasphemy against Christ; another charge must be manufactured. When they first approached Pilate, and he inquired as to their grievance against the accused, they asserted that he did not have to trouble himself with the details: "We wouldn't have accused him and brought him before you unless he was guilty of death" (cf. John 18:29-30).
 - d. The charges they finally decided on are set forth in Luke 23:1-2: Perverting the nation, forbidding the Jews to give tribute to Rome, and claiming to be a king. They knew that Pilate would execute Jesus if they could show that he was guilty of sedition against the government of Rome. But the burden of proof was on them, and they were unable to sustain any of these charges. "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him" (Matt. 27:18).
 - 1) The Lord had shown publicly in a very powerful way that he did not oppose the Jews paying tribute Rome. “And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him” (Mark 12:13-17).
 - 2) Pilate would soon find out for himself concerning the nature of kingdom of which Jesus was to have: “Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (John 18:33-37).
 - 3) “Thou sayest it” (Luke 23:3) is an affirmative response. But as the passage from John shows, he was to be king over a spiritual kingdom; he did not represent any danger or opposition to Rome.
 - 4) From Mark's report we learn that Jesus answered, "Thou sayest" (14:3-5), a Hebrew way of expressing an affirmation; and this he followed with the question of our text which, by implication, made clear to Pilate that Jesus did not claim to be a king in any way which would

- constitute any threat to Roman power. It said, in effect, "Does this inquiry stem from personal knowledge that I have made such claims or were you prompted to this by others?" It was vitally important to the Lord's cause that it be made clear in what sense the phrase, "king of the Jews," was being used. Was it as the Romans would use it, or as the Jews did? Moreover, the question pinpointed the fact that his accusers were Jews, not Romans, the latter having no interest in the claims of Jesus. (Woods, on John, pp.385f).
- e. It appears that they had loosed him for a time and then re-bound him before taking him to Pilate; however, it might be that they tied him more securely before going to the governor. He had earlier been bound when he was arrested in the garden. McGarvey says it is more likely that he remained bound the whole time and that his bonds were made more secure before taking him to Roman court, lest his friends try to set him free during the trip. The earlier movements of those who arrested Jesus had been in the darkness.
- 1) Pilate held both civil and military authority. He was primarily required to collect taxes, and in certain cases, to rule in special legal cases. Paul was later brought before two different governors. John 18:28 describes this trial taking place in Pilate's judgment hall, located in the governor's palace. He also reports that the Jews would not enter lest they be defiled and be unable to participate in the religious festivals in progress. So Pilate would speak with them a while, enter the palace to speak with Jesus, and go back out to the Jews. Apparently he was aware of the Jewish thinking, and conceded them this point, for no mention is made of any confrontation about the arrangement.
 - 2) Pilate had been appointed by Tiberius Caesar to be governor, or procurator, of Judea about six years earlier. He served in this capacity for about ten years. "Pilate was described by King Agrippa who knew him well as a man naturally inflexible and obstinately self-willed. He frequently defied the Jewish people until the clamor against him succeeded in effecting his disgrace with the emperor Caligula. He was banished to Vienne in Gaul, where he is said to have died by his own hand" (Boles, Matthew, pp.524f).
 - 3) "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, **It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:** That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die" (John 18:28-32).
- f. God used both Judas and Pilate's natural tendencies to bring about certain aspects of his great plan. Both went down in history as weak, misguided, and evil individuals. Pilate's story is given in some detail by Josephus; see also Smith's Bible Dictionary. "A 52' pyramid stands at Vienne on the Rhone which purports to mark the place of his suicide. He was also supposed to have drowned himself in Lake Lucerne, where an adjacent mountain is called Pilatus. It is known that he was summoned to Rome to face charges; but when he arrived, Tiberius had been succeeded by Caligula, and Pilate was deposed. Eusebius affirmed that soon afterwards Pilate, 'wearied with misfortunes, killed himself'" (Coffman, pp.461f).
- g. "To understand Pilate's behavior at the trial of Jesus, one must be aware of his former dealings with the Jews and the pressures he felt from the terrifying political inquisitions perpetrated by Tiberius Caesar in his later years. Pilate had a relatively 'free hand' in ruling Judea, responsible directly to Tiberius. In Pilate was vested the power of life and death for all Roman provincials. He was both final judge and governor.
- 1) "The territory of Judea, being under the direct rule of a Roman procurator, was not allowed to execute capital punishment even on a Jewish citizen (cf. Josephus, Antiquities 1X:1:1; Jn. 18:31). Pilate was in continual conflict with the Jews. Most procurators were. The Jews would not let

them be otherwise. When Pilate first came to Palestine, he wanted to abolish all Jewish laws and customs, but found this politically impossible. He brought effigies of Caesar to Jerusalem and set them up at night.

- 2) “When the Jews heard, they came by the hundreds and camped around his palace at Caesarea imploring him to remove them. He refused, called them to his judgment seat, surrounded them with an army in ambush, and threatened to kill them. They refused and threw themselves down on the pavement baring their necks to the sword. Pilate had to retreat” (Butler, p.568).
 2. Verse 4: “Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.”
 - a. The events of John 18:33-38 having occurred while the governor was inside questioning Jesus, Pilate returned to the Jews waiting outside to report that he had decided that the accused was innocent.
 - b. He had learned that Jesus posed no threat to Roman civil authority, since his kingdom was strictly spiritual in nature. His ruling that the Lord was innocent should have ended the legal process.
 3. Verse 5: “And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.”
 - a. Pulpit Commentary: “The Roman was interested in the poor Prisoner; perhaps he grudgingly admired him. He was so different to the members of that hated nation he had been brought into such familiar contact with; utterly unselfish, noble with a strange nobility, which was quite unknown to officials and politicians of the school of Pilate; but as regards Rome and its views quite harmless.”
 - b. The accusers of our Lord were extremely filled with hatred for him, so much so that this response must have been loud and very angry. The Jews were known as being excitable and easily aroused.
 - c. They accused him of “stirring up the people.” Their intent here is to charge Jesus with sedition, just as their first charge had alleged.
 - d. Boles: “The Jews kept insisting that Pilate pass judgment on Jesus; it seems that they thought that Pilate had taken the matter too lightly; hence, they were more vigorous in repeating the charge that he perverted the nation or stirred up the people. Pilate had been convinced that Jesus had committed no crime of treason against the Roman government; he was not concerned about their being aroused over any religious teaching. In fact, Pilate did not like the Jews, and he did not care who disturbed their peace of mind so long as they remained peaceful citizens of Rome. The Jews had found that their charge against Jesus as a king did not disturb Pilate, hence they emphasized the charge that he was an insurrectionist.”
 - e. Their last statement quickly caught Pilate’s attention, the fact that he had lived in Galilee, which was under the civil control of Herod. This furnished him an easy way to avoid having to deal with Jesus. The word “Jewry” denotes the nation of the Jews.
 4. Verses 6-7: “When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.”
 - a. “Now, Pilate dreaded lest these Jews should make his clemency towards the Prisoner a ground of accusation against him at Rome. Pilate had enemies in the capital. His once powerful patron Sejanus had just fallen. His own past, too, he was well aware, would not bear examination; so, moved by his cowardly fears, he refrained from releasing Jesus in accordance with what his heart told him was just and right; and yet he could not bring himself to condemn One to whom he was drawn by an unknown feeling of reverence and respect. But hearing that Jesus was accused among other things of stirring up sedition in Galilee, he thought he would shift the responsibility of acquitting or condemning, on to the shoulders of Herod, in whose jurisdiction Galilee lay. Herod was in Jerusalem just then, because of the Passover Feast. His usual residence was Capernaum.” [Pulpit Commentary].
 - b. With no hesitation, Pilate divested himself of this dilemma by sending Jesus to Herod, who was in the city for the religious occasion. It was happy news to the governor to learn that the Lord was from Galilee. This appeared to be fortuitous.
- B. Luke 23:8-12: Our Lord is Brought before Herod.

1. Verse 8: "And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him."
 - a. Herod was especially pleased to see this Jesus, of whom he had heard and, knowing of his miracles, expected to have him perform some supernatural act. He was soon to be disappointed.
 - b. Boles: "Herod had longed to see Jesus; he had recovered from his fright that Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead. (Matt. 14:1, 2.) Herod was still selfish; he wanted to witness some miracle; he was not interested in Jesus as the Messiah or as a Savior; he was weak and sensual and cunning, but superstitious and cruel; he was revengeful. (Matt. 14:9; Luke 3:19; 9:9; 13:32.) Herod's curiosity had been excited greatly by the reports that he had heard of the miracles of Jesus; he wanted to be entertained by Jesus' working miracles; he had no further interest than to gratify his vain curiosity."
 - c. Herod did not know the purpose of real miracles, just as many of our day misunderstand it. Herod was expecting hardly more than some "magical trick." These heavenly powers were not to be used for any common, selfish purpose. These supernatural works were designed primarily to confirm the messages preached to be God's eternal truth. The same purpose was served by the miracles Christ worked.
 - 1) Mark 2:5-12: "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But **that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins**, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, **Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house**. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."
 - 2) John 20:30-31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."
 - 3) Luke 24:47-49: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - 4) Acts 1:5,8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Cf. Acts 2:1ff.
 - 5) Mark 16:15-20: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word by the signs that followed**. Amen" (ASV).
 - 6) 1 Corinthians 13:8-13: "Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, **then that which is in part shall be done away**. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see

- through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity."
- 7) Ephesians 4:8-13: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things).
 - 8) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." [Miracles were essential for the first gospel preachers].
2. Verses 9-10: "Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him."
 - a. Related verses:
 - 1) Luke 9:9: "And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him."
 - 2) Luke 13:31: "The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee."
 - b. The king demanded answers to many questions, but Jesus gave him no answer at all. Dead silence was the best reply; there may be occasions with us in which we may properly imitate the Lord's example. Cf. Proverbs 26:5: "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."
 - c. The chief priests and scribes were present, evidently following Jesus to the court of Herod, to make sure the charges against him were enforced. As they stood by during the questioning, they vehemently stated their accusations. Our word vehemently means: "showing strong feeling, forceful, passionate, or intense."
 - d. "These Jews were afraid that Herod would not render a verdict in their favor; hence they loudly and piously accused Jesus; what they lacked in facts they attempted to make up in their vehement charges. Herod and his soldiers 'mocked him, and arraying him in gorgeous apparel sent him back to Pilate.' Herod was greatly disappointed, and he is willing to let his bodyguard join with the Jews in reviling him. The Son of God stood before them, but they could see in him only an object of contempt and derision!" (Boles).
 - e. MacLaren: "Luke's canvas is all but filled by the persecutors, and gives only glimpses of the silent Sufferer. But the silence of Jesus is eloquent, and the prominence of the accusers and judges heightens the impression of His passive endurance. We have in this passage the Jewish rulers with their murderous hate; Pilate contemptuously indifferent, but perplexed and wishing to shirk responsibility; and Herod with his frivolous curiosity. They present three types of unworthy relations to Jesus Christ."
 - f. Henry: "The poorest beggar that asked a miracle for the relief of his necessity, was never denied; but this proud prince, who asked for a miracle only to gratify his curiosity, is refused. He might have seen Christ and his wondrous works in Galilee, and would not, therefore it is justly said, Now he would see them, and shall not. Herod sent Christ again to Pilate: the friendships of wicked men are often formed by union in wickedness. They agree in little, except in enmity to God, and contempt of Christ."
 3. Verse 11: "And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate."
 - a. NKJ: "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."
-

b. Gill:

- 1) "Or his soldiers, his bodyguards that attended his person, who came with him from Galilee, and were both for his security and service, and for his pomp and magnificence: set him at nought; made nothing of him; had him in no account; treated him as a silly, and contemptible creature, that could not do any thing that was reported of him; nor able to say any thing for himself; but took him to be a mere fool and idiot; and so they used him: and mocked him; as a king, and made sport and pastime with him: and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe. The Vulgate Latin renders it, 'a white robe'; a token of his innocence, though not so designed by them, but rather by way of derision, as a symbol of his simplicity and folly. The Syriac version renders it, 'scarlet'; and the Arabic and Persic versions, 'red'.
- 2) "It is very likely that it was an old worn-out robe of one of the officers, or soldiers, which they put on him; in contempt of his being a king, as the Roman soldiers afterwards did, upon the same account: and sent him again to Pilate; uncondemned, not knowing what to make of him, or the charge against him, and he might be unwilling to have any hand in his death, not having forgotten the case of John the Baptist; and therefore remits him to Pilate, to do as he thought fit with him."

c. "The ancients gave the name *purple* to any colour that had a mixture of *red* in it, and consequently these different colours might be sometimes called by the same name. The *robe* used here was the same kind worn by Roman generals and other distinguished officers of the Roman army, and also by the Roman governors. It was made so as to be placed on the shoulders, and was bound around the body so as to leave the right arm at liberty. As we cannot suppose that Pilate would array him in a new and splendid robe, we must suppose that this was one which had been worn and cast off as useless, and was now used to array the Son of God as an object of ridicule and scorn" (Barnes, p.307). This comment was made about the garment which the Roman soldiers put on the Lord when they mistreated him severely. Could this be the same one Herod's men had used?

4. Verse 12: "And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves."

- a. We are not told what had caused Pilate and Herod to have been at odds with each other. Men in such positions of authority might have many things that could set them at enmity. Whatever the cause, they were made friends now.
- b. In the ministry of Christ, bitter enemies sometimes joined forces in opposition to our Lord. We are told that the Pharisees and Herodians were partners in one operation (Mark 12:13-17). In modern times, we have often observed cases where the sectarians would band together to oppose our work of presenting the pure gospel; they knew that to the extent of our success, they would be exposed in their various errors.
- c. Pilate had shown Herod respect by sending Jesus to him for the disposition of the judicial matter. But the governor was merely trying to shift the onus of the case onto Herod.

C. Luke 23:13-26: Jesus is Convicted and Condemned.

1. Verses 12-15: "And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him."
 - a. NKJ: 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."
 - b. In a concise and straightforward statement, Pilate told the chief priests and rulers of the Jews that neither he nor Herod had found any fault in Jesus, worthy of death.

- c. His enemies had charged Jesus with fomenting insurrection against the rule of Rome. There was no evidence or proof for this accusation.
2. Verses 16-17: "I will therefore chastise him, and release him. (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast)."
 - a. Matthew 27:15: "Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would." Pilate was determined to set Jesus free, but somehow he must mollify the Jews. His next attempt to set the Lord free was in offering to chastise him and release him. This was a severe beating and Pilate thought that this punishment might satisfy them. He made the offer by first stating that neither he nor Herod had found any fault in him; he was guilty of nothing worthy of death.
 - b. "I will therefore chastise him, and release him" (Luke 23:16). "There was nothing mild about the horrible Roman flagellation. In this brutal suggestion, the moral crevasses in the character of Pilate were plainly visible. This proposal to subject a man he had just declared to be innocent to the shocking and bloody chastisement practiced in those days showed plainly enough that Pilate actually had no moral scruples against crucifixion, and that proposal was probably the first indication to the Jewish leaders that they would be able to have their way with Pilate in regard to Christ" (Coffman, Matthew, p.467).
 - c. His next plan was to release Jesus under the customary practice of a Jewish prisoner being set free during the Passover. How or by whom this practice was started is unknown. It was a means used by Rome to help keep the rebellious Jewish population appeased.
 - d. "I will therefore chastise him,... Give him some correction, as by scourging, or beating with rods: this he proposed, not because he thought him deserving of it, but in complaisance to the Jews; since it would look as if their charges were not altogether weak and groundless; and that Jesus was not entirely innocent: this would carry a show of guilt and punishment, and he hoped this might be thought sufficient, and so he should please them, and save Jesus from dying, which he much desired" (Gill).
 - e. Compare: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe ... Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, **Behold the man!**" (John 19:1-5). His appeal to their sympathy was met with more hatred for Jesus!
3. Verses 18-19: "And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison)."
 - a. There was a notable prisoner in Roman custody at that time. "Notable" means that this prisoner was distinguished. The prisoner was named Barrabas who had been convicted of sedition, robbery, insurrection, and murder:
 - 1) Matthew 27:16-17: "And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?"
 - 2) Mark 15:7: "And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection."
 - 3) Luke 23:19: "Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison."
 - 4) John 18:40: "Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber."
 - b. His plan quite naturally assumed that they would rather release Jesus than a murderer and robber. He gave them the choice. But he had not reckoned their hearts to be so callous and their hatred of Jesus so fervent. Pilate knew the real motive behind the hatred of the Jews for Christ was envy. We are not told how he knew this, but probably he had had enough experience with them to learn of their zest for prominence, and knowing of the popularity of Jesus among the people (the triumphant entry into Jerusalem would hardly have missed his attention), he could conclude that they were envious of Christ. [Matt. 27:18]. Envy can lead to hatred.

- c. That they were envious is shown in John 11:47-51: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation."
- 1) "Nothing had transpired during that morning to convince Pilate that they were moved with envy toward Jesus, except as he connected it with what he had known of their feelings before. This shows that he was familiar with the issues between the parties" (McGarvey, p. 241).
 - 2) "The word 'envy' in ancient writings implies somewhat more than it does now Fear of his power with the people, jealousy at his purity, his wisdom and miracles, a mean desire to crush a good and great man, with all the wicked, malicious feelings of a fickle multitude are ranked under the word 'envy' as used here" (Boles, p.532). "...Behold, the whole world is gone after him" (John 12:19).
4. Verses 20-21: "Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him."
- a. Mark 15:11: "But the chief priests stirred up the multitude, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them" (ASV).
 - b. Compare: "But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas" (Matt. 27:20-21).
 - c. We are not told just how the religious leaders moved and persuaded the people to call for the release of Barabbas. They likely circulated through the crowd, arguing and cajoling them to do so. Perhaps some of them were strategically placed among the people and raised a chant which the multitude joined. When one person laughs, others are moved to laugh with him even if they see nothing funny. Rabble rousers are able to manipulate a crowd to do their will. Consider the "Popular Pentecostal Perverters" of our day and their ability to "work an audience."
 - d. McGarvey:
 - 1) "The common people who had by this time assembled about Pilate's pretorium, were not of themselves so disaffected toward Jesus as to prefer Barabbas: on the contrary, Pilate made the proposal to them in the expectation that they would call for Jesus, and that he would thus get rid of the case; but 'the chief priests and elders *persuaded* the multitude,' and their persuasions prevailed.
 - 2) "They doubtless represented to the people that Jesus had been guilty of blasphemy, and that he had already been tried and convicted by the highest tribunal of their nation. This story strongly supported by the most influential men of the city, produced a sudden revolution in public sentiment, so that the multitude whose friendship for Jesus had two days' ago made the Pharisees afraid to arrest him (25:4,5), were now persuaded to cry out for his crucifixion. 'This was doubtless a part of the plan agreed upon at the counsel before they brought Jesus to Pilate. (Verse 1.)'" (pp.241f).
 - e. Pilate asked the multitude which of the two they willed to be released: Jesus or Barabbas. The chief priests had done their work well, and the multitude is about to give its unholy answer. Barabbas is their choice! This illustrates the persuasive power of false teachers (cf. 2 Tim. 4:4).
 - f. Matthew 27:25: "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children." The people foolishly cried out their glad acceptance of the responsibility. If they could only have known the significance of their statement! Their rash and foolish statement involved such suffering and hardship that none but the Lord could know and comprehend beforehand. This evil prayer was answered; thus men receive what they ask. All the subsequent sorrows that came upon Israel were then and there invoked by a multitude that included the highest official representatives of the nation.
-

- g. "Of all rash things, the rashest is a rash prayer; nor was this the first time that Israel had prayed and received the answer of so rash a petition. Their ancestors had cried in the wilderness, 'Would God we had died in the wilderness' (Num. 14:2).
- 1) "Of course, that is exactly what that generation did; they died in the wilderness. A similar thing happened when Rachel prayed, 'Give me children, or I die!' (Gen. 30:1). She died in childbirth when Benjamin was born. The petition recorded here, 'His blood be on us and our children,' was also answered in the most dramatic and overwhelming manner when, according to Josephus, 30,000 young Hebrew men were crucified upon the walls of Jerusalem by the soldiers of Titus when the city fell during the summer of A.D. 70; but the full tragedy of that tragic prayer and its tragic aftermath shall never be known until eternity.
 - 2) "Through the long centuries, the persecutions, blood-purges, and pogroms directed against Israel must surely be classed among the most astonishing social phenomena ever known; and it is not too much to say that all of them head up to a single fountain in this awful prayer" (Coffman, pp.473f). "To this could be added the case of Jephthah in Judges 11:30-40."
 - 3) Jeremiah 30:11: "For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."
- h. "To this day, also, the curse has remained. They have been a nation scattered and peeled; persecuted almost everywhere, and a hissing and a byword among men. No single nation, probably, has suffered so much; and yet they have been preserved. All classes of men, all the governments of the earth, have conspired to overwhelm them with calamity, and yet they still live as monuments of the justice of God, and as proofs, going down from age to age, that the Christian religion is true—standing demonstrations of the crime of their fathers in putting the Messiah to death, and in calling down vengeance on their heads" (Barnes, Matthew, p.306).
5. Verses 22-23: "And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed."
- a. See John 19:1-14 for other information.
 - b. Matthew 27:22-23: "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified."
 - 1) "Pilate's question was pertinent and demanded an answer; but in the response we see nothing but the unreasoning spirit of a mob; no argument; no answer to objections; no patience with opposition; no attention to entreaties; nothing but an insane clamor for the one thing desired" (McGarvey, p.242).
 - 2) The question of verse 22 is one which everyone must sooner or later, directly or indirectly, answer for himself. The reality of Jesus Christ is so manifest that we all are faced with the decision of, "What shall I do with him?"
 - c. Pilate's second question (verse 23), raised in response to the roar of the mob to crucify Jesus, was raised three times (cf. Luke 23:22). But the unthinking mob was in a frenzy beyond reason. They cried out all the more, "Let him be crucified!"
 - d. There was a similar case at Ephesus: "And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (Acts 10:33-34).
6. The events leading up to the crucifixion of our Lord: This listing may not be precise in the chronology:
- a. First there was the trial before Annas, recorded only by John (18:1:3-24); this man sent Jesus, bound, to Caiaphas.
-

- b. Jesus next faced a preliminary examination conducted by Caiaphas aided by a section of the Sanhedrin [Matt. 26: 57-68; Mark 14: 55-65].
 - c. We are told by Luke about the formal meeting of the great Sanhedrin, at about daybreak [Luke 22:66-71).
 - d. Then came the formal accusation before Pilate, which all of the accounts report.
 - e. The interview between Christ and Pilate is recorded in John 18:33-38.
 - f. Pilate's first acquittal; further charges; Christ's silence [Matt. 27: 12-14; Mark 15: 3-5; Luke 23: 4-5].
 - g. Pilate sent the case to Herod (Luke 23:6-12).
 - h. Our Lord is then sent back to Pilate, where the second acquittal is declared [Luke 23: 13-16].
 - i. Pilate then offered to release Jesus or Barabbas [Matt. 27:15-18; Mark 15:6-10].
 - j. Pilate's wife sent her husband a message warning him to have nothing to do with "this just man" [Matt. 27:19].
 - k. The Jews stirred the multitude to demand that Barabbas be released [Matt. 27:20-22; Mark 15:11-13].
 - l. The governor made further attempts to convince the Jews that Jesus should be released [Matt. 27:20-22; Mark 11-13].
 - m. Pilate washed his hands, thinking to absolve himself of any crime [Matt. 27:24].
 - n. Barabbas was released, to the cries of "Crucify him"—meaning Jesus [Matt. 27:26].
 - o. Jesus is given over to the hands of the soldiers to be crucified [Mark 15:15; Luke 23:24-25).
 - p. Pilate made still other efforts to secure the Jewish approval to release him [John 19:4-16].
 - q. After the mocking and scourging, Jesus is led away to be crucified [Matt. 27:31; Mark 15: 20].
7. Verses 24-25: "And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will."
- a. Johnson:
 - 1) "The great tragedy moves rapidly on. The chief priests, members of the Sanhedrin, and Jewish leaders, had prepared their plans well; so well that Pilate, with all his well-meant endeavors, found himself unable to frustrate them. A great crowd of their creatures surrounded his palace and met every expostulation against the injustice of murdering Jesus with hoarse remonstrances, loud cries and ferocious threats.
 - 2) "Accustomed to the inflammatory temper of the Jewish population he feared an uprising at a time when the passover had brought two or three millions of people to the city and when it would be easy to overwhelm the little Roman garrison of 600 men.
 - 3) "He feared still more the accusations against him that they proposed to despatch to Caesar, for he had already learned by their victory over him in a former collision that they were not without influence at Home. Hence, rather than sacrifice himself, he begins to yield to demands to which he is bitterly opposed and knows to be cruel and unjust. His attempt to relieve himself of responsibility by sending the prisoners to Herod had failed Verse 1: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him" (pp.276f).
 - b. Woods:
 - 1) "Pilate had heard the charges against Christ and had interviewed him about the accusations. There was nothing on which the Lord could be condemned. In order to placate and in an attempt to elicit some degree of compassion from the Jews, the governor ordered that Jesus be scourged.
 - 2) "This scourging was a horrible ordeal, often causing the death of the victim. The scourge was a whip with leather thongs, the ends fastened to lead balls or sharp spikes. The victim was usually bound to a stake naked and made to bend over thus tightening the skin which usually split open at the first blow.
 - 3) "This terrible scourging was likely the cause of our Lord's not being able to bear up under the cross (John 9:17; Matt. 27:32). Also, he had been without sleep the night before, and he had undergone an ordeal in the trials and false accusations."
-

- c. Before this sentence was passed, Pilate had our Lord scourged. But prior to this, Pilate had diligently interviewed the Lord and spoken with the Jews:
- 1) He spoke to the Jews outside the palace: John 18:28-32.
 - 2) Inside the palace, he spoke to Jesus: John 18:33-38.
 - 3) Outside the palace, Pilate again spoke to the Jews: John 18:38-40.
 - 4) Inside the palace, he spoke with Jesus again: John 19:1-3.
 - 5) Outside, he spoke with the Jews: John 19:4-8.
 - 6) Inside again, he spoke with the Lord: John 19:9-11.
 - 7) Outside, he dealt with the Jews again: John 19:12-16.
- d. Notice the other accounts about the scourging:
- 1) Matthew 27:27-31: “Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.”
 - 2) Mark 15:15-20: “And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.”
- e. These soldiers had the items at hand with which to torture and ridicule the King of Glory. They platted a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head. We do not visualize this as a gentle action. Not only was this a means of mockery but of torture. The sharp spines of the thorns would easily penetrate the skin and more than a little blood would be emitted. Mark reported that they smote him on the head with the reed—the pain would have been harsh, especially if the crown was in place.
- f. Mark also tells us that the whole band of soldiers were at hand to participate in the cruelty and mockery that followed. The life of a Roman soldier was certainly harsh and brutal; they met with all kinds of adversities in the field and in battle which would have hardened them against the gentle qualities of life. It is hard to picture them as having any compassion for our Lord. Perhaps they were competing with each other as to which forms of torture and mockery to use!
- 1) They put on him a purple robe, usually worn only by royalty. “And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate” (Luke 23:11). It might well be this same purple robe which Pilate’s men put on the Lord. One of the first things they did to Jesus was to strip off the clothing he wore.
 - 2) The soldiers of Pilate bowed before their victim, who had been dressed in a robe of royalty and crowned with a crown of thorns. Mockery can be exceedingly painful to the inner man. No one likes to be made fun of. But as the old truism declares, “Sticks and stones might break my bones, but names will never harm me!”
 - 3) They laughingly saluted him as “King of the Jews.” These men were stationed in Palestine among a population which they controlled by brute force. They hated the Jews and the Jews hated them. The prominent exception to this rule was Cornelius (Acts 10:2, 22).
 - 4) FourFold: “After the sentence of death the soldiers take Jesus back into the Pretorium, and renew the mockeries and indignities which had been interrupted that Pilate might exhibit Jesus to the people as John shows us. Moreover, the whole band, or cohort, are now gathered, where at first but a few took part. It is likely that the mock robe and crown were removed when Jesus was
-

- brought before Pilate to be sentenced, for it is highly improbable that a Roman judge would pronounce the death sentence while the prisoner was clothed in such a manner.”
- g. They smote the Lord with their hands and spat upon him. These are especially insulting to the usual victim, but doubtless Jesus was enured to their beatings and insults.
- 1) When Jesus was arrested, he stated that there was unlimited power available to defend himself, if he had so-chosen: “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 27:53).
 - 2) That great power was still as his call—but these men had no conception of who it was they were tormenting! Compare: “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...” (Luke 23:34). This brief prayer was answered only for those who would later obey the Gospel of Christ—Acts 2:36-47.
 - 3) At the last day, these same men [unless they later obeyed the gospel] are slated to hear the final pronouncement of their last fate, to be given by this same One.
 - a) Matthew 25:41: “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”
 - b) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
- h. The murderer, robber, the insurrectionist—a vile criminal—was released to continue his life; but the perfectly innocent and sinless Jesus of Nazareth was condemned to the awful death by crucifixion.
8. Verse 26: “And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.”
- a. Other accounts:
 - 1) Mark 15:21: “And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.”
 - 2) Matthew 27:31-34: “And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.”
 - 3) John 19:16-17: “Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.”
 - b. Brother Woods offers these comments on John 19:16-17:
 - 1) On the way to the place of crucifixion Jesus stumbled under the weight of his cross, his strength greatly weakened from the long hours of torture, scourging and lack of rest; and the soldiers seized a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, compelling him to take up the cross in Jesus' stead.
 - 2) Eventually, the procession arrived at the place of execution called *Golgotha*, a Hebrew word meaning, "the place of a skull." The word "Calvary" is the Latin equivalent of the Hebrew word, and from it comes our English word *Calvary*. This was beyond the city gate (Heb. 13:12), since the law of Moses forbade capital punishment within the confines of the city (1 Kings 21:13; Acts 7:58; Lev. 24:14; Num. 15:35).
 - 3) There is today a natural formation in rock on the side of a hill not far from the Garden tomb bearing great resemblance to a skull, and it is very possible that this was the site of the crucifixion. [p.401].
 - c. The Bible does not say why the soldiers leading Jesus out to the crucifixion site forced Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross. John 19:17 shows that he started out bearing his own cross, as was customary. In virtually the same location, about two thousand years earlier, Isaac had borne the wood which was to be used by Abraham in sacrificing his son of promise.
-

- d. The way to Golgotha is known by the term, "Via Doloroso" ("the sorrowful way"). It is common practice for sectarians to walk with their priest surrounding an old wooden cross up this narrow passage in ceremonial display. Other equally sincere individuals will travel the roads of our country bearing a cross. However, this entirely misses the point in the Lord's command that we take up our cross and follow him. To bear a **literal** cross is as foolish as it is sinful. Such practices bring no glory to the Almighty. We are required to bear the obligations he gave us to do (including carrying the gospel to the lost, remaining faithful, etc.), and humbly to bear the persecutions which come to us because we serve him.
- e. The Lord began the journey to Golgotha bearing his cross, but due to his weakened condition, he either could not bear up under its weight, or could not travel fast enough to suit the soldiers. The Roman soldiers, wishing to expedite the proceedings, seized a man in the crowd, Simon of Cyrene, and forced him to carry the cross after Jesus (Luke 23:26). Jesus trudged on before the procession (Matt. 27:32). "And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross" (Mark 15:21).
- f. "Cyrene was a flourishing city in the north of Africa, having in it a large Jewish population, and Simon shows by his name that he was a Jew. The Cyreneans had one or more synagogues in Jerusalem (Acts ii. 10; vi. g; xi. 20). There were many Cyreneans afterwards engaged in spreading the gospel (Acts xiii. 1), and since the sons of this man are spoken of as well known to Mark's readers it is altogether likely that Simon was one of them. This Rufus may be the one mentioned by Paul (Rom. xvi, 13). The Roman soldiers found Simon entering the city, and because he was a stranger and they needed a man just then, they impressed him after the manner mentioned on p. 245" (FourFold).

D. Luke 23:27-31: The Daughters of Jerusalem.

1. Verse 27: "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him."
 - a. There was a large number of people who followed this procession through the narrow streets of the city, through the gate, toward the crucifixion site. In the crowd, were women who bewailed and lamented the Lord. We commonly use the words bewail and lament interchangeably.
 - b. Bengel: "κόπτοντο, bewailed) either jointly under the emotion of the one common feeling, or even under the influence of peculiar affection. Κόπτεσθαι properly applies to the gestures:[256] θρηνε v refers to the lamentation, and weeping tone of voice."
2. Verse 28: "But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."
 - a. Boles: "This shows that the women were weeping for Jesus, and that they were not from Galilee, but Jerusalem. Jerusalem was soon to be destroyed and these women were to suffer untold evils themselves; Jesus in tenderness and loving-kindness foretold these sufferings. He was going to a glorious victory through death, not for himself, but for others, and they need not weep for him. They should weep for themselves and their children because their children would be involved in the destruction of Jerusalem. The sorrow which they were now experiencing was only the beginning of that which would soon come upon them."
 - b. These women were likely close behind the Lord and his cross; he turned to speak directly to them. We are told that some of these ladies were from Jerusalem; we may also assume that Mary and Martha may have been in the procession; also, those ladies who had aided him in his public ministry. Compare: "And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils" (Luke 8:2). He had followers in and around Jerusalem, so he could properly address them as women of Jerusalem.
 - c. These women were advised by the Lord to weep for themselves and their children, not for him. He implied that greater tragedies lay in the future for the nation, which would come to pass in about forty years.

3. Verses 29-31: “For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”
 - a. Jewish women in particular desired to bear children; one who was barren considered herself to be in a wretched condition. But in the case our Lord indicated by his prediction, women would be counted as blessed who had no children. Remember the counsel Jesus gave that his followers must see the signs he gave about the destruction of Jerusalem, and hastily get away to safety. The near approach of the Roman army would be one of the obvious indicators.
 - b. During this tremendous ordeal and disaster, the inhabitants of Jerusalem would pray for the hills and the mountains to fall upon them, to hide or protect them from the hardships of the occasion. “Then shall they begin to say to the mountains.—The imagery was natural in a limestone country such as Judæa, subject to earthquakes. Commonly, such catastrophes were dreaded, and men prayed against them. The time was coming when the dens and caves which usually offered a place of refuge from invading armies (Isaiah 2:19) would prove insufficient, and men would cry, as they had done of old (comp. Hosea 10:8, from which the words are quoted), to the mountains to fall on them” (Ellicott).
 - c. “For if they do these things in the green tree The green tree is the symbol of the righteous and the dry tree of the wicked. (Psalm 1:3; Ezek. 20:47.) If an innocent man should so suffer, what would be the fate of the wicked? The green tree is representative of one which bears fruit, while the dry tree represents the one that does not bear fruit, but is ready to be burned. The Jewish people were now rejecting him and leading him forth to the death of the cross; upon them would come fearful judgment. They were more guilty than those who would take no part in the crucifixion” (Boles).
- E. Luke 23:32-38: Jesus is Crucified Between two Criminals.
 1. Verse 33: “And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.”
 - a. The great company came eventually to a place known in the Hebrew language as Golgotha, which means "Place of a Skull" (John 19:17). Luke 23:33 identifies this place by the name "Calvary" which has the same meaning. Luke uses the Greek equivalent (*kranion*) for the Hebrew word "Golgotha." From the Latin equivalent our English word "Calvary" is derived. The Greek word gives our word "cranium."
 - b. We are not told why the location was so-named. It could be named this because so many crucifixions took place there; it could be because skulls were found there; or it could simply be because the place resembled a skull. It was located outside the city of Jerusalem (Heb. 13:12), and was "nigh to the city" (John 19:20).
 - c. While it was the Jewish leaders who insisted on the death of Jesus, it was the Roman governor who sentenced him to die, and it was Roman soldiers who actually executed him. These soldiers were simply doing their gruesome duty; Pilate put politics before justice and principle; the Jewish leaders put jealousy and hatred of the Lord before Truth. And each sinful person had an indirect part in his crucifixion because of our own sins (1 Cor. 15:3; Matt. 26:28; 1 John 2:2).
 - d. The traditional site is now marked by the "church of the Holy Sepulchre." But this location would be within the walls of ancient Jerusalem. Another place, located to the northwest of the city, more accurately fits the picture. It is a rocky eminence, an extension of the hill the temple was located on; it is rounded, and has large holes in the side which cause it to resemble a skull when viewed from certain angles (Coffman, pp. 478f). Ken Beard and other missionaries to Italy made a trip to Jerusalem in the early 1960s and took some color slides of this place; it truly resembles a skull. The following graphic was taken from the internet.



- e. Boles:
- 1) And there were also two others, malefactors,—"Malefactor" means evildoer; Matthew and Mark call them "robbers" (Matt. 27:38, 44; Mark 15:27); they were guilty of some crime, probably that of robbing
 - 2) We do not know when the malefactors were condemned; it seems that they had been condemned previous to the condemnation of Jesus, and were awaiting their execution. It was prophesied that Jesus should be numbered with the transgressors, but nowhere is he called a malefactor. (Isa. 53:12; Luke 22:37.) These malefactors were conducted by the soldiers to the place of execution and were compelled to bear their own cross
 - 3) The governor was accustomed to crucify criminals at the Passover; it was a suitable time, as it would impress on the multitude the importance of submitting to the Roman law. They nailed Jesus to the crossDeath did not ensue in most cases until many hours after the victim was thus affixed to the cross.
2. Verse 34: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
- a. This prayer was answered, but not immediately, not without conditions, and not for everyone involved. Only some of the guilty ones obeyed the gospel. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain....Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:23,37-38,41).
 - b. Matthew 27:35-36: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there."
 - 1) Only a sketch of the crucifixion is given of the crucifixion, an indication of its inspiration. Crucifixion was unanimously considered the most horrible form of death, even worse than
-

burning. [We are told that when a person is burned, the sensory nerves in the skin quickly are destroyed]. Aside from the physical agony, the cross denoted an awful shame: among the Gentiles, it was reserved for slaves and criminals; the Jews had a revulsion for it since the Law placed a curse on one who was hanged on a tree (Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).

- 2) Crucifixion usually began with scourging, a terrible ordeal of itself. Jesus underwent this dreaded punishment (John 19:1-5; cf Isa. 52:14). Pilate's intent in the scourging inflicted upon Jesus was an attempt to evoke sympathy in his accusers toward the Lord so that they might agree to his release (cf. Luke 23:22).
- 3) The victim was usually forced to carry his cross, and sometimes even goaded and beaten on the way. The execution site was in some public place, often along a prominent road, or on a hill where the victim could be easily seen. The victim was stripped naked, with perhaps a loin cloth being allowed.
- 4) The cross was in the usual shape we envision, or formed as a "T," or in the form of an "X." The victim was laid upon the cross and nails were driven through his hands and feet. Sometimes thongs were also used to prevent the body from slipping from the cross if the flesh should tear. The cross was erected so that the feet of the subject was only a foot or two above the ground.
- 5) A large nail was driven through each hand, and another through each foot or one nail through both feet (Psalm 22:16; Luke 24:39; John 20:24-28). A wooden rod was inserted between the legs as support for the sagging body to prevent the nails from tearing from the hands and feet.
- 6) One of the very few acts of mercy attendant to crucifixion was the practice of giving the subject a drink of medication, wine mingled with myrrh (gall), which would induce grogginess, and deaden the pain. Christ refused to accept this drink so that he might fully taste death (Mark 15:23; Matt. 27:34; Heb. 2:9). He later was offered a drink of vinegar in a sponge (John 19:28-30). This was a mixture of sour wine and water which was used by the soldiers. The hyssop stalk (reed), on which the sponge was raised to the Lord, grew from one and a half to three feet in length.
- 7) The wounds of crucifixion did not result in a great loss of blood, and were not directly fatal. The causes of death are given as follows:
 - a) The unnatural position and violent tension of the body caused great pain from even a small movement. The great agonies experienced contributed to death. The nails were driven through the hands and feet where a great number of nerves are located, thus great agony resulted.
 - b) The exposure of the many wounds and lacerations, including those from the scourging, brought on inflammation which tends to become gangrene; the pain thus increases moment by moment.
 - c) "In the distended parts of the body more blood flows through the arteries than can be carried back into the veins: hence too much blood finds it way from the aorta into the head and stomach, and the blood-vessels of the head become pressed and swollen. The general obstruction of circulation which ensues causes an internal excitement, exertion, and anxiety, more intolerable than death itself" (*Smith's Dictionary of The Bible*, p.515).
 - d) The gradually increasing and lingering agony, and unbearable thirst, and the difficulty in breathing, eventually brought about death. Depending on the constitution and condition of the subject, death might be several days in coming. McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia reports the case of a young Turkish slave named Mameluke who lasted from Friday to Sunday during his crucifixion, and he was noted for being an exceptionally rugged individual.
 - e) Woods described the process of crucifixion with these words: "As unspeakably inhuman as this mode of execution was, it stopped just short of producing merciful death and delivery from its agony and those thus executed often lingered for days on the cross unable to live, unable to die. The wretched position made every movement one of agony; the pierced hands and feet soon became inflamed and then infected, arteries were distended and blocked, fever shot upward, intolerable headaches often drove those thus being put to death into insanity. It was to such a

death that our Lord was condemned, and this by men who affected to be the guardians of the truth and the favored of Jehovah!" (*Commentary on John*, p.402).

- f) The Romans often left the body hanging on the cross until it decomposed or was devoured by birds. In the Lord's case, the Jews besought Pilate that the legs of Jesus and of the two thieves be broken so that death might be hastened. They were unconcerned about the length of suffering these men were under-going; they merely wanted their bodies to be out of sight when the Sabbath came! (John 19:31; cf. Dt. 21:23; Josh. 8:29). The breaking of the legs would hasten death, according to some scholars, because it would make it impossible for the victim to push himself upward in order to breathe. The legs were broken by a strong blow with a hammer or mallet.
 - c. The soldiers parted the Lord's garments. This was in payment for their "services." They divided the clothes into four parts (John 19:23-24), but cast lots to determine who would get the seamless coat. Each crucified person was under the control of four Roman soldiers who in turn were supervised by a centurion. Thus, it appears that there were twelve soldiers on hand, with four assigned to each of the three people being executed on this occasion, plus a centurion who was in charge of the overall operation. The soldiers divided the Lord's smaller garments among themselves in keeping with custom. The articles of clothing commonly worn were the sandals, the girdle, the outer robe, the headdress. "The tunic, or undergarment, made of linen or wool, was without seam, being wholly woven and thus not of parts sewed together, a rule the priests followed. (Woods, *Commentary on John*, p.405; Vine, pp.198f).
 - d. It was for this garment that the soldiers cast lots. Matthew informs us that the soldiers thus fulfilled the prophecy given in Psalm 22:18. "Here again Matthew states a fact needing explanation, and John incidentally furnishes the explanation needed. There appears from Matthew's account no reason why they should have cast lots in order to divide the garments; but we learn from John that the coat, which was the principal garment, was seamless, so that the goods in it could not be divided, and that it was on this the lots were cast" (McGarvey, pp.244f).
 - e. After attending to their business of nailing Jesus to the cross, and raising it and positioning it in the ground, the soldiers next sit down to watch him there. This suggests their indifference to his suffering, and indicates that they were guarding the victim lest some of his friends should remove him from the cross and nurse him back to health.
3. Verse 35: "And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God."
- a. Compare: "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" (Matt. 27:39-44).
 - b. As he suffered, those who passed by (either entering or leaving the city, or coming out from the city to view him), wagged their heads as they reviled him with certain unholy, hateful statements. To wag the head was an insulting gesture (2 Kings 19:21; Job 16:4; cf. Psalm 22:7-8). There was no sympathy for Jesus. How hard indeed must the heart be which could look upon him in this wretched condition and not feel a pang of conscience or be touched by his plight.
 - c. "It is strange how tenaciously the minds of the people clung to the old slander that Jesus threatened to destroy the temple and build it again in three days. The remark from which it sprang was made during his first visit to Jerusalem after his baptism (John 2:18-22), and yet it is now thrown in his teeth while he hangs on the cross, as though it were the most boastful speech that he had ever made"
-

- (McGarvey, p.245). Their meaning was that he made a boastful statement which he could not fulfill—a statement they grossly misunderstood.
- d. They challenged him to come down from the cross and they would then believe him. But one who has rejected the obvious miracles which he had done on many occasions would not likely be willing to accept the significance of any new miracle. There is a limit to divine patience; they had had their chance. He would offer no further miracle to convince them of the truth.
 - e. His enemies were unwilling for him to die without tormenting him further with these evil words. Little did they know that they were actually killing the Lord of Glory, a crime for which they themselves would later receive unspeakable punishment. No doubt some of his enemies later became his followers when they learned more (Acts 2:37; 6:7).
 - 1) But self-willed men being what they are, we expect that most of them continued to reject the Lord. These chief men of Israel no doubt had fears, knowing of his many miracles, that he would come down from the cross; but seeing he did not do so, they now berated him for not coming down. This appears to be bravado. Had he removed himself from the cross they would not have fulfilled their promise to believe on him.
 - 2) They felt sure that if he had been the Messiah, God would have delivered him from the cross; but seeing that he had not, they were hardened in their unbelief. They taunted him with his profession to be the Son of God, assuming that since God did not intervene to deliver him from the cross, he was not God's Son. "All of these revilings are indicative of guilty fear mingled with cruel exultation" (McGarvey, p.245).
 - 3) "The shameful behavior of the rulers of Israel in this instance has no parallel or precedent. Their blasphemous quotations from the sacred Scriptures, being then and there fulfilled before their very eyes, only emphasize the moral blackout of their nobler natures. The taunting promise that they would believe on him if he then came down from the cross was, of course, a lie....As a matter of fact, Christ did a more marvelous thing three days later by coming forth from the tomb, though they had it sealed and guarded, and yet they did not believe on him even after that" (Coffman, Matthew, p.484).
 - 4) "They knew he performed the marvelous works of God (he raised the dead, restored sight to the blind, had healed the lame, etc.) yet they refused to accept the implication (that he was the Son of God, as he claimed) of that fact" (ALC, 1973, p.162).
4. Verses 36-37: "And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself."
- a. Obviously, both of the robbers felt hard toward Jesus because he did not save himself and them from the horrible ordeal they were suffering. "If you are the Son of God, why don't you save yourself and us from this fate?" We learn from Luke 23:35-43 that one of these men later repented, and rebuking the other robber by saying that they deserved this penalty, but that Jesus was innocent of wrongdoing; and asked the Lord to remember him when he came into his kingdom.
 - b. These pagan soldiers had no respect for the Jews for they caused much trouble for the occupation army. A conquered people who were as stubborn as Israel, could not be content under the heavy heel of the Roman Empire. Rome allowed defeated nations to retain their religions and customs. Jesus, being a Jew, would easily be the victim of their ribald mockery.
 - c. Having arrived at the site, someone offered Jesus a drink of vinegar mingled with gall (Mark describes it as wine mingled with myrrh, 15:23). Gall and myrrh are words describing something very bitter; vinegar was a sour wine. The combination was a potion which had the ability to deaden the sensibilities and to alleviate some of the suffering. He declined this offer after he had tasted it and saw what it was. Perhaps, this offer was one conceived in a sympathetic heart.
 - d. This is a different drink from that which John reports. He accepted a drink in the latter case (19:28-29). This was given to him after he had been on the cross for a good while; the former apparently was offered to him when they first arrived at Golgotha, perhaps even before he was nailed to the cross.
-

- e. The pagan soldiers, taking their cue from the word of the Lord's Jewish enemies, challenged him to come down from the cross, thus to save himself.
5. Verse 38: "And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS."
- a. Compare: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19).
 - b. It was recorded in Hebrew (the language of the Jews), in Greek (the language of the educated), and in Latin (the language of the Romans). All who could read would be able to decipher the message.
 - c. The message was intended as irony. The Jewish leaders attempted to get Pilate to change its wording but were refused (John 19:21-22).
 - d. The message was truthful: Jesus is King:
 - 1) Matthew 2:2: "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."
 - 2) Luke 1:32-33: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."
 - 3) John 12:13: "Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."
 - 4) John 18:36-37: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."
 - 5) Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."
- F. Luke 23:39-49: The Two Thieves and the Death of Our Lord.
1. Verse 39: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us."
 - a. This malefactor did not believe that Jesus was the Christ, but based on his unbelief, he requested that he save himself and the two thieves—if he is the Christ. This man was doubtless in extreme pain, and was willing to grasp at any chance for relief. He was not asking for the salvation of his soul.
 - b. He railed at the Lord. This strong word is defined as to vilify, defame, revile, speak evil of, and even to blaspheme. How could such wicked words bring help?
 2. Verses 40: "But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss."
 - a. The penitent one asked the other, "Do you not fear God?" You are on the brink of dying and are about to meet God in the eternal realm! Compare: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14).
 - b. The penitent thief somehow knew that Jesus had not been guilty of any crime; he did not deserve the execution on a cross, such as these two malefactors had duly earned. Jesus had done nothing amiss.
 3. Verses 42-43: "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
-

- a. It is obvious by the Lord's reply that this man was saved: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." There can be no contradiction between Matthew's report and Luke's; it is simply that one of the robbers later repented after initially joining his fellow criminal in reproaching Jesus.
 - b. The word *Paradise* means "pleasure garden" or "pleasure park." It is a Persian word which has also been transliterated into both Greek and English. Any place of pleasure could be called *paradise*. The word is applied to heaven (Rev. 2:7) and to that place of comfort in hades called "Abraham's bosom."
 - c. Paradise is a general term like *city*; heaven is called a city, but every time the word *city* is used heaven is not meant. Paradise is used also to describe a place of comfort and pleasure, where the holy dead await the resurrection and Judgment of the last day.
 - d. Revelation 2:7: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." The tree of life is depicted as being in Heaven (Rev. 22:2, 14. Our going to Paradise depends on *our overcoming*; the Lord will not do it for us.
 - 1) Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 - 2) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 3) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - 4) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - e. Compare: "And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:3-4).
 - 1) The terms *third heaven* and *paradise* evidently are used interchangeably. *Paradise* is defined by the scholars as "pleasure park," and thus the word could properly be used in reference to the place where the spirit of Jesus resided while his body was entombed (cf. Luke 16:19ff). It properly is used to designate heaven, where God is (Rev. 2:7).
 - 2) In that place, Paul was privileged to hear words which were unlawful to repeat. Human language might not even be able to communicate the ideas expressed by the words he heard. Heaven, the home of the soul, is usually described in the Bible by negative ideas. Compare: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).
4. Verses 44-45: And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst."
- a. Returning to the story of the cross, Luke tells us that the time now was about the sixth hour, or noon in our method of identifying the time of day. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour" (Matt. 27:35).
 - b. From the sixth to the ninth hour would be from noon to three o'clock in the afternoon in our terminology. "This darkness cannot be attributed to an eclipse because of the great length of time it prevailed upon the land, and because at that time of the year, the moon was full as it always was on the first day of the Passover" (McGarvey, p.246). "Whether the darkness was over 'all the earth,' in our sense of the terms, or only over the small portion of it to which the Jews often applied these words, is uncertain. It came suddenly at noon, and passed away at three o'clock; consequently it prevailed during the three hours in which the sun has usually its greatest heat and brilliancy" (*ibid.*).
 - c. It cannot be explained by attributing it to a dense fog, mist, or dust storm, for this would have caused no consternation among the people, and would hardly have been worthy of mention by the inspired

- writers. Luke's account states that the "sun was darkened" (23:44-45). In some miraculous way, God caused the sun to cease giving its light, or did not permit its light to reach at least this part of the earth!
- d. "Appropriately, while the Sun of Righteousness was suffering humiliation and death, the literal sun refused to shine....Tertullian said, 'In the same hour, too, the light of day was withdrawn, when the sun at the very time was in his meridian blaze. Those who were not aware that this had been predicted about Christ, no doubt thought it an eclipse. You yourselves have the account of the world portent still in your archives!'
- 1) "In that quotation, Tertullian appealed to Proculus, a Roman senator; and it is certain Tertullian would not have made such an appeal to Roman records if it had not been true.
 - 2) "Pontius Pilate sent the following report to Tiberius, emperor of Rome, 'And when he had been crucified, there was darkness over the whole earth, the sun having been completely hidden, and the heaven appearing dark, so that the stars appeared, but had at the same time their brightness darkened, as I suppose your reverence is not ignorant of, because in all the world they lighted lamps from the sixth hour until evening. And the moon, being like blood, did not shine the whole night, and yet she happened to be at the full.'
 - 3) "From these two quotations, to which many others might be added, it is plain that one of the strong arguments used by early Christians in urging the truth of the gospel was their appeal, again and again, to persons in highest authority, to whom they invariably imputed the universal knowledge that such a wonder had indeed occurred.
 - 4) "This manifestation of God's power should cause the soul to tremble. Only the true God and Creator of the universe could step forth and lay his hand upon the established routine of the natural creation and bring to pass such a darkness as that which enveloped the world during three full hours of the crucifixion.
 - 5) "Why did God do it? It was a singular witness to the power and godhead of him who was crucified. It was a signal that even the most brutal and depraved could understand. The sneers and jibes of the mockers froze on their evil faces at the onset of that supernatural gloom; and as the somber hours dragged on, the awful fact must have occurred to many that, for all any of them knew, the sun would never shine again!
 - 6) "That awe-inspiring darkness was God's seal upon the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ's identity and mission upon earth. It was a sign of God's personal presence in the crucifixion. 'Thick darkness was under his feet' (Ps. 18:9)....
 - 7) "The darkness symbolized the magnitude and effect of Jesus' sufferings. It clothed the Saviour's humiliation with decent privacy. No man could have gone home that night and said, 'I saw the whole thing.' That darkness also marked the summary end of the sabbath day. Amos 8:9; Isaiah 13:10; Jeremiah 15:9 and Micah 3:6 are OT scriptures bearing on this significant truth. That was the day that the sun 'went down at noon, and the earth was darkened in a clear sky,' as Amos prophesied. That termination also extended to the dispensation of the prophets and the entire religious economy of the Jews. It was likewise a fitting symbol of God's wrath upon all who reject the world's only Redeemer" (Coffman, Matthew, pp.487-489).
 - a) Amos 8:9: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day."
 - b) Isaiah 13:10: "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
 - c) Jeremiah 15:9: "She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it was yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD."
 - d) Micah 3:6: "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them."
-

- 8) "Darkness was typical of the powers of darkness which seemed to be prevailing; it was also typical of the great sufferings of the atoning for sin and the dark hour of sin and depravity that could crucify God's beloved Son; it could also typify the darkness of sin over all the earth, which was to be dispelled by the cross of Jesus and by his resurrection from the dead, when he brought light and life by his resurrection" (Boles, p.543).
 - 9) This was significant and miraculous. It was at a time of a full moon because the Jews' lunar month started with the new moon, and the Passover was observed on the 14th (Num. 9:3). An eclipse at high noon cannot occur when the moon is full; and an eclipse cannot last three hours! (see Hamilton, p.191). This apparently fulfills Amos 8:2-9. It signified a dark day for Israel for she had been judged and found wanting, and her Law was taken away. It signified the sadness felt in heaven in the suffering of its Prince. It signified sadness to humanity for the pure One was suffering for the sinful.
- e. Notice this statement by brother Boles:
- 1) The sun's light failing:—We can only account for the physical phenomena that occurred by saying that a miracle was worked; the Son of God was dying and the physical elements were drooped in mourning of the awful occasion; after the darkening of the earth the sun and moon were obscured; during this time the veil of the temple was rent, which signified that the end of the temple service had come. This veil separated the temple into the two parts—holy and most holy.
 - 2) When this veil was rent, the distinction between the two places was destroyed, and that signified the services of the high priest and other priests were at an end. The high priest entered into the most holy place only once in the year to make an atonement for the people. (Ex. 30:10; Lev. 16:15-17; Heb. 9:7.)
 - 3) So the rending of the veil destroyed the sanctity of these two divisions of the temple. Jesus, our great high priest, entered into the most holy place to make atonement through his blood for our sins. (Heb. 9:12-14, 25, 26.)
- f. Compare: "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matt. 27:51-53).
- g. The veil was the heavy and beautiful curtain that separated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place in the Temple. "By shutting out from the most holy place all persons except the high priest, who alone was permitted to pass through it, and this only once in the year, it signified that the way into the holiest—that is, into heaven was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing. (Heb. 9:7,8). But the moment that Jesus died, thus making the way manifest, the veil was appropriately rent in twain from top to bottom, disclosing the most holy place to the priests who were at that time offering the evening incense in the holy place" (McGarvey, p.247).
- 1) "The miracle in this instance, other than its timing which is a feature of all these wonders, was that a veil untouched by human hands should have fallen into two equal pieces, in a progressive rending from top to bottom, the force which parted it coming, not from beneath as if violent hands had been laid upon it, but from above as though some unseen hand had passed down the center of it.
 - 2) "The event occurred at three o'clock in the afternoon, at a time when the priests would have been busy with the evening sacrifice, going about their tasks with lighted lamps, with a very large number of them present; and it is from this group of eyewitnesses to that remarkable wonder that we may suppose is the explanation of why such a large 'company of the priests believed' (Acts 6:7), being later converted to Christ.
 - 3) "One may only imagine the fear and awe which attended the rending of that veil, witnessed by so many priests, busy with their lanterns, apprehensive of the enveloping darkness, and eventually associating the event with the final cry of Christ as he perished on the cross" (Coffman, pp.489f).
-

-
- h. Those priests involved in the daily offerings had never had the opportunity of entering the Most Holy Place. It is unlikely that any of them had ever even seen what lay behind the veil. Thus, to them the rending of the veil must have been a truly shocking and astounding event, one that would make an even greater impression on them when they learned how this event coincided precisely with the death of Jesus, and that this same Jesus was raised up from the dead three days later. Josephus says that the Most Holy Place was empty of furniture; the ark of the covenant had disappeared centuries earlier.
- i. The rending of the veil signified several significant things:
- 1) The abrogation of the Old Covenant (Matt. 27:50-51; 2 Cor. 3:14-16; Heb. 9:7-10). It also abolished the office of the Old Testament high priest, and lesser priests.
 - 2) The mysteries of God's eternal plan, which were unrevealed until the New Testament was given, were now to be opened to man's understanding (Eph. 1-11; Rom. 16:25-26; Matt. 13:17).
 - 3) It symbolized the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator (1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Peter 2:5,9; Matt. 23:8; Rev. 1:6 (ASV)).
 - 4) Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, was about to enter heaven, and offer the atoning sacrifice for us (Heb. 9:6-17).
 - 5) The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened. Hebrews 9:8; 10:19-22.
 - 6) The veil itself represents for us death by which we leave this world and enter eternity. Its having been rent depicts the great truth that Christ, by his death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven, has won victory for us over death (Heb. 1:14-15; Isaiah 25:7-8; 1 Cor. 15:20-22, 55-57).
- j. Another astonishing sign accompanying the death of Christ is here related by Matthew in the latter part of verse 51; it shows that at his death there was an earthquake which rent the rocks. Graves of certain dead saints were opened by this earthquake, and these arose and went into Jerusalem and appeared unto many. Notice that the text says that their resurrection took place after the Lord was raised up from the dead. But the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, and the opening of the graves occurred at the instant of the Lord's death!
- k. Brother Coffman gave the following incident:
- 1) "Matthew chooses to mention the last event here because of its association with the rending of the rocks, which opened the rock-hewn sepulchers in which the saints had slept. There has been much speculation as to what became of these resurrected saints. We have no positive information, but the natural presumption is that they ascended to heaven. The fact that this very singular incident is mentioned by Matthew alone, does not detract from its credibility' (McGarvey, p.247). Whether these risen saints went on to heaven is unknown; it may be that they lived on for a period of time, and died again, with perhaps their attestations of the Lord's identity giving additional proof of his divine Sonship.
 - 2) "Why was this earthquake a miracle, seeing that earthquakes are ordinary events? First, even the most ordinary of earthquakes would in this case, due to its timing, have been strongly suggestive of the supernatural; but this was far more and utterly different from any ordinary earthquake. The peculiar violence of the quake was sufficient in the vicinity of Calvary to rend the rocks, yet the great buildings of Jerusalem, not more than a mile away, were left undisturbed. Insinuations of skeptics and even some commentators that no earthquake occurred are dissolved in the plain light of the New Testament words that 'the earth did quake' (Matt. 27:52) and that the people who witnessed it 'feared exceedingly' (v. 54).
 - 3) "There is a historical occurrence of just this type of earthquake within very recent times. Three-quarters of a mile northeast of the village of Novice, Texas, during the 1950s, a violent earthquake took place in the center of a corn field at three o'clock in the morning, while the village was asleep. My brother, David E. Coffman, was living there at the time, and I have seen the devastation
-

wrought by that earthquake in which several hundred thousand tons of rocks, some of them ten feet in thickness, were rent and cast up from the earth in a very grotesque geological disturbance covering many acres in the heart of that field. Seismometry teams from a number of universities and colleges examined it and diagnosed it as an earthquake, having a very high epicenter, with the focus only a couple of hundred feet beneath. The strange story of that little earthquake received widespread newspaper coverage throughout the United States, especially in scientific journals; and there are many pictures of it, some of which were made by this writer, and which show the corn-rows leading directly into it.

- 4) "Now this is related, not that it is thought to add anything to the Holy Scriptures, but because it dramatically refutes the allegations of some that an earthquake at Calvary would invariably and necessarily have wrecked the temple. As a matter of comparison, none of the houses in Novice was damaged by that violent little earthquake so near to it, although the shock was sufficient to rouse people from their slumbers for many miles in all directions....Any traveler to Golgotha needs only to consult his eyes to see that it happened. Alford took note of this, saying, 'To this day, Golgotha is a proof of it, where the rocks were rent on account of Christ.'
 - 5) "Note that the earthquake did not disturb the cross, that it discriminated among the graves of Calvary, opening those of the righteous but not the others; and, from these considerations, one would be hard pressed indeed to explain it as an ordinary earthquake, however timed!
 - 6) "The meaning of the earthquake does not lie solely in the opening of the grave but bears an independent testimony of its own. It was Calvary answering to Sinai. There was a great earthquake at Sinai (Ex. 19:18) when the Law was given; and that Law, so long associated with sin and death (Rom. 8:2), was being removed and replaced by the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. Appropriately, the earth itself should have borne witness to the event....Also, there was prefigured and symbolized the earth-shaking consequences of Christ's redemptive death and the gospel which would be preached and which was destined to shatter ancient empires and destroy the power of the devil himself (Heb. 2:14)" (Coffman, pp.492-494).
- l. The resurrection of the saints following the Lord's own resurrection carries with it some wonderful significance. It of course means that God knows the location of the graves of his people. It means that he is able to raise from the dead anyone he chooses; in fact, at the end of time, all that are in the grave shall come forth (John 5:28-29). So this event is a pledge and promise that all will be raised. The nature of the resurrection in the last day is shown to be a bodily resurrection. More than the spirits of these departed saints came forth.
 - m. "The opened graves had to be left open over Passover, since it would have been unlawful for anyone to have filled a grave during that holy week; it would have been unlawful even to touch one. While the graves were exposed for three days and nights, a period was provided during which the identity of the graves as belonging to 'the righteous' could have been made and verified. No record is left of the awe and wonder that doubtless accompanied the events connected with so strange and supernatural a phenomenon" (Coffman, pp.495).
5. Verse 46: "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - a. Compare: "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth" (Psa. 31:5).
 - b. Coffman: He gave up the ghost ... The loud voice just mentioned was significant. "The loud voice shows that Jesus did not die of exhaustion." [27] If death had come from exhaustion, his vocal chords would not have functioned at all. Jesus' death was conscious and voluntary, fulfilling his prophecy recorded in John 10:17,18.
 - c. John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
-

- d. We need to notice that Jesus did not go directly to the Father in Heaven at his death: “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:16-17). NKJ: 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.*’”
- 1) Regarding *touch me not*: The verb, primarily, means "to fasten to." Hence, it implies here, not a mere momentary touch, but "a clinging to." Mary thought that the old relations between her Lord and herself were to be renewed; that the old contact, by means of sight, sound, and touch, would go on as before [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft].
 - 2) The Lord affirmed that he had not yet ascended to his Father. During his three days and nights, his body was in the tomb and his spirit was in Paradise. But he had not been in heaven with the Father. His ascension to heaven did not occur for forty more days (Acts 1:1-6, 9-11).
- e. Acts 2:29-36: “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
- 1) David had spoken in the first person in writing the material just cited by the apostle. If it could be shown that David was not speaking of himself, it would be easy for them to see the only person to whom the statements could apply would be the Messiah. From thence, Peter had only to show evidence that Jesus is Christ.
 - 2) The apostle's evidence that David was not the object of his prediction was in a concrete and undeniable form. The body of the Sweet Psalmist of Israel still resided in its tomb at Jerusalem! David had died (as all would admit); his body was placed in the sepulcher; his sepulcher (and his decayed remains) was even then still known. It is said to have been the only tomb within the walls of Jerusalem (1 Kings 2:10; 2 Sam. 5:7; Neh. 3:16). His sepulcher was well-known to every citizen of Jerusalem. But the body of the Messiah was not to remain in the tomb long enough for decay to take place.
 - 3) "David's own flesh having seen corruption, as they themselves admitted, and his soul being still in hades, there was no alternative but to admit that he spoke of the Messiah. This brief argument not only refuted the supposed objection, but opened the minds of his hearers to an entirely new conception of the prophetic throne of David, and of the Messiah who was to occupy it; showing, that instead of being the ruler of an earthly kingdom, however glorious, he was to sit upon the throne of the whole universe" (McGarvey, p.36).
 - 4) The promise God gave to David is recorded in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and cited again in Psalm 132:11. It is this latter verse that Peter paraphrases. See also Psalm 89:3-4. The Lord is not referring to Solomon, the son of David, but to the Messiah who would be of the lineage of Abraham, through David and Solomon, *et al* (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:16-18; Gal. 3:8,16; Rev. 22:16).
 - 5) Peter proceeds quickly to point out that David was speaking of the resurrection of Christ. It was the soul of Christ which would not be left in hades; and it was the body of Christ that would not see corruption. “...That **HIS** [Christ's] soul was not left in hades.”
-

- f. This conclusion naturally followed in the minds of the Jews since it was clear that David was not speaking of himself. The only other person who could be thus described was the Messiah. They knew that he was to be of the lineage of David.
- 1) The miraculous demonstrations on that notable day would verify the attestations of the apostles. Furthermore, there was nothing for them to gain materially for their affirmations. All that the apostle presented meshed perfectly with the prophecies and other information furnished by the Old Testament Scriptures.
 - 2) In fact, this same Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, and has sent forth these very miraculous wonders which had brought the multitude running together, asking, "What meaneth this?" They evidently had heard the sound [as of a mighty wind], saw the tongues like as of fire which sat upon each of the apostles, and were hearing the twelve speak in languages they had not learned in the natural way. Peter called attention to the various miraculous signs then in evidence.
 - 3) "What they then saw and heard was both the proof that he who sent it down had ascended the throne of heaven, and the assurance that Peter spoke by divine authority in declaring this fact" (McGarvey, p.37).
 - 4) This serves as the concluding point: an affirmation that the foregoing truths had proved Jesus of Nazareth had been exalted by God to be both Lord and Christ. If we carefully ponder the points that Peter made, taking into consideration the miracles being wrought and the testimony offered by the apostles that Jesus had been raised up (2:32, 40), the conclusion is inevitable and undeniable!
 - 5) By this time, Peter had proclaimed the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, exaltation of Christ as King, and his involvement in the present miracles. His appeal in this verse was for them to accept the deity of Jesus (cf. Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 3:15).
 - 6) "This was the divinely reached irresistible conclusion, and it was armed with unspeakable terrors for the guilty hearers. To *know assuredly* is to believe with confidence, or more literally, to know beyond the shadow of a doubt" (ALC, 1962, p.88).
- g. After his resurrection, Christ met with the apostles on several occasions.
- 1) Following the last meeting, he ascended heavenward out of their sight: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).
 - 2) A prophetic picture of his approaching heaven's gate as he came back to his eternal home was given in the Old Testament: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory" (Ps. 24:7-10).
 - 3) Daniel 7:13-14 gave a prophetic description of what happened when he approached the Heavenly Father: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an ever-lasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
- h. Christ gave Mary a job to, "Go tell my brethren..." [John 20:17-18]. She was to tell them that the Lord was to ascend to God. She was entirely convinced that Jesus had been raised from the dead; she had seen him, she had spoken to him, he had spoken to her, and he had given her a mission. The Lord
-

- did not say that he was immediately to return to heaven. Acts 1:3 reports that he was with the apostles for another forty days: "To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, **being seen of them forty days**, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."
- i. He gave great assurance to Mary and the apostles that he was returning to his God, her God and to their God. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3).
6. Verse 47: "Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man."
- a. Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." The Lord is here called a righteous man and the Son of God.
 - 1) "From the fact that the centurion was of heathen education, and that the words Son and God are without the article in Greek, some have understood him as meaning, 'This was a son of a god.... But the expression Son of God, with both words *anarthrous*, occurs frequently in connections which show that it means the same as when the article is used. (Verse 43; Luke 1:35; John 19:7.)
 - 2) "It must be remembered also that these Roman officers, while resident in Judea, made it a part of their business to study the peculiarities of the people with whom they had to deal, and that sometimes, as in the case of Cornelius and the centurion of Capernaum (8:8-10), they became converts to the Jewish religion.
 - 3) "This man lived in Jerusalem in the midst of the excitement about Jesus; he had this very day heard him charged with blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God; and he had heard the same idea expressed concerning him since he was suspended on the cross (verse 43); and therefore he must have been stupid indeed if he did not know what was meant by the expression. It is almost certain that he knew what Jesus claimed to be, and that when he saw the miracles accompanying his death, he was convinced that the claim was just" (McGarvey, pp.247f).
 - b. The very wording of Matthew's report of the centurion's statement and why he made it, is sufficient to show that the man fully believed that Jesus was whom he claimed to be. The reasons for his affirmation are stated as being the earthquake and the other things done in his sight, including the three hours of darkness.
 - 1) The result of having seen these impressive miraculous events caused these stalwart men to fear greatly. Notice that these were not men who were easily stampeded into such a statement. They were used to violence and turmoil; they were pagans by religion and upbringing; they did not have any special attraction to the Jews or Jesus, in fact they had reason to be suspicious of the whole nation since they were subjugated to Rome and had often raised insurrections against their conquerors.
 - 2) Jesus was being crucified on the charge of being king of the Jews. But the supernatural darkness and the earthquake, coupled with the meekness and control of Jesus, moved these hardened men to make the good confession.
 - c. Many people who knew about Jesus confessed him to be greater than a mere man.
 - 1) Angels confessed him—Luke 2:10-11.
 - 2) Demons—Matthew 8:29; Mark 1:24, 34; 3:11.
 - 3) The Father—Matthew 2:15-17; 17:1-5; John 12:28.
 - 4) Simeon—Luke 2:30.
 - 5) Nicodemus—John 3:1-2.
 - 6) Anna—Luke 2:36.
 - 7) Nathaniel—John 1:49.
 - 8) John the Baptizer—John 1:29.
 - 9) Others:
 - a) Peter—Matthew 16:16.

- b) Pilate—Matthew 27:4.
 - c) Pilate's wife—Matthew 27:19.
 - d) Judas—Matthew 27:4.
7. Verses 48-49: “And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.”
- a. Pulpit Commentary: “We must remember that the condemnation of the Christ was no spontaneous deed of the multitude. Their miserable share in the act was suggested to them by their rulers. In the multitude very quickly revulsion of feeling sets in, and they often regret the past with a bitter, useless regret. The wave of sorrow which seems to have swept across those wavering, unstable hearts, which induced them to smite their breasts in idle regret, was a dim and shadowy rehearsal of the mighty sorrow and true penitence which will one day, as their prophet told them, be the blessed lot of the once-loved people when "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son” (Zechariah 12:10).”
 - b. The three thousand who were baptized in Acts two certainly did: Acts 2:36-38, 41: Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, **Men and brethren, what shall we do?** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost ... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.
 - c. Many thousands of others likewise learned the Gospel, believed, repented, and on their confession, were baptized for the remission of their sins.
- G. Luke 23:50-56: The Burial of the Body of Jesus.
- 1. Verses 50-51: “And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.”
 - a. Inspiration reports that Joseph was a good man and a righteous man. What a fine epitaph this would make. He was also anticipating the establishment of the kingdom of God.
 - b. Compare: “And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus” (John 19:38).
 - c. The body of Jesus was requested by Joseph of Arimathaea. An ordinary citizen could not have walked into Pilate’s chamber to make any request; this man was a well-known man.
 - 1) Matthew 27:57: "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple."
 - 2) Mark 15:43: "Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."
 - 3) Joseph was a rich man; a good man; just and honorable; a counsellor; he waited for the kingdom; **he had not consented to the death of Jesus**; he was a secret disciple of the Lord.
 - 4) Arimathaea was a city of the Jews (Luke 23:51), but its location is unknown. That he was a rich man is plainly affirmed in the text.
 - 5) This man went boldly (Mark 15:44) before Pilate to beg (crave) the body of Jesus for burial. The apostles had forsaken the Lord in Gethsemane and fled; Joseph had not openly revealed his faith before, but now his faith shines brilliantly!
 - 6) By his action he kept Jesus from being buried in some unknown location; it also fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9 ("With the rich in his death").
 - 2. Verses 52-53: “This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.”
-

- a. "And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight" (John 19:39). On the surface of the above passages, it might appear that Joseph alone removed the Lord's body from the cross: "And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid" (Luke 23:53).
 - 1) Nicodemus came with a hundred-pound weight of myrrh and aloes with which to use in the Lord's burial. He had approached Jesus by night (John 3:1ff), and is mentioned as defending the Lord in John 7:50-52: "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."
 - 2) This great amount of material was used in the embalming process then practiced; it was placed next to the body and wrapped with a linen cloth; possible a layer of the spices was also put under the body, on the resting place.
 - 3) The Sanhedrin had caused Jesus to be crucified; but two members of that August body were directly involved in interring the Lord's body.
 - b. "Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury" (John 19:40).
 - 1) Johnson:
 - a) The Jews did not embalm as did the Egyptians, though in the case of King Asa there seems to be a hint of it, but it was the custom to wash the body, anoint it, and then wrap it in fine linen with spices and ointments enveloped in the folds.
 - b) It is probable that the approach of the Sabbath hurried the preparation of the body, and it seems from the return of the women after the Sabbath that they did not consider the burial rites fully completed.
 - c) Comparing the four accounts we learn that the body was wrapped in fine linen clothes with spices, and laid in a new rock-hewn sepulcher in a garden near the place of crucifixion, and that the sepulcher had never before been used.
 - d) It was common in Palestine to cut vaults for the burial of the dead in the sides of the rocky cliffs and to close them with stones. It is probable that Joseph had built this for the sepulcher for himself and family. Thus is fulfilled the prediction of Isaiah (chap. 53), that though Christ "numbered with the transgressors," "he was with the rich in his death."
 - c. "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:41-42).
 - 1) Doubtless, it was providential that the crucifixion site and the burial tomb were close to each other. The tomb was in a garden, what we might call a cemetery.
 - 2) It was a **new** tomb. No one had been buried in it before the Lord. It was new in the sense that it had never been used (Greek "kainon"), not necessarily that it had only recently been hewn.
 - 3) Also, lest anyone think that the body of Jesus had come into contact with some great one's body, and raised by its power, as was the case in 2 Kings 13:21, the tomb had to be an unused one. "And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men*; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet" (2 Kings 13:21).
 3. Verses 54-56: "And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment."
 - a. "There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:42).
-

-
- b. “According to rabbinical writing a few hours before the Sabbath were called the Preparation; but afterwards the term was applied to the entire day preceding the Sabbath. The Romans left the bodies of criminals hanging upon the cross until beasts and birds of prey, or putrefaction, removed them. But the Jewish law forbade that a body should hang over night; for a dead body was accursed, and so the day following might be polluted by the curse which attached to it (Deut. XXI. 23; Josh. viii. 29; x 26; Jos., Wars iv. 5. 2) But as the Sabbath in this instance was that of the passover week, and as they were ready enough to do anything to show that Jesus was an extraordinary criminal, they asked Pilate that their law might be observed. Instead of killing the criminals, they broke their legs, which rendered recovery impossible ...” [Four Fold Gospel].
- c. We are told about certain women who learned of the location of the Lord’s tomb:
- 1) Matthew 27:57-60: “When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.”
 - 2) Mark 15:40-41: “There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.”
- d. “The spices and perfumes that they prepared would complete the proper embalming of the body; these were bought and prepared, but owing to the late hour, seemed to be laid aside until after the Sabbath. They rested on that day according to the commandment of Moses. (Ex. 12:16; 20:8-11; Deut. 5:1-15.) The teachings of Jesus served to make them careful observers of the moral law as well as the law regulating the Sabbath. Some think that the two Marys remained too long at the tomb to make purchases on Friday. (Mark 15:47.) Matthew (27:62-66) records the sealing and guarding of the tomb, the chief priests and Pharisees asking Pilate to make the sepulchre secure, and his granting their request” (Boles).
-

The Seven Statements from the Cross

A. Luke 23:34: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

1. We may be sure that God heard all the prayers offered by his holy Son. How many went unanswered? None. How many requests did he make that were turned down? Perhaps just one: "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*" (Matt. 26:39).
 - a. Hebrews 5:7: "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."
 - b. This prayer was answered but, not immediately, not without conditions, and not for everyone involved. Only some of the guilty ones obeyed the gospel. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain....Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:23,37-38,41).

B. Luke 23:43: "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

1. The attitude of the two thieves is shown in Luke 23:39-43: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
2. The statement was addressed to only one of the thieves. It *may* be that this man was a backslider since he knew somewhat about Jesus and his kingdom.
 - a. Mark 1:4-5: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."
 - b. Luke 3:7: "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"
 - c. Luke 3:21: "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened."
 - d. Luke 7:30: "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."
 - e. Acts 13:24: "When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel."
3. Whether he had or had not been baptized is of no significance to us: the law of the gospel did not take effect until Jesus had died; and prior to the effective date of a will, the testator may dispose of his blessings as he sees fit, but after his death, the conditions of the will are then imposed.
 - a. Galatians 3:15: "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto."
 - b. Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
4. Therefore, the conversion of this thief is no example for us since his pardon was given prior to the death of Christ, and we live on this side of the cross.

- a. Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
- b. Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
- c. Hebrews 10:9-10: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."

C. John 19:26-27: "Woman, behold thy son...behold thy mother."

1. It is to be expected that his mother was present. "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35).
2. The Lord demands that children honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-2), even after they are grown (cf. Mark 7:10-13). He never commanded us to do what he was unwilling to do himself.
 - a. Luke 2:51: "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart."
 - b. Acts 1:1: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." Our Lord lived up to what he taught.
3. This exchange shows the Lord's great compassion: he made arrangements for his mother's welfare. It also implies that Joseph was dead.
4. It shows his methods: he uses other people to provide for his own: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

D. Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

1. Matthew 27:46: "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
2. At about the ninth hour, the Lord cried out with a loud voice, raising the wonderful question, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Some have thought that the Lord was merely quoting from Psalm 22:1, which is a Messianic prophecy. But if so, why did he speak the line in such a loud voice? Perhaps so that those who heard him could know that he is the Messiah. But it is more likely that he was actually living out the anguish of which the statement speaks.
3. "The depth of meaning contained in this bitter outcry can never, we suppose, be fathomed by human thought, yet the word 'forsaken' directs our thought in the right channel. If a good man who has long trusted in God and delighted in his favor could suddenly realize that God had *forsaken* him, he would enter, at least partly, into the Savior's feeling. But the peculiar relation which Jesus sustained to the Father rendered this feeling more intense than human hearts can experience, and at the same time it renders most mysterious to us the forsaking itself. It is enough to know that in it lay the chief bitterness of the Savior's death" (McGarvey, p.246).
4. Isaiah 53:12 predicted that Christ would pour "out his soul unto death." The word "soul" might be used in the sense of "life"—that he gave his life for us. But in view of the statement from the cross, much more is doubtless involved.
5. Death means "separation." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2;26). When the human spirit is separated from the human body, death is the result; the physical body without the spirit is dead.
 - a. One is spiritually dead if he is separated from God. "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins....Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the

covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

- b. The second death is the eternal separation those who die in sin will experience; they are forever separated from God: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11; cf. Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8).
6. During the time our Lord hang on the cross, bearing the sins of the world, he was separated from God; God can have no communion with sin; while Christ bore our sins (though he was entirely guiltless), he had no fellowship with God.
 - a. As awful as crucifixion is, there is one thing that is worse—being separated from God!
 - b. Although Christ was utterly sinless, yet he suffered as a sinner—separated from God. But this statement is beyond human comprehension; it enters into the eternal, and has to do with such deep considerations that we are not able to fathom them. This is the only statement of the seven statements from the cross, recorded by more than one writer.
7. "The cry is the result not only of His suffering body, but also from the fact that Jesus is the sin-bearer of the world. God in his holiness could not have fellowship with sin and therefore is removed from the Son (Ex. 33:3; Josh. 7:11-12; Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2; Isa. 64:7; Hos. 5:6). The Greek verb translated in English translation '*forsaken*,' is in the aorist tense. Therefore, indicating the forsaken state had taken place in that time period in the past (the three hours of darkness), and had now reached its climax, thus the Lord's loud outcry. Paul states that Jesus, by His death had redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13). Jesus was our sin offering (II Cor. 5:21). Therefore, Jesus died in our place, that He might bring us near to God" (Laws, *The Book of Matthew*, p.685).

E. John 19:28: "I thirst."

1. Thirst is one of the natural consequences of death by crucifixion. He could have miraculously provided water for himself. He did for Israel (I Cor. 10:4); he made the world (John 1:3). But he died without divine help.
2. He died that we might never thirst.
 - a. John 4:14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."
 - b. Revelation 7:16: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat."
3. This is the only one of the seven statements in which he sought something for himself. He was offered a mixture of sour wine and water (vinegar) which the soldiers had provided for themselves: "Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:29-30).

F. John 19:30: "It is finished."

1. All that he had come to do had been done: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).
 2. The pertinent prophecies had been fulfilled; the atonement had been made; the law was fulfilled (Matt. 5:17); his sufferings were now over!
 3. This is a statement of victory.
-

Luke Chapter 24

A. Luke 24:1-12: Women Go to the Lord's Tomb.

1. Verses 1-2: “Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.”
 - a. The women of the preceding verses (23:55-56) are the subject of this report. We are told that they came to the sepulchre very early in the morning, which was the first day of the week.
 - 1) “And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun” (Mark 16:1-2).
 - 2) “The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him” (John 20:1-2).
 - b. Mary got to the tomb in the darkness, just before sunrise. The day of the crucifixion had ended [that was on Friday]; the twenty-fours of the Sabbath had passed; the dark part of the first day of the week [Sunday] was about to end as the sun would soon rise. The Jewish method of dividing the days of the week was to begin a day at sunset [6:00 P.M.], and that day would end twenty-fours later. Their days began with darkness, went through the daylight hours, and came to an end at sunset. A part of a day they counted as a full day.
 - c. The great stone with which the tomb was closed is important to the story. The Greek text describes this stone by the words *lithon megan* (Matt. 27:60) which is the source of our English word "megalith" (a huge stone). Several women knew they could not move it, thus no beaten, crucified man who had been severely wounded in the side by a spear could not do so. They wondered how they could get this stone moved: “And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?” (Mark 16:3).
 - 1) The stones used to close ancient tombs usually were set in a sloping groove, a runway, with the lowest point being in front of the tomb entrance. It would require far more strength to remove the stone than to roll it into place.
 - 2) The stone was round with the front and back being flat, like a great stone wheel. When it was moved, it was not merely pushed a little to the side so that Jesus could squeeze through, but was moved completely away from the tomb opening (John 20:1). [Matthew reports that the tomb had been hewn out of THE rock—thus it was hewn from solid rock]. The following graphic shows how the stone most likely was:



- d. Critics assert that the reports contradict since different women are named as being present at the tomb. John only names Mary Magdalene; Matthew names Mary Magdalene and the other Mary; Mark says Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (the other Mary), and Salome were there; Luke reports the presence of several: Mary Magdalene, Joanna (the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward—Luke 8:3), the mother of James (the Less; she is the other Mary of Matthew's account), and other women:
- 1) Luke 23:49: "And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things."
 - 2) Luke 23:55-56: "And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment."
 - 3) Luke 24:1: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."
 - 4) Luke 24:10: "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles."
- e. The complete story is told only when all of the accounts have been consulted; no one of these four writers claimed to have reported every detail, and no detail reported by one is contradicted by any of the others. John does not say that Mary Magdalene came alone; Matthew and Mark do not say that only those women they named were present; Luke gives a more complete picture of the identity of the women since he names more than the others, and states twice that there were others present who are not named (24:1,10). Each gospel writer provided the information needed to accomplish the end in view for his account. John names Mary Magdalene only, probably because he gives a detailed view of her encounter with the risen Lord, being the first person to see him after his resurrection: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils" (Mark 16:9).
- f. The stone had not been rolled away in order for the Lord to exit the tomb; it was removed to allow the various witness to enter and learn that the body was not there.
- g. The purpose of their coming to the sepulchre was to anoint the Lord's body (Mk. 16:1-2). Matthew merely says they came to see the sepulchre, since he had not previously said anything about them preparing spices for that purpose. Luke 23:50-56 reports that the women had watched as Joseph placed the Lord's body in the tomb, and that they returned to the city to wait out the Sabbath, and to prepare spices for the anointing process.
- 1) Mark states that they had purchased sweet spices. They would have been able to buy and prepare these spices after the sabbath had ended the evening before, and left before daylight to make their way out to the tomb as early as possible.
 - 2) The distance was likely a half-mile or more. It appears that they knew nothing about the Roman guard, or else they would have realized they would not be permitted entrance into the tomb. Also, they discussed among themselves, as they made their journey, how they would be able to move the great stone sealing the sepulchre (Mark 16:3-4).
- h. "Then she [Mary Magdalene] runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him" (John 20:2).
- 1) Johnson: "The reason that John mentions Mary Magdalene alone is shown in this statement. She was the one who ran and met Peter and himself. Her sad cry, 'They have taken the Lord away out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him,' shows that others were with her at the sepulcher. Her only explanation was that the enemies had taken away the body. While Mary had gone to seek the disciples the other women entered the sepulcher and saw an angel there" (p.295).
 - 2) Matthew 28:5-7: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which 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, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.”
- 3) “At the moment when Christ died, nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak, more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn and extinction and despair, than the Church which he founded. It numbered but a handful of weak followers. They were poor, they were ignorant, they were hopeless So feeble were they, and insignificant, that it would have looked like foolish partiality to prophesy for them the limited existence of a Galilean sect. How was it that these dull and ignorant men, with their cross of wood, triumphed over the deadly fascinations of sensual mythologies, conquered kings and their armies, and overcame the world? There is one, and one only, possible answer—the resurrection from the dead. All this vast revolution was due to the power of Christ's resurrection” [*ibid.*].
2. Verses 3-4: “And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.”
 - a. Mark 16:4-6: “And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.”
 - b. Matthew 28:2: "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Matthew names only one angel.
 - 1) The marginal rendering puts the verb in the past tense: there *had been* a great earthquake. It had occurred prior to their arrival at the tomb. It was great in its intensity, but not wide in its extent; perhaps similar to the earthquake which occurred when the Lord died (Mt. 27:51-52).
 - 2) The word "for" (Greek, *gar*) indicates that the power of the angel caused this earthquake when he descended and rolled back the great stone. Having moved the stone, he sat upon it.
 - 3) Matthew 28:3-8: “His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which 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, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.”
 - c. Matthew’s account includes information about the scattering of the Roman guard which had been sent to keep the tomb [Matt. 27:62-66; 28:11-15]: “And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men” (28:2-4).
 - d. John 20:12-13: “And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”
 - 1) Brother Woods thought that Mary was weeping because she suspected that cruel robbers had stolen the body of the Lord: She "stooped" to look because the entrance to the tomb—cut out of rock into the side of the hill—was too low to stand upright and look inside. She was weeping over what she thought was desecration of the grave by enemies of Jesus.”
 - 2) The angels asked the lady why she was weeping. She expressed her dismay that someone had taken away the body of her Lord. Her tears were genuine. She supposed that his body had been taken away by the enemy and did not know what they had done with it. Did she perceive that these two men were angels? In her highly emotional state, brought on by the powerful events of the past three days, she was not able to absorb the information that had suddenly come before her.
-

3. Verses 5-7: “And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet 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.” See Matthew 17:23.
 - a. The women were afraid by the sudden sight of the two men, who were clothed in shining garments; they bowed their faces to the earth. The messengers told these ladies not to be fearful: “And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matt. 28:5-6). This report notices only one angel—the spokesman of the two.
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) The women saw the empty tomb and "two men stood by them in dazzling apparel." They were "men," not "women"; Mark 16:5 speaks of a young man while Matt. 28:5 has "the angel." There is no contradiction here, but perfect harmony. The angel looked like a man In verse 23 "angels" are mentioned. Matthew and Mark mention one angel.
 - 2) Angelic beings often appeared to have the power to become visible and invisible at will. Matthew and Mark represent the angel as sitting, while Luke represents them standing; no contradiction here as they could at one moment be sitting and at another be standing, or they could have been sitting when the women approached and standing while talking to them.
 - 3) Frightened by the sudden appearance of the forms in shining garments, they fell upon their faces in fear and awe; the angels spoke tenderly unto them and asked: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" This was another way of saying that Jesus had risen from the dead; Jesus' body had been placed in the grave; he had been among the dead, but was now, and forevermore, among the living; those who seek him today must seek him among the living. [No other body was in his tomb].
4. Verses 8-10: “And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.”
 - a. These ladies remembered the words of the Lord, to which the angels had made reference. They went back into Jerusalem and reported what they had seen and heard to the eleven apostles and others.
 - b. We are told that this group of women included Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the Mother of James, plus others who are not named.
 - c. Mark 16:9: “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.” Several faithful women came to the tomb early on the first day of the week. This company included Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James the Less; Salome, the mother of James and John; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; and others who are not named (Matt. 28:1; Mk. 16:1-4; Luke 23:49,55-56; 24:1-3,10; 8:3; John 20:1).
 - 1) These came to further anoint the body of Jesus; they did not have time to do so following the Lord's death, and could not do so on the Sabbath (Luke 23:55-56).
 - 2) They left home while it was still dark—John 20:1. They arrived at the tomb as the sun arose on Sunday, the first day of the week: “And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun” (Mark 16:2). As they made their way toward the tomb, they wondered how they would be able to move the great stone to gain access. Clearly, they did not know about the band of soldiers guarding the tomb or the Roman seal with which the tomb had been secured (Mark 16:3).
 - 3) On their arrival, they discovered much to their dismay that the stone had been moved already. An angel had been dispatched from heaven to remove the stone; and after doing so, he sat on it, causing great fear among the soldiers (Mt. 27:1-4).
 - 4) The body of the Lord was not in the tomb! The women naturally supposed that the Lord's enemies had removed the body and hidden it elsewhere (John 20:2). Mary ran back into the city to give this report to Peter; the other women entered the tomb in Mary's absence.

- 5) In the meantime, the other women arrive and meet the angels. Peter and John ran to the garden immediately upon hearing Mary's report, with John reaching it first, but allowing Peter to enter ahead of him (John 20:3-10).
 - 6) On seeing that the tomb was indeed empty, they returned to Jerusalem. Peter left "wondering" (Luke 24:12), while John "saw and believed" (John 20:8). Mary came back to the tomb after Peter and John, and her conversation with the angel takes place (John 20:1-13).
 - 7) Mary Magdalene may have reached the tomb ahead of these other women, or on quickly perceiving that the tomb was empty, and supposing the body had been stolen, she ran to tell Peter.
5. Verses 11-12: "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass."
- a. The spices used in the burial customs of the Jews were sticky. These were placed on the body and the linen cloth was wrapped around the body, from neck to foot. "Who un-wrapped Jesus, in unhurried manner rolled up the face napkin, then painstakingly, and with the skill of an artist, re-wrapped those sticky grave cloths back into their original shape so perfectly that they appeared as if they had not been tampered with?" (Ed. Wharton, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ Historical...Or Mythological?").
 - b. What the women told the apostles appeared these men as invented tales, imaginary and untrue. These chosen apostles, who had been with Christ for about three years, had seen many miracles done by him, and had heard from his own lips certain promises about his death and resurrection, rejected the reports brought by these women. But Peter was moved to run to the tomb and peered into the empty sepulchre.
 - c. "Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead" (John 20:3-9).
- 1) John and Peter ran to the tomb; the news was so shocking that they gave great haste in seeing for themselves! John arrived first, and looked into the sepulcher. His speed is an indication that he was younger and fleeter of foot; Peter is thought to be among the older of the apostles. What met John's eyes were the linen clothes in which Jesus had been wrapped. He did not enter the tomb, perhaps out of respect for the apostle Peter.
 - 2) Coffman:
 - a) In addition to the deference to Peter, evident throughout in this passage, there was another deterrent to John's entering that tomb. "He seeth the linen cloths lying!" There is no marvel why John hesitated. Those linen cloths remained in the exact position AS IF THE LORD HAD STILL BEEN WOUND THEREIN. The impact on John was the same as if he had seen the linen cloths WALKING!
 - b) The position of those medical bandages in which the body was wrapped absolutely demanded the conclusion that Jesus had risen THROUGH THEM, even as he had risen THROUGH the tomb, leaving them undisturbed, as if he had still been in them.
 - c) The miracle of those undisturbed cloths was the clincher in John's mind, proving that Jesus had risen from the dead. John gave this evidence in his Gospel, because it was the evidence which convinced him....
 - d) They had not been ripped off; and, if any man had taken them off, it would have been impossible to have restored their position, Even the napkin, to be mentioned later, still held the position it had when Jesus' head was in it. It had not even collapsed! It should be remembered that the angel who (presumably) rolled the stone away from the grave did so, not to let the Lord out, but to let the witnesses in. He rose through the tomb exactly as he did through the bandages.
-

- d. What John saw in the tomb convinced him that Jesus had truly been raised from the dead. From this conviction the apostle never wavered. He remained a firm believer in Christ and a devoted servant to the end of his earthly life; he lived to about the end of the first century.
 - 1) No grave robber had taken away the body of Jesus. The grave clothes remained in place without having been unwound, a difficult and tedious operation, since a large amount of myrrh and aloes had been bound up with the bandages.
 - 2) “This is the climax of the whole paragraph regarding fine cloths. It resulted in John's everlasting faith that Jesus had risen from the dead. There were three elements of this convincing sign: the open grave, the absence of the body, and the undisturbed linen cloths. As for the reason why the stone was removed (supernaturally), it cannot be viewed as a means of letting the Lord out, but as a means of letting his disciples in for the purpose of beholding and being convinced of his resurrection” (Coffman).
 - 3) No search was made to locate the body of Jesus; very shortly all of the apostles were fully appraised of his resurrection. John here tells us that at the moment when they came to the sepulcher they did not adequately perceive the scriptures which declared the Lord's resurrection, ahead of time. Christ had told them several times that he would die at Jerusalem but would rise from the dead.
 - e. The women brought word to the apostles (Luke 24:9-10). These men did not believe the story at first (Luke 24:11). Luke seems to say that the report to the apostles was given by the whole group of women at the same time, but from the additional information given by John it appears more likely that Mary Magdalene brought the initial report, and the rest of the women gave another report soon afterwards. This view fits the overall facts better.
 - f. The Eyewitnesses of the Resurrected Lord.
 - 1) Mary Magdalene was the first to see the risen Lord (Mark 16:9; John 20:14-18). She was the lady from whom the Lord had cast seven demons.
 - 2) The other women saw the Lord (Matt. 28:9-10). These had been with the Lord for quite some time, assisting in his ministry (Luke 23:49,55f; 24:1ff).
 - 3) Peter saw the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:34). Certainly, this apostle would know whether it was Jesus.
 - 4) The two disciples traveling to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-32; Mark 16:12).
 - 5) The twelve, including Matthias (1 Cor. 15:5; Acts 1:21-26; Mk. 16:14; Luke 24:36-41; John 20:19-29).
 - 6) More than 500 brethren at one time (1 Cor. 15:6). At the time that Paul wrote the First Corinthian letter, the greater part of these were still alive.
 - 7) He was seen by James, then by all of the apostles (1 Cor. 15:7).
 - 8) Lastly, he was seen by Saul of Tarsus, hardly an impartial witness since he had dedicated his life to opposing the cause of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:8; Acts 9:1ff; 26:9ff).
- B. Luke 24:13-24: Two Men Going to Emmaus Meet the Lord.
1. Verses 13-14: “And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened.”
 - a. NKJ: “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.”
 - b. Johnson: Their skepticism affords just ground for our belief. Their testimony is the testimony of incredulous and scrutinizing witnesses. They seemed to have forgotten that he said he would rise again. It was while they were discussing the story of the two disciples who had seen him at Emmaus that the Lord appeared in their midst of the apostles and “upbraided their unbelief” (Luke 24:36).
 - c. “Luke recounted in detail how these two returned to Jerusalem and reported to the eleven as they were gathered together; and, although Luke did not mention the fact of the eleven's unbelief of their report, he did relate how Christ suddenly appeared in the midst of them for the express purpose of causing them to believe. Thus, the sacred records sustain and corroborate each other (Luke 24:33-35). Neither
-

believed they them ... From the Lucan account, it is clear that the ‘eleven’ were the ones who did not at first believe. In the verses following this, one of the most fantastic exhibitions of the use of pronouns to be found anywhere in all literature is in evidence; and the pronouns are the key to the next passage” [Coffman].

- d. While Mark says that Jesus “appeared in another form” to these two disciples, Luke accounts for their not recognizing him by the fact that “their eyes were holden that they should not know him.” (Luke xxiv. 16.) The statements are not inconsistent; they only show, when taken in connection, that Jesus appeared in another form by holding in some way, their eyes, so that he would appear to be a different person. Mark’s account implies that they eventually saw through his disguise, without stating how. [McGarvey].
 - e. We are told in verse eighteen that one of these disciples was Cleopas.
2. Verses 15-16: “And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.”
 - a. These two were discussing and reasoning about what had recently taken place. As they continued their journey, Jesus came close and joined them.
 - b. In some way, our Lord hid his identity from these two. ““While they were thus discussing the matter. ‘Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.’ They did not know Jesus; he had joined the two as they journeyed along, but they had not recognized him. Mary Magdalene did not recognize him, neither did the disciples on the Sea of Galilee at first. The reason the two disciples here did not recognize him was partly because he appeared in another form from that which they were accustomed to. (Mark 16:12.) Another reason they did not recognize Jesus was that “their eyes were holden that they should not know him.” [Boles].
 3. Verses 17-18: “And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”
 - a. NKJ: 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?"
 - b. Jesus asked what they were talking about, as they walked, describing them as sad. They had a mournful appearance. We can often tell by another’s countenance if he is happy or sad.
 4. Verses 19-20: “And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.”
 - a. Our Lord inquired more specifically about those things that troubled them. “What things?” He could know the subject of their conversation by his divine powers, but he asked to lead them into a fuller discussion.
 - b. They quickly sketched the events of the past few days. The subject was about Jesus of Nazareth, who had been perceived as a prophet—his powerful words and deeds had established him as a prophet. God was behind his work, and the people generally accepted him as a prophet.
 - c. They mentioned the evil work of the chief priests and other rulers who had delivered him to death [to the Roman authorities], and that he had been crucified.
 5. Verses 21-24: “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.”
 - a. NKJ: 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."

- b. The certain ones who went to the tomb, were Peter and John. These apostles did not then see the Lord, but they were all astonished by the reports that had been brought. The women had seen a "vision" of angels; the body was missing; and this was the third day since his death.

C. Luke 23:25-35: Our Lord Speaks to These Two Men.

1. Verses 25-26: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"
 - a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. During his work, our Lord had revealed many things to his disciples, and especially to the twelve. With what he had taught for years, there should have been more understanding on their part. Describing these two men as foolish, because they were so slow to comprehend what the prophets of old had revealed.
 - c. He asked them this rhetorical question: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these thing and to enter into His glory?"
 - d. Ellicott: "The word for 'fools' (more literally, silly, senseless) is not that which is used in Matthew 5:22; Matthew 23:17, but one belonging to a somewhat higher style of language. It is used by Paul of the 'foolish Galatians' (Galatians 3:1), and elsewhere, and by no other New Testament writer. The word of reproof sounds strong, but we must remember that our Lord had already given hints as to the true interpretation of Messianic prophecies (Luke 9:22; Luke 9:44; Mark 14:21), which might have led thoughtful men to see that they pointed to suffering and death, as well as to sovereignty and triumph."
 - 1) Luke 9:22: "...The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."
 - 2) Luke 9:44: "Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men."
 - 3) Mark 14:21: "The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born."
 - e. It was essential for Christ to endure the hatred of sinful men, to be arrested and tried, hear many false charges alleged against him, and be harshly scourged and crucified. This was the eternal plan God had established from before the great creation.
 - f. Those of us who teach the gospel to many people, publicly and privately, are often moved to wonder why some of these have so much difficulty in grasping the gospel plan of salvation, and many other simple truths of the Bible.
2. Verse 27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."
 - a. "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (ASV).
 - b. His exposition of the Old Testament passages would have been in survey or summary form, for the trip he was making with them was not far. Which sections did he discuss? We are not told, but perhaps these passages were included: Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Genesis 22; Zachariah 11-12. Also:
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will

- bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”
- c. Christ believed in predictive prophecy. He gave these two men a presentation which including things which Moses had been guided to record, as well as those things which the Old Testament prophets had written.
 - d. Barnes:
 - 1) Probably He showed them that their notions of the Messiah were not according to the Scriptures. "They" expected a temporal prince; they were perplexed because Jesus had not assumed the regal power, but had been put to death. He showed them that according to the prophecies he ought to suffer, and that his "death," therefore, was no argument that he was not the Messiah.
 - 2) In all the scriptures - In all the "writings" of the Old Testament. They were called "scriptures" because they were "written," the art of printing being then unknown.
 - 3) The things concerning himself - Concerning the Messiah He showed what the Scriptures foretold, and "they" saw that these things applied to Jesus of Nazareth, and began to be satisfied that he was the Messiah. The most striking passages foretelling the character and sufferings of Christ are the following, which we may suppose it possible our Saviour dwelt upon to convince them that, though he was crucified, yet he was the Christ: Genesis 3:15; Deuteronomy 18:15; Genesis 49:10; Numbers 21:8-9; Isaiah 53:1-12; Daniel 9:25-27; Isaiah 9:6-7; Psalm 110:1-7; Psalm 16:1-11; 22; Malachi 4:2-6.
3. Verses 28-29: “And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.”
- a. Cleopas and his traveling companion were en route to Emmaus, a village the location of which has not been authenticated.
 - b. The risen Lord, whose identity had not yet been perceived by the two man, indicated that he was going on past this place. They invited him to spend the night with them.
 - c. In whose house did they stay? Was it owned by one of them or by a relative? This unimportant fact is not included by the inspired Luke.
 - d. Boles: “They ‘constrained’ or compelled with courteous words, him to sojourn with them. By their gentle pressure of hospitality, they urged him to abide there, giving the reason that the day was far spent and that evening was very near. They were grateful to him for teaching them of the Messiah, and had learned from a stranger, as they thought, much about the prophets; they were ready to show hospitality to him as a token of their gratitude toward him.”
4. Verses 30-31: “And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.”
- a. As they sat down for a meal, he took bread, expressed gratitude for it, broke and gave it to them. We are not told whether anyone else was present. The food had been prepared by someone.
 - b. Ellicott: “As part of the narrative, the words have the interest of bringing before us the eager desire of the disciples to know more of the wisdom which they had been drinking in from the lips of the unknown Teacher. They could not bring themselves to part with one who had done so much for them. Devout imagination has, however, legitimately read other meanings in it. ‘Abide with me’ has become the burden of the most popular of evening hymns, the true prayer for the evening of each day...”
 - c. “They reclined on couches and did not sit at the table as is our custom. While he was in the act of distributing to them, in an instant, their eyes ‘were opened’ and they immediately recognized their Lord. ‘Their eyes were opened’ is put in contrast with ‘their eyes were holden that they should not know him.’ (Verse 16.) If their eyes were ‘holden’ through some miraculous power, ‘their eyes were opened’ by the same power; whatever had kept them from recognizing him all along had now been removed and they ‘knew him.’ It seems that so soon as they recognized him ‘he vanished out of their sight’” (Boles).
-

- d. The other things they would need to learn, would be made available to them more fully later on, and after the events of the Pentecost Day of Acts two.
5. Verse 32: “And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”
 - a. Try to imagine the sudden shock of learning who this unnamed teacher was! They knew this was a very special person even as he talked to them. Their heart burned within them.
 - b. The words he used in offering thanks for the meal may have stirred some vague memory in them. They knew that this teacher possessed a rare knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. When he suddenly disappeared, and their perception returned, as he vanished from their presence.
 6. Verses 33-35: “And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.”
 - a. We remember that Emmaus was about seven miles from Jerusalem. How long would it take a normal man to walk that distance? From the Internet: “A healthy person without diabetes, heart disease, or orthopedic problems can probably walk 5 to 7 miles (9 to 11 kilometers). This is about two hours of walking at a steady pace. An average person, who is walking in their free time rather than at work, walks at a pace of just over 3 miles per hour. By simple math, you might conclude that the average person, walking at a comfortable pace, might walk as many as 25 miles in a day.”
 - b. As soon as the Lord left, they got up at the same hour and returned to Jerusalem, about another two hours of walking.
 - c. They found the eleven apostles in a certain place, likely the upper room where they spent much time during that period. There were others there. The apostles related to these two men that the Lord had certainly arisen from the dead and had appeared to Simon. These two men gave their report of having walked and talked with the Lord. As they ate the bread, they learned who he was.
- D. Luke 23:36-49: “The Lord Appears to the Apostles.
1. Verses 36-37: “And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.”
 - a. NKJ: 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.
 - b. As suddenly as he had vanished from the two men at Emmaus, just as suddenly he here appeared in the upper room. “First, they were simply terrified, as any mortal would have been under the circumstances; but very soon this gave way to joy, which was also mentioned by Luke in Luke 24:41” (Coffman).
 - c. “But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. See under preceding verse. It was incumbent upon Jesus to win over the apostles to a complete and unflinching faith in his resurrection; and so, in these verses, one beholds the Son of God actually laying the keel, in a figure, of that ship of the church which would sail the seas of all subsequent generations. After the interview reported in this paragraph and the Johannine parallel, there was never any wavering at all on the part of the apostles forever afterward” (*ibid.*).
 - d. John 20:19-20: “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.”
 - 1) “The religion of our Lord is a reasonable one; it never requires one to be credulous; and thus the Saviour supplied these disciples with physical evidence of his identity. He showed them his hands with the nail prints in them and his side into which the soldier had thrust his spear. In so doing, he convinced them that he was not a ghost or apparition and that their eyes were not deceiving them; and additionally, he provided evidence that he was the same one they loved and with whom they had been associated for over three years. Thus at once he gave them proof both of his *reality* and

resurrection. Fear and doubt, formerly possessing them yielded to faith and assurance, and they believed” (Woods, p.427).

- 2) They were filled with gladness at these events. Coffman observes:
 - a) “This appearance before twelve men (including the two from Emmaus) was authentic and convincing; and they who saw it never wavered or doubted afterward. It was even repeated a week later when Thomas had rejoined them; and this double epiphany to the Twelve constituted the very foundation of Christian evidence. This was the sacred fountain that supplied the evangelistic zeal of the apostles. The certainties established in these scenes enabled them to stand before the whole world shouting the message of redemption in Christ.
 - b) “The conviction made final and permanent by these events sustained them in the fires of persecution and death. The Galilean had triumphed! If the facts here related did not occur, then what did happen? Skepticism has no answer. For nearly two millenia the wisest and best have received this narrative as sacred Gospel. The record here is the truth, and it shall stand forever.”
- e. The apostle John next reports the appearance of Jesus to the band of the apostles, except for Thomas, who was not present. They were eating a meal, and were discussing the startling news about the Lord’s resurrection
- f. Luke tells us that he ate a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb: “But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them” (Luke 24:37-43).
2. Verses 38-39: “And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”
 - a. Luke 24:38-39: “And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and wherefore do questionings arise in your heart? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having.”
 - b. 1 John 1:1-3: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
 - 1) John and the other apostles had been eyewitnesses of Christ—they knew his reality; they had heard him, seen him, beheld him, and handled him.
 - 2) “Each of the verbs *heard*, *seen*, *beheld*, and *handled*, in rising gradation, sharpens the concept and vivifies the thought intended by the writer. The lowest in the scale which he presents is hearing. There is no personal contact in hearing; it may be done from a distance, without design or purpose, indeed, unwillingly. Seeing is likewise involuntary, though the eyes may be averted from that which we do not desire *to* see. The word ‘beheld,’ however, indicates conscious and willful participation; it denotes more than mere seeing (*etheasametha*), from which it is translated, suggests a steady and penetrating gaze designed to hold the object in view until all its characteristics are noted. Also inherent in the meaning of the word is the idea of contemplating with pleasure, looking with delight, finding satisfaction in the object thus contemplated. The verb *handled* suggests the most tangible, intimate, and definite evidence which John offered. In it there was physical contact. Thus three senses—hearing, seeing, and touching—were utilized by the apostle to obtain evidence of the reality of the Word of life about which he testifies here” (Woods, Epistles of John, p.211).

- 3) The Gnostics held a perverted view of Christ— some denied his humanity and others rejected his deity; they perceived the Lord as being some kind of apparition—he only appeared to be real. John’s affirmation here gives first-hand evidence that the Lord was real, as to his humanity and his divinity.
- c. John 20:24-28: “But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.”
3. Verses 40-41: “And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?”
 - a. NKJ: 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?"
 - b. Boles:
 - 1) “They were perplexed and hesitated to believe that he had risen, and yet they were unable to deny the testimony of others and the evidence of their own senses; they were slow to accept the truth of his resurrection, and could not deny it. Hence, the Lord rebukes them for the doubts and hesitations which arose in their hearts. They were doubting or hesitating about a matter which their spiritual perception ought to have recognized at once. Jesus helps them to make up their mind on the question; when once convinced, they can then preach with the highest degree of certainty his resurrection.
 - 2) “The risen Lord made them look at his pierced hands and feet, and handle his flesh, using the senses both of sight and feeling; they could hear his voice and recognize him from his speech; hence three of their physical senses were called into action to convince them. Surely a look at his hands and feet would be sufficient to convince them; but to clear the matter he tells them that he is not just a spirit, for ‘a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having.’ There was reality present that they could not deny, neither was it possessed by a ghost or a spirit.
 - 3) “Jesus not only demanded that they look at his hands and feet, but he showed them his hands and his feet pierced with the cruel nails. They used the sense of sight and then they were called upon to ‘handle’ him and thus use the sense of touch; they had used the sense of hearing; they knew his voice. The risen Lord thus offered his scarred and mangled hands and feet for particular examining to convince them that he was alive.”
 - c. The very body of Jesus, which they had seen hanging on the cross, the body which they knew very well, having been with him through his work on earth; they had heard his voice, had talked with him often, and could recognize the sound of his voice. Now they were seeing the hands and feet which had been nailed to the cross, and the wound in his side was still visible (from the thrust of a spear wielded by the Roman soldier). They were invited to examine these wounds.
4. Verses 42:43: “And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.”
 - a. Our risen Lord was now to show them that even in this crucified body he could still consume food. A spirit being has no fleshly body and has no appetite for food. Jesus ate a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb.
 - b. All of these things convinced them for all time that this Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, indeed had risen from the dead! He would never suffer death again! He was alive forevermore.
5. Verses 44-45: “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in

the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”

- a. “Then opened he their mind,—Jesus taught his disciples that all that was written of him in the Old Testament was fulfilled; he took the different passages that referred to him and showed how they were fulfilled in him; in this way he ‘opened ‘their mind,’ so that they could understand. Some think that he gave them unusual power to perceive the truth of the ‘scriptures’; however, it is not necessary to infer that they needed any divine aid to understand his language. They could easily recall the bitter experience through which they had gone in the arrest, trials, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus; his resurrection was so fresh in their minds that they could now see the meaning of the Old Testament passages. They had been slow and dull in understanding these truths, but now their minds were clear on these things. The Holy Spirit afterward brought these teachings to their remembrance. The doctrine of the Old Testament scriptures with regard to the suffering, dying, rising of the Messiah, they now understood” (Boles).
- b. John 14:25-26: “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”
 - 1) Through John 14-16, the Lord prepares the apostles for his leaving the earth and returning to his Father. The fact that he was to depart from them raised grave concerns in their hearts. He consoled them; he also revealed what would be done for them when the Comforter was sent to them.
 - 2) There were many other thing they needed to learn, but that mass of truth would be beyond their full grasp: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John 16:12).
 - 3) The Holy Spirit would reveal these things when he began his work with the apostles of Christ beginning on the Pentecost Day of Acts chapter two. “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come” (John 16:13).
 - 4) The revelation would be given to them as certain new information was needed. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away” (1 Cor. 13:9-10).
 - a) The New Testament was revealed part by part as the need arose and as they were able to grasp and use the new information, until finally the New Covenant had been completely revealed and recorded. It was only after the entirety of the New Testament had been revealed that anyone had unlimited access to the will of Christ.
 - b) That which is perfect is placed in contrast with that which is in part. When we determine what is meant by "that which is in part" we shall have learned the meaning of "that which is perfect." See James 1:25.
- c. Acts 8:30-35: “And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.” Philip opened the mind of the eunuch by showing him the fulfillment of that prophecy in Isaiah 53.
- d. Acts 17:2-4: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and

- consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." Paul opened the minds of the Thessalonians by reasoning them from the scriptures.
6. Verses 46-48: "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved 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 among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."
 - a. NKJ: 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. 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."
 - b. The death of Christ was mandated by the eternal plan God formulated before the beginning of time. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). Christ, the Lamb, is said to have been slain "from the foundation of the world." His death on the cross was planned and intended from eternity (Isa. 53).
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) Luke 22:22: "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!"
 - 3) Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."
 - 4) Acts 4:28: "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."
 - 5) Ephesians 3:11: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - c. As the death of Christ was preplanned, so was his resurrection from the dead. After his death, when his body was placed in the tomb and his spirit was in the Paradise of the Hadean Realm, it was not possible that his spirit could be there retained!
 - 1) Acts 2:22-24: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (ASV).
 - 2) Matthew 16:18-19: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (ASV).
 - a) The most logical, consistent view is that the Lord is promising that nothing, not even the hadean realm into which he would enter at death, would preclude his building the church.
 - b) The subject being discussed in the verse is the establishment of the church. As brother Hearn noted [in his class notes], the church has indeed been prevailed against in that it disappeared from historical view during the long years of the Dark Ages.
 - d. Another mandate of God's eternal plan, was that repentance should be preached, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Sin is the violation of the will of the Almighty. Adam and Eve were told not to eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 2:16-17). Their violation of this demand would surely bring death to them. When they disobeyed, separation from God instantly ensued [they died spiritually]. From that point in their lives, they began the slow march toward physical death.
 - 1) God's remedy of sin has always required repentance. "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye" (Ezek. 18:31-32).

- 2) Christ illustrated repentance in Matthew 21:28-29: "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went." He decided to change his mind and do what his father had told him.
 - 3) Paul defined repentance in 2 Corinthians 7:9-10: "I now rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye were made sorry unto repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly sort, that ye might suffer loss by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (ASV). Godly sorrow leads to a changed mind which results in a changed life. Repentance is the decision to make the change.
 - e. Repentance was preached in the early chapter of the New Testament. At the close of Malachi, there followed four hundred years during which there was no prophet. Israel was in a state of rebellion; their spiritual condition at the opening of the great work of John the Baptist, followed by the mission of the Son of God, was that of apostasy. The general population was thus, even through there were notable cases of holiness and righteousness. Repentance was the prominent need for the Israelites.
 - 1) Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 2) Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 3) Repentance is specifically named in the account of the Great Commission as found in Luke, our present text.
 - 4) Faith and baptism are not named in Great Commission in Luke. Repentance is separated from these in order to emphasize its vital importance.
 - 5) Repentance is a highly important part of the plan of salvation; it is also imperative in Christian living. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 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. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:7-10). This passage is addressed to Christians, not to alien sinners.
 - 6) Luke's book was mainly directed to the Gentiles; they were steeped in sin and needed a complete change in their attitudes, beliefs and practices. Paganism permeated their society and their religion was that of idolatry, with all the perversities it included; a large number of religious prostitutes served at the temple of Diana in Ephesus.
 - 7) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 8) Acts 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."
 - 9) Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
 - f. The apostles were commanded to preach repentance to all nations, to both Jews and Gentiles.
 - 1) Remission of sins was to be preached.
 - 2) Remission of sins was to be preached in the name of Christ.
 - 3) Remission of sins was to be preached first in Jerusalem.
 - 4) Remission of sins was to be preached to all nations.
 - 5) The apostles preached what Christ here commanded them to preach, or else they disobeyed him.
 - 6) They were faithful in doing their work: Romans 10:13-18; Acts 2.
 - g. The apostles were witnesses.
-

- 1) These men were to be the Lord's witnesses. "Him [Christ] God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:40-41). It was the apostles who gave witness in Acts 4:33. The thing they were to bear witness to was the resurrection of Christ. There is no such thing as a substitute witness; we either saw the thing we are to testify about or we did not see it.
 - 2) Christianity is based on truth, not supposition; it is founded on verified realities, not subjectivity. God selected good witnesses to testify to the world that Jesus was indeed raised from the dead. They devoted their lives, and even forfeited them, in proclamation of this truth.
 - 3) Their work was to be done first in Jerusalem, which they did with great results. It was sensible to begin here where the first great enemy of the gospel was entrenched. Then they were to extend their labors to Judea, Samaria, and to the most distant lands where men dwelled. Acts 1:8.
 - 4) John 15:26-27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
7. Verse 49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
- a. Acts 1:5, 8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - b. Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - c. This was spoken only to the apostles (see 24:36; Mark 16:14). They were to be **endued** with power. The word translated "endued" means "to be clothed with" (Vine, p.29). It is used as a figure of speech to describe their reception of the power indicated.
 - d. They would be clothed with **power**. Power means "might or authority." They would receive this might and authority which would enable and authorize them to do certain prescribed things, including those things of Matthew 18:18 and John 20:23.
 - 1) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) John 20:23: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."
 - e. This clothing with power would originate **from on high** (heaven). This would be the source of this might and authority; it would not be from any earthly source.
 - f. They were to **tarry in Jerusalem** until they received this power from heaven. They were to remain in the city, awaiting the coming of this heaven-sent power. This detail of the promise shows that it was intended only for those personally addressed, for it was only they who could wait in Jerusalem; we cannot.
 - g. Being clothed with power from on high and being baptized with the Holy Spirit are different descriptions of the same thing. The word baptize means literally to dip, plunge, immerse; and metaphorically, to overwhelm. It is used in this later sense when the baptism of the Holy Spirit is being discussed. "It was not the manner of the Holy Spirit's descent from heaven that constituted the baptism of the Spirit, but their being *filled*, or *overwhelmed*, or *endued*, or *clothed*—it was the result, not the manner of descent, that defines the Holy Spirit baptism, which the apostles only received" (Foy Wallace, *The Gospel For Today*, p.697).
-

E. Luke 24:50-53: The Ascension of Our Lord.

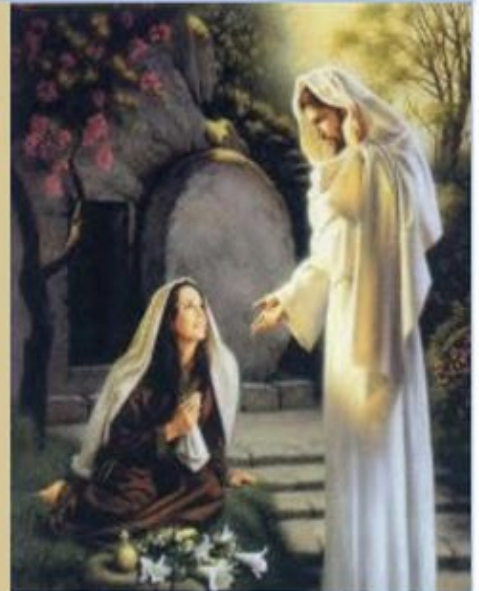
1. Verse 50: “And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.” “ And he led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them” (ASV).
 - a. NKJ: “And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed 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” (Luke 24:50-53).
 - b. The Lord led the eleven apostles out of Jerusalem toward Bethany, which was about two miles east of the city. We are told that he lifted up his hands and blessed them. He expressed gratitude to the Father for the apostles. It was near that village where the ascension took place.
 - c. 1 Timothy 2:8: “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”...Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” The bodily position is not being bound here for the Bible gives examples of prayers being offered where the hands were not lifted up: “And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). Lifting up the hands during prayer was a Jewish custom. Prayers are to be free from anger and doubting (disputing—ASV).
 - d. Barnes: “To lift up the hands denotes supplication, as it was a common attitude of prayer to spread abroad the hands toward heaven; compare Ps 68:31; Exo. 19:29,33; 1 Kings 8:22; 2 Chr. 6:12-13; Isa. 1:15 ; see also Horace Odes, iii. 23. 1; Ovid, M. 9:701; Livy, v. 21; Seneca, Eph 2:1. ‘Holy hands’ here, mean hands that are not defiled by sin, and that have not been employed for any purpose of iniquity. The idea is, that when men approach God they should do it in a pure and holy manner.
 - e. At the Ascension site, our Lord lifted up his hands, perhaps in prayer, for the apostles and their great work. The eternal plan of God depended on the fidelity of these good men.
 2. Verse 51: “And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”
 - a. As he ended these instructions, even as they watched, he began to ascend up into the sky until a cloud received him out of their sight. (Again, notice the pronouns). "Note how artlessly simple is the account of the ascension. Nowhere does an inspired writer make an attempt to describe the most sacred scenes in the life of Christ. They are stated as facts to be expected of such a person as Jesus. The natural bent of the mind is to explain the mysterious and describe the difficult. No New Testament writer tries this anywhere. All content themselves with a plain, straightforward statement of what actually happened. It is not in human nature to write thus. The very method of recording miracles by these writers is strongly suggestive of their Spirit guidance" (Walker, p.11).
 - b. Luke 24:51 and Mark 16:19 also give brief statements about the ascension. Matthew and John, both of whom were apostles and witnessed the ascension personally, do not give direct reports of it. Their silence on this matter has caused some critics to question the ascension, since the direct accounts of it were given by men who did not see it. The answer is to be found, in part, by the nature of the narratives. To speak of the ascension fitted the intent of Mark and Luke; it did not fit that of Matthew and John. There was no need for all of the writers to mention it; if only one had done so, that would have been sufficient to establish it as a Bible truth. But John 6:62, John 14:1-6, 18-19, 28-29, 16:5-10, 16-19, 28, and 20:17 imply the ascension.
 3. Verses 52-53: “ And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.”
 - a. Boles:
 - 1) “The risen Lord remained on earth ‘by the space of forty days’ (Acts 1:3), after his resurrection, before he ascended. His repeated appearances during the forty days had comforted his disciples, cleared this spiritual vision, reestablished and confirmed their faith, corrected their former views of his kingdom, and gave them an understanding of the scriptures pertaining to his mission to earth. Later Peter wrote: ‘Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his
-

- great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' (1 Pet. 1:3.)
- 2) "This apostles now saw in the crucified but risen and ascended Lord, the Christ, the long-expected Messiah; hence they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem in obedience to his command, and waited for further developments. This is the first formal act of adoration which we ever read of the disciples' paying to our Lord; their knowledge of his Messiahship and divinity was now clear and distinct; hence, the 'great joy' which they had as they returned to Jerusalem. The darkness was past and the true light was now shining upon them. (1 John 2:8.) Their worship continued; they went to the temple as was the custom and there blessed God.
 - 3) "The temple was a place for all pious Jews in Jerusalem; in its spacious courts all sorts of worshipers met daily without interruption, or interference with one another. Even later, when the church was established, 'every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.' (Acts 5:42.) It seems to have been such an established custom for all pious Jews to assemble in the temple that the apostles could even preach the gospel there."
- b. Luke gave more information about the ascension in Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
- 1) While they continued to stare into the sky, two men stood by them, dressed in white apparel. That these were angels, and not mere mortals, is seen by other accounts in which angels took on the form of men in order to converse with men. Luke describes the two beings at the Lord's tomb as men, while John plainly identifies them as angels (Luke 24:4; John 20:11-12).
 - 2) It is also seen in the promise that Jesus would return: no mortal could have known this truth. Also, these angels appeared without the apostles seeing their approach.
- c. The angels gave a mild rebuke to the apostles by asking them why they stood there gazing up into the sky. We should not understand the statement that they were looking into heaven as meaning they were actually seeing heaven where God's throne is. In point of fact, the cloud in which Jesus disappeared would have hindered their view, and it is impossible for any mortal to see heaven with his natural sight. It may be that they were expecting the Lord to reappear quickly; if so they were wasting their time. And there were preparations to be made: a successor to Judas must be found.
- 1) The apostles are described as "men of Galilee." All of them were from that province in northern Israel, several of them from the same city (Bethsaida). This helps us to identify those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, since some in the audience stated that all of those who were thus endowed were Galileans (2:7).
 - 2) This same Jesus would return, but the time was unknown to the angels (Mark 13:32-33). His return will be with clouds, accompanied by the sounding of the trumpet (1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 1:7). His return will be audible and visible, and known immediately by all of the earth (Matt. 24:27).
- d. The ascension of Christ is of great importance. If the Lord had simply vanished from the earth during the night, or from some place or time when his departure was unobserved, his followers would have been confounded and the world would have thought them to be deceived. But when they saw him rise up from the earth, there was no doubt whatsoever about Christ, and their preaching was the more zealous and their faith the more fervent for it. It was a confirmation of the truthfulness of Christianity. Our faith is on sound footing; we have not followed cunningly devised fables (2 Pet. 1:16). The apostles could state from firsthand knowledge where the ascension took place, describe the scene clearly, and report the words of the angels.
- e. Since the King is in heaven, the nature of his kingdom is established. If it were an earthly kingdom, he would be ruling it directly from an earthly throne and palace, which he denies.
-

- f. This writer read an article in the military newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes*, which reported what a certain Russian gentleman thought about the Ascension of Christ. He claimed that Christ was an alien visitor to earth, and that he departed to go home, s in a cloud of smoke and dust, from the blast-off of his spaceship. This was, I think, in 1964.

Post-Resurrection Appearances

➤ TO MARY MAGDALENE	• John 20:11-12
➤ TO CERTAIN WOMEN AS THEY RETURNED TO THE SELPUCHRE	• Matthew 28:1-10
➤ TO PETER	• Luke 24:34
➤ TO TWO DISCIPLES ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS	• Luke 24:13-15
➤ TO 10 APOSTLES (THOMAS BEING ABSENT)	• John 20:19-23
➤ TO ALL 11 APOSTLES ONE WEEK LATER (INCLUDING THOMAS)	• John 20:26-28
➤ TO SEVERAL DISCIPLES AT THE SEA OF GALILEE	• John 21:1-23
➤ TO THE APOSTLES AND ABOUT 500 BRETHREN AT ONCE ON AN APPOINTED MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE	• Matt. 28:16-20
➤ TO JAMES	• 1 Cor. 15:7
➤ TO THE APOSTLES AT JERUSALEM IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ASCENSION	• Acts 1:3-9
➤ TO SAUL OF TARSUS	• Acts 22:3-5 • Acts 9:1-2



1 Corinthians 15:5-8



Accounts Of The Great Commission Compared

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
Go	Go		
Teach	Preach Gospel	Preach	
All Nations	Every Creature	All Nations	Whose Soever
	Believe		
		Repentance	
Baptize	Baptize		
	Saved	Remission of Sins	Sins Remitted
With You Always	Signs Accompany	Endued with Power	Receive Spirit

MATTHEW	Teach			Baptism	
MARK	Preach	Faith		Baptism	Salvation
LUKE	Preach		Repentance		Remission
JOHN	Preach				Sin Remitted
SUMMARY	PREACH	FAITH	REPENTANCE	BAPTISM	SALVATION

A Comparison of Acts 2:38-39 and Acts 3:19

ACTS 2:38-39	ACTS 3:19
Repent	Repent
Be Baptized	Be Converted
For the remission of sins	That sins might be blotted out
Receive the gift	Times of refreshing shall come
Of Holy Spirit	From the presence of the Lord
Promise is to you (and all)	All kindreds of earth to be blessed
As many as God shall call	Turning everyone from iniquities

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- American Standard Version, (ASV), Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, NY*
- Analytical Greek Lexicon, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970*
- Annual Lesson Commentaries (ALC), Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, TN, 1959, 1971, 1973, 1980*
- Barnes, Albert, Notes On the New Testament, Matthew and Mark, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976*
- Bible Hub: Commentaries by Gill, Ellicott, Pulpit Commentary, Jamieson, MacLaren, Benson, Expositor's Greek, Bengel's Gnomens*
- Biblical Notes, Roy Deaver, Pensacola, FL, June, 1981*
- Boettner, Lorraine, Roman Catholicism, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 1962*
- Boles, H. Leo, A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1936*
- Book of Matthew, The, Spiritual Sword Lectures, 1988, Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren, Sain Publications, Pulaski, TN*
- Book of Mark, The, Spiritual Sword Lectures, 1989, Edited: Jim Laws, Sain Publications, Pulaski, TN*
- Burgeon, John, The Last Twelve Verses of Mark, AFB Authors Inc, Grand Rapids,*
- Butler, Paul, Commentary on Luke, College Press, Joplin, Missouri, 1981*
- Christian Courier, Wayne Jackson, Stockton, CA, March, April, May, 1981*
- Coffman, Burton, Commentary on Matthew, ACU Press, Abilene, Texas, 1974*
- Dorris, C.E.W., A Commentary on the Gospel by John, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1939*
- Elam's Notes, E.A. Elam, Gospel Advocate, 1928*
- E-Sword, Version 11, 2017*
- Hamilton, W.T., Show Us The Father, Nichols Bros. Publishing Co., 1964*
- Halley, Henry, Halley's Bible Handbook, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1965*
- Holman Bible Dictionary for Windows, Version 1.1g, Parson Technology, Hiawatha, Iowa, 1991,1994*
- Horne, Thomas Hartwell, Introduction To The Scriptures, Vol. IV, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970*
- International Bible Dictionary, Logos International, Plainfield, NJ, 1977*
- Jamieson, Robert, Fausset, A.R., Brown, David, A Commentary Critical, Experimental and Practical, Vol. III (JFB), Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1973*
- Kenningham, S.C, Expository Sermon Outlines on the Book of Luke, J.C. Choate Publications Winona, MS, 1980*
- Josephus, Flavius, Josephus, Complete Works, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 1960*
- Kik, J. Marcellus, An Eschatology of Victory, Presby & Reformed Publishing Company, 1971*
- Land and the Book, William Thomson, B&P Bibles & Publications, Montreal*
- Lipscomb, David, Questions Answered, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, 1969*
- Lockyer, Herbert, All the Miracles of the Bible, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1961*
- McGarvey, J.W., Biblical Criticism, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1956*
- McGarvey, J.W., A Commentary on Matthew and Mark, Gospel Light Publishing Company, Delight, AR, 1875*
- McGarvey, J.W., Lands of the Bible, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1966*
-

cGarvey, J.W., Sermons, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1958

PC Study Bible, BibleSoft, Version 5, 2008

Robertson, A.T., Harmony of the Gospels, Harper and Row, 1950

Sermon On The Mount, Spiritual Sword Lectureship, Editors: Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren, National Christian Press, INC, Jonesboro, AR, 1982

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, H.B. Hackett, Editor, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1971

Spiritual Sword Magazine, Getwell Church of Christ, Memphis, TN, May, 1981

Stevens, Eldred, The Sermon on the Mount, Eldred Stevens Publications, Dallas, 1982

Sweet, Ralph, Moments on the Mount, R.B. Sweet Co., Inc, Austin, TX, 1963

Swordsearcher, Version 9, 2022

Thayer, Henry, Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, The National Foundation for Christian Education, Marshallton, DE

The New King James Version, Thomas Nelson Company, Nashville, 1987

Thiessen, Henry C., Introduction to the New Testament, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 1943

Trench, R.C., Notes on the Miracles and the Parables of our Lord, Fleming H. Revell Co, Old Tappan, NJ, 1953

Turner, Rex, Sound Doctrine, Montgomery, AL, 1978, pp.294f

Vine, Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, MacDonald Publishing Co., McLean, VA

Wallace, Foy E., Jr., God's Prophetic Word, Foy E. Wallace., Jr. Publications, Nashville, 1967

Wallace, Foy E., Jr., The Sermon on the Mount and the Civil State, Foy E. Wallace., Jr. Publications, Nashville, 1967

Warren, Thomas B., Your Marriage Can Be Great, National Christian Press, Jonesboro, Arkansas, 1978

Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition, The World Publishing Company, New York and Cleveland, 1968

Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus, Deluxe Edition, 2001

Wharton, Ed, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Historical...or Mythological?" (Tract)

Whiteside, Robertson L., A New Commentary On Paul's Letter To The Saints At Rome, The Manney Company, Fort Worth, TX, 1945

Woods, Guy N., "When Does One Become A Disciple," Gospel Advocate, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, September, 1989

Woods, Guy N., New Testament Commentaries, John, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, 1981

Woods, Guy N., Questions and Answers Open Forum, Freed Hardeman College, Henderson, TN, 1976

World Book Encyclopedia, Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Chicago, IL, 1964

Young's Concordance, Robert Young, Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI
