

# Luke Questions:

## Chapter and Verse

by Dr. Robert D. Luginbill

### Introduction to Luke

NIV SB: The author's name does not appear in the book, but much internal and external evidence points to Luke. This Gospel is a companion volume to the book of Acts, and the language and structure of these two books indicate that both were written by the same person. They are addressed to the same individual, Theophilus, and the second volume refers to the first (Ac 1:1). Certain sections in Acts use the pronoun "we" (Ac 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16), indicating that the author was with Paul when the events described in these passages took place. By process of elimination, Paul's "dear friend Luke, the doctor" (Col 4:14) and "fellow worker" (Phm 24) becomes the most likely candidate. His authorship is supported by the uniform testimony of early Christian writings (e. g., the Muratorian Canon, AD 170, and the works of Irenaeus, c. 180).

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Q: Do you agree with how Luke's authorship is established here?

A: It's a fine synopsis. Sinaiticus does have the title *kata Loukan*. This is the universal tradition with no serious alternative of which I am aware.

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NIV SB: The message of this Gospel was intended for his own instruction (1:4), as well as for the instruction of those among whom the book would be circulated. The fact that the Gospel was initially directed to Theophilus does not narrow or limit its purpose. It was written to strengthen the faith of all believers and to answer the attacks of unbelievers (see 1:1-4 and note). Luke wanted to show that the place of the Gentile Christian in God's kingdom is based on the teaching of Jesus. He wanted to commend the preaching of the gospel to the whole world.

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Q: Can we know that Luke intended his writing to instruct all believers rather than only Theophilus?

A: I don't know of much true literature ever produced in the history of the world that was really meant only for one recipient. Luke's message to Theophilus is the equivalent of our dedications in books written today. The fact that I dedicated my first Thucydides' book "to my dear mother and the memory of my dear father" doesn't mean I didn't want anyone else to read it. If the book

is inspired, which it is, then by definition it is meant by God for all of His people. So any "problem" someone might see with the dedication would have to be along the lines that because it is dedicated to one person in this way it is not scripture. Once we are comfortable with the fact that the book is indeed a part of the Bible, then this dedication becomes only a potential curiosity and not a real problem. We don't know enough about the background or this Theophilus to be able to say anymore than what we read in Luke and Acts (other than this is not an unprecedented thing to do in the ancient world, and that we have modern equivalents). These books were written by people to people in very human ways and in human languages with all the quirks and modes of expression these humans who wrote them actually used and possessed. What unbelievers don't understand is that even so the Holy Spirit inspired these books in an absolute way so that they contain the very words of God, expressed through these men whom He chose to write them:

For true prophecy has never occurred by human will, but only when holy men of God have spoken under the direction and agency of the Holy Spirit.

2nd Peter 1:21

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NIV SB: The two most commonly suggested periods for dating the Gospel of Luke are:(1) AD 59-63, and (2) the 70s or the 80s (See essay and chart).

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Q: Is there a reason why these two estimated periods are separated by about 20 years? In one of your responses you wrote that you believe Luke's gospel was written between 45 and 50 A.D., which is a different time as well.

A: I would have to see the rationales behind these dates. The only thing I might speculate is that the early date people have Luke still with Paul at the end of his life, writing this book, whereas the later date people assume that Luke wrote after Paul's death when some time had passed.

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Luke 1:1 (NIV)

1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled[a] among us,

a. Luke 1:1 Or been surely believed

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Q: Could you relate to the footnote? What should scripture say here?

A: "Fulfilled" is correct here; however, the verb *plerophoreo* can sometimes mean what the footnote suggests in NT Greek (not appropriate in this context).

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b. NIV SB: Lk.1:1 things ... fulfilled among us. Things prophesied in the OT and now fully accomplished.

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Q: Do you agree that Luke is here referring to Old Testament prophecies being fulfilled rather than simply stating that he's writing an account of what happened (rather than what was fulfilled)?

A: The use of the word certainly includes the fulfillment of prophecies, but I don't think it would be wise to try and pin it down to mean *only* that, as if we had to do here with a strictly technical word of limited scope.

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Luke 1:15 (NASB)

15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

NIV SB: Lk.1:15 wine or other fermented drink. It appears likely that John was to be subject to the Nazirite vow of abstinence from alcoholic drinks (see Nu 6:2-12 and notes). If so, he was a lifelong Nazirite, as were Samson (Jdg 13:4-7) and Samuel (1Sa 1:11).

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Q: Why was John to live under the Nazirite vow?

A: There was more to the Nazirite vow than abstinence from alcohol. So while there is a similarity, it's not the same thing. John was "filled with the Spirit" from birth and abstinence from alcohol was to go hand in hand with that blessing as a complement. When they went near the tabernacle to minister, the Levites were forbidden to drink wine (Lev.10:9), and John's ministry was a lifelong one; the abstinence was a sign of that special ministry.

Q2: I read your postings on this subject and have just one question regarding Luke 1:15. How should we understand *eti* here? The meaning I'm familiar with

is "still", which perhaps explains why the verse is often interpreted in the way it is. How should we translate this word here?

A2: Greek is different from English and sometimes words in Greek do not have precise equivalents in English. This is a particular problem with Greek temporal adverbs (as we have here); for example, *ede* can mean "already" in the English sense, but verges on "now"; in like manner, *eti* often means "continuing on from a particular point in time". The problem, therefore, with translating *eti* as "still" (or "yet" as in the NIV quoted above) is that in English it will then be naturally taken as having to do with the **past**; in fact, however, the adverb is expressing a continuation **forward** from the point in time represented by the phrase *ek koilias metros autou* ("from [out of] his mothers womb"). This is why people want to make the word *eti* mean "in" (which is impossible), namely, to foist an English understanding of the adverb here on the passage and turn the prepositional phrase and its true meaning on its head. Of course the people who do this have a particular doctrinal axe to grind. So the best way to translate *eti* here is "even" (since "continually from the point when" is cumbersome in English). I think if you look carefully at the article on this word in the big LSJ lexicon, translating for yourself the Greek exempla, you'll see what I mean.

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Luke 1:19 (NASB)

19 The angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

NIV SB: Lk.1:19 Gabriel. The name can mean "God is my hero" or "Mighty man of God." Only two angels are identified by name in Scripture: Gabriel (Da 8:16; 9:21) and Michael (see Da 10:13, 21 and note on 10:13; Jude 9; Rev 12:7 and note).

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Q: How do you think we should understand the meaning of the name Gabriel?

A: The etymology given here in the first instance is correct: *geber* = mighty man / warrior ; *iy* = "my"; *el* = God. The second suggestion omits the possessive suffix and turns the verbal action around. Gabriel is an archangel, having won that august position in the angelic warfare that preceded our creation. As we can see from Michael's name too ("who is like God?"), another archangel, dedication to the Lord was at the heart of their success and eventual promotion.

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Luke 1:24 (NASB)

24 After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying,

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**Q: Why did Elizabeth keep herself in seclusion?**

**A:** I know of no requirement for doing so, so I would have to speculate that it was for personal reasons. I can certainly understand how that someone her age who announced that she was pregnant would be doubted and risk becoming a laughing stock – until she actually gave birth. It's no sin to spare oneself such treatment if possible.

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Luke 1:26 (NASB)

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

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**Q: What is the "sixth month" counted from? Elizabeth's conception?**

**A:** Yes. There's no other temporal anchor here, and v.24 speaks of "five months".

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Luke 1:32 (NASB)

32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

**NIV SB:** Lk.1:32 the Son of the Most High. This title has two senses: (1) the divine Son of God and (2) the Messiah born in time. His Messiahship is clearly referred to in the following context (vv. 32b-33). Most High. A title frequently used of God in both the OT and NT (see vv. 35, 76; 6:35; 8:28; Ge 14:19 and note; 2Sa 22:14; Ps 7:10, 17). throne. Promised in the OT to the Messiah descended from David (see 2Sa 7:13, 16; Ps 2:6-7; 89:25-27; Isa 9:6-7 and notes). his father David. Mary was a descendant of David, as was Joseph (see Mt 1:16 and note); so Jesus could rightly be called a "son" of David.

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Q: I'm not clear about point 2 - "the Messiah born in time" - could you clarify?

A: Not sure what they mean by this unless they mean "at the proper/appointed time"; (fr. BB 4A):

1. Jesus came when "the right time was at hand": Mark 1:15
2. Jesus came at the "proper time": Romans 5:6
3. Jesus came in the "fullness of time": Galatians 4:4
4. Jesus came when "the times had reached their fulfillment": Ephesians 1:10
5. Jesus came at the very "conjunction of the ages": Hebrews 9:26

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Luke 1:34 (NASB)

34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

NIV SB: Lk.1:34 How will this be ...? Mary did not ask in disbelief, as Zechariah did (v. 20). See v. 45.

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Q: Would you say that this is the reason why Zacharias was rebuked and Mary wasn't? Could it also be taken into account here that conception at an old age has already been proved possible by God through Abraham and Sarah, but virgin birth was unprecedented?

A: Yes, that is how I understand and have explained this verse. It's not a lack of faith to ask how something will be accomplished that obviously will include one's own intimate involvement in an never before seen and never after repeated way. This was a unique situation. We can see Mary's faith in her response throughout; Zacharias, as you mention, had Abraham as a precedent. Importantly also, *this is precisely what he and his wife had been praying for for many years*. Mary, on the other hand, could have had no idea that any such miraculous thing would be done for her prior to this announcement (and no need to pray for it since she was a young woman about to be married).

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Luke 1:60 (NASB)

60 But his mother answered and said, "No indeed; but he shall be called John."

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Q: Can we work out how Elizabeth knew to name the child John?

A: Well, Zacharias wrote out his name on this occasion, and I would venture that over the space of more than nine months he and his wife had worked out means to communicate, writing being one of them, when something specific like this was to be conveyed.

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Luke 1:68 (NASB)

68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,

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Q: Is Zacharias here prophetically referring to our Lord's work on the cross?

A: This "redemption" includes the cross and the [coming] crown (as may be seen from what follows). Israel is redeemed from Her sins (as are we all) at the first advent; she is redeemed as a nation at the second advent.

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Luke 1:71 (NASB)

71 Salvation from our enemies,

And from the hand of all who hate us;

Luke 1:74 (NASB)

74 To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies,

Might serve Him without fear,

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Q: Since our Lord saves us from our sins, why does Zacharias say "from our enemies", similarly in verse 74?

A: See previous answer: the conquering Messiah was in the forefront of the thinking of everyone in Israel, and even in the case of those who wrote the likes of Isaiah 53 under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "the prophets of old diligently investigated and inquired about this [gift] of grace, being eager to discover the precise time the Spirit of Christ within them was signifying as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories [of salvation, among other things] that would follow [the cross]" (1Pet.1:10b-11). Those who truly were God's people understood that they needed redemption from sin as well as from their earthly enemies, but the cross was still shrouded in the shadows of the Law, and this prophecy of Zecharias' is in keeping with all that has gone before.

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Luke 1:80 (NIV)

80 And the child grew and became strong in spirit[a]; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.

a. Luke 1:80 Or in the Spirit

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Q: Does the scripture here say "in spirit" or "in the Spirit"? How should we interpret these words?

A: I would prefer "spiritually" since that comprehends the ministry of the Spirit who is effecting his growth and the nature of that growth. The other two are problematic since the former incorrectly names the spirit as if it were independent of the body whereas the latter fails to recognize that he was already filled with the Spirit from birth and that the growth was spiritual. "By the Spirit" would also work.

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Luke 2:1 (NASB)

2 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all [a]the inhabited earth.

a. Luke 2:1 I.e. the Roman empire



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Q: Was "all inhabited earth" a term normally used to describe the Roman empire?

A: Since he is speaking here somewhat technically about Roman procedures, Luke seems to be using this word as a Greek equivalent to the Roman phrase *orbis terrarum*, literally "circle of the lands", but meaning "the world". This is "the world" according to Roman notions, or "our world", hence, the empire. In Hellenistic literature the word sometimes also means "our world", but in that case the restriction is to areas of Greek habitation and commerce. The use of this word for the empire does occur in the papyri and in imperial Greek literature. Most often, however, the word in scripture means "the world" as a whole, not just the Roman empire. So this verse is not to be taken to mean that the Romans felt they could tax the entire (literal) world; Luke is merely putting the Roman decree in its appropriate format here (and may be quoting the actual decree itself).

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b) NIV SB: census. Used for military service and taxation. Jews, however, were exempt from Roman military service. God used the decree of a pagan emperor to fulfill the prophecy of Mic 5:2 (see note there; see also Mt 2:3-6).

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Q: I'm not clear about this point - what is meant by the SB when it says "God used the decree of a pagan emperor to fulfill the prophecy of Mic 5:2"?

A: To be overly generous to the editors who missed the lack of logic here, they might mean that this was "the fullness of times", that is, just the right situation in the Mediterranean world for the calling out of the King's assembly, the Church, which situation God had brought about by empowering a secular empire to provide a unified and peaceful political framework for the spreading of the good news proclamation of the true King.

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Luke 2:5 (NASB)

5 in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

NIV SB: Lk.2:5 with Mary. Mary may also have been of the house of David and therefore required to enroll. In Syria, the Roman province in which the Holy Land was located, women 12 years of age and older were required to pay a poll tax and therefore to register.

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Q: Why does the note say "may also have been of the house of David", as if it wasn't certain?

A: The scholastic disease: skepticism. It's unwarranted here, clearly, and a dangerous thing to say. Since our Lord in terms of His physical body **was** of Mary's human line alone, the necessity that she be of the line of David (as the genealogy of Mary's family line in Luke chapter three affirms she is) is absolute. That was the prophecy as everyone knew then and knows now (e.g., 2Sam.7:5-16). See the link: "[Genealogy of Christ](#)".

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Luke 2:7 (NASB)

7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

NIV SB: Lk.2:7 cloths. Strips of cloth were regularly used to wrap a newborn infant. manger. The feeding trough of the animals. This is the only indication that Christ was born in a stable. Very early tradition suggests that it was a cave, perhaps used as a stable.

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Q: What is your take on the exact place of our Lord's birth?

A: Our Lord was born in an inn, not a stable. The "manger" is wooden trough that was used in place of a crib (or equivalent) – that is what was not available. This does emphasize our Lord's humility in coming to save the human race. I have written all this up at the following link: BB 4A: "[The Babe in the Manger](#)".

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Luke 2:14 (NASB)

14 "Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men [a]**with whom He is pleased.**"

a. Luke 2:14 Lit of good pleasure; or of good will

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Q: What is the correct rendering here?

A: The Greek of all the better mss. has "men of good will", but the problem is that Greek is not English. Many times, phrases that are translated into English from Greek in a slavishly literal way are so nonsensical as to make it clear on the face of it that something is wrong. This is an instance where such a translation sounds at first as if it makes sense – and it does make sense; the only problem is that it makes the **wrong** sense. "Men of good will (or good pleasure)" sounds as if the "good will" is coming from the men. In fact, it is **God's** "good pleasure" with which we have to do here. The grammatical name for this phenomenon is a "subjective genitive" wherein the element in the genitive case (the object of "of" in the English phrase") is producing the action rather than receiving it (that would be an "objective genitive"). Unfortunately, there is nothing to tell us which is which in the text; these things are understood from context. For a Greek reader (or a Hebrew reader; this idiom is also prevalent in Hebrew "construct" phrases), this presents no problem. Clearly, mankind is sinful; any truly good will or "good pleasure" in such a context ought to be speaking of God, not men – and that is the case here. So the NASB translation (emphasized) in the main text above gives the correct sense. This passage is further complicated by the unfortunate KJV rendering which is so famous throughout the English speaking world, "good will toward men". That translation (the result of an inferior textual reading in the TR) makes it sound as if God is pleased with **all** mankind, and all will receive His peace. In fact, only those who have been redeemed so that the blood of Christ actually wipes out the enmity between God and man produced by sin enjoy that peace. The biggest problem to my mind of the KJV rendering is that it makes the gospel into a sort of political instrument where the Christmas message is that we should all just try to get along because that is what God wants. In fact, of course, there are only spiritual solutions to the problems we face as individuals before God, and the Lord came into the world to make those solutions possible by dying for the sins of all mankind. The angelic proclamation is good news for all – as is the gospel – but only those who respond positively in faith to become "men of God's good pleasure", that is, those with whom **He** is well-pleased.

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Luke 2:18 (NASB)

18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds.

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**Q:** Who is meant here by "all who heard"? It seems from previous verses that the shepherds reported what was told them by the angel only to Mary and Joseph?

**A:** The previous verse indicates that they shared this exciting news with all they met (and no doubt not only on that blessed night):

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child.

Luke 2:17 NIV

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Luke 2:25 (NASB)

25 And 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.

NIV SB: the Holy Spirit was on him. Not in the way common to all believers after Pentecost. Simeon was given a special insight by the Spirit so that he would recognize the "Messiah" (v. 26; cf. 1:15 and note).

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**Q:** Do you agree that Simeon was given a special insight by the Spirit?

**A:** Yes. As it says in the following verse:

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Luke 2:26 NIV

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Luke 2:31 (NASB)

31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

NIV SB: Lk.2:31 all nations. As a Gentile himself, Luke was careful to emphasize the truth that salvation was offered to Gentiles (v. 32) as well as to Jews.

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Q: I'm not clear about this note, which makes it appear as if it was Luke's emphasis rather than Simeon's words which are important here.

A: I agree with your criticism. Salvation is "of the Jews" (Jn.4:22) but is meant for all; in the very next verse, Lk.2:32, Simeon quotes Isaiah on this very point:

"I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

Isaiah 42:6-7 NIV (cf. Lk.49:6; Acts 13:47)

However, Luke was not a gentile. He was Jewish (despite popular confusion on this point). Please see the link "[Luke](#)"

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Luke 2:32 (NASB)

32 A Light of revelation to the Gentiles,

And the glory of Your people Israel."

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Q: Is Simeon quoting scripture here?

A: The phrase "a light for the gentiles" occurs as a Messianic prophecy in both Isaiah 42:6 and Isaiah 49:6 (without the intervening word "revelation"). So no doubt the Spirit is alluding to these passages in this prophecy of Simeon.

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Luke 2:34 (NASB)

34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed-

NIV SB: sign ... spoken against. This somewhat enigmatic statement may mean that Jesus, a sign from God (v. 12; 11:30), would precipitate division, opposition and rejection.

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Q: How should we understand this statement?

A: The note is on the right track. From Christology Questions II: "

As to the "sign spoken against", I certainly agree that Jesus is the sign, as this passage says, and that He was prophesied here to be "spoken against" throughout His ministry. Indeed, that has never stopped (cf. Acts 28:22: "for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against" KJV)."

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Luke 2:39 (NASB)

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

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Q: What is your take on the interpretation that the visit of the Magi and the escape to Egypt took place before this return?

A: I have a chart of these events at the following link: "[Early Travels](#)"

Q2: Yes, I'm familiar with your interpretation on this and I just wanted to ask if it is at all possible that the visit of the Magi and escape to Egypt took place before the return to Galilee referred to in Luke 2:39, or whether the scripture leaves no room for such a sequence of events.

A2: Luke 2:39 places this initial return to Galilee immediately after the ceremony at the temple with its corresponding occurrences. I don't think Luke's language allows for the other possibility.

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Luke 2:52 (NASB)

52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and [a]stature, and in favor with God and men.

a. Luke 2:52 Or age

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Q: Is "stature" or "age" better here?

A: Emotional age and its reflection in the eyes of others is what is meant rather than chronological age. Here is my translation of the verse:

And Jesus [continued to] make progress in His wisdom and His stature and in grace with God and with men.

Luke 2:52

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Luke 3:6 (NASB)

6 And all flesh will see the salvation of God."

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**Q:** Why does this quotation used by John the Baptist say "all flesh" if our Lord's ministry was limited to specific time and space? Is it a metaphor, or is Second Advent also in view here?

**A:** This is a poetic rendering, being a quote from Isaiah 40:5, a poetic passage which prophesies the ministry of John the baptist. "All flesh" means "all people". But your question is interesting. Clearly, not everyone saw Jesus, even at the time of His sojourn on earth. Also, His glory and the deliverance He renders for Israel will not be visible until the second advent – when indeed "every eye shall see Him" (Rev.1:7; cf. Zech.12:10). And John's work too is not yet done. Along with Moses he is one of the two witnesses who will restore the hearts of many in Israel during the Tribulation. So the complete fulfillment of this passage did not take place at the time of our Lord's first advent. Eventually, however, all will see Jesus as He will judge the entire world, believers and unbelievers both.

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Luke 3:23-28 (NASB)

23 When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli, 24 the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, 25 the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Hesli, the son of Naggai, 26 the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, 27 the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, 28 the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,

NIV SB: Lk.3:23-38 There are several differences between Luke's genealogy and Matthew's (1:2-16). Matthew begins with Abraham (the father of the Jewish people), while Luke traces the line in the reverse order and goes back to Adam, showing Jesus' relationship to the whole human race (see note on 2:31). From Abraham to David, the genealogies of Matthew and Luke are almost the same, but from David on they are different. Many interpreters suggest that this is because Matthew traces the legal descent of the house of David, using only heirs to the throne, while Luke traces the direct bloodline of Joseph to David (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles: Genealogies) -perhaps the preferred view. Another common explanation is that Matthew follows the line of

Joseph (Jesus' legal father through Solomon; see Mt 1:6-7, 16), while Luke emphasizes that of Mary (Jesus' blood relative through Nathan, v. 31). Although tracing a genealogy through the mother's side was unusual, so was the virgin birth. Luke's explanation here that Jesus was the son of Joseph, "so it was thought" (v. 23), brings to mind his explicit virgin birth statement (1:34-35) and suggests the importance of the role of Mary in Jesus' genealogy. However, this view is less likely since Luke here so explicitly names Joseph (v. 23), without any reference at all to Mary.

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**Q:** I know your view on these two genealogies and just wanted to ask your opinion on other theories presented - are there any points which directly show they are not true, or is it more a question of probability?

**A:** As you know, I teach that Joseph's genealogy is given in Matthew (Matthew writing to a predominately Jewish audience where patrimony is key), whereas Luke gives Mary's line, the actual physical line of our Lord's humanity. I would quibble with "*this view is less likely since Luke here so explicitly names Joseph (v. 23), without any reference at all to Mary.*" In the Greek, it is easier to see that "being it was supposed the son of Joseph" is a parenthesis, and as such does not go directly with what follows. In practical terms, this phrase is the equivalent of "Mary's son". Here is how I expand the translation: "being, it was supposed, the son of Joseph, [but really of the line] of Eli, [Mary's father], of Matthat. . .". More details may be found at the link: "[Genealogy of Christ](#)"

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Luke 4:2 (NASB)

2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

NIV SB: Lk.4:2 he was tempted. See notes on Mt 4:1-11; 4:1; Heb 2:18; 4:15. Luke states that Jesus was tempted for the 40 days he was fasting, and the three specific temptations recounted in Matthew and Luke seem to have occurred at the close of this period-when Jesus' hunger was greatest and his resistance lowest. The sequence of the second and third temptations differs in Matthew and Luke. Matthew probably followed the chronological order, since at the end of the mountain temptation (Matthew's third) Jesus told Satan to leave (Mt 4:10). To emphasize a certain point the Gospel writers often bring various events together, not intending to imply chronological sequence. Perhaps Luke's focus here is geographic, as he concludes with Jesus in Jerusalem.

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**Q:** Do you agree with the reasons given here for the different sequence of the second and third temptation? Doesn't the point made in this note contradict the fact that Luke states that his account is given in chronological order?



A: First, I don't think it is possible to place such a weight on Luke's use of the adverb *kathexes*. In the history of writing "history", no one has ever managed to write a comprehensive account of any complicated event in entirely strict chronological sequence. That is because, just to give two obvious reasons, some events have important background which cannot be introduced before the fact, and also because some events happen simultaneously but cannot be explained and treated that way (for example what is going on on the Greek side and what is going on on the Persian side in Herodotus' account of the Persian invasion). Second, all three temptations did apparently happen on the same day (so strictly speaking Luke's variation of the actual order does not violate even an overly narrow interpretation of his stated program). Matthew connects the temptations with the temporal adverb *tote* / "then, indicating a chronological sequence, whereas Luke connects the three merely with the simple connective "and" – which does not necessarily have to be temporal. Further, Luke was writing at a time when Matthew's gospel was well-known, so under the Spirit's guidance he felt comfortable (since the chronological order was known) changing the order for the purpose of emphasis. As I say at the link below,

"One reason why Luke puts the devil's egging on of our Lord to "throw yourself down" last is because of Jesus' response: "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test' " (Lk.4:12 NIV). Luke was desirous of demonstrating Jesus' deity, and this quote, especially coming at the end of the temptations, demonstrates that fact with considerable irony: Who is "the Lord your God", the One who ought not to be "put to the test", if not Jesus Christ Himself?"

Here is that link: "[The Temptations of Christ](#)"

\*\*\*

Luke 4:7 (NASB)

7 Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours."

NIV SB: Lk.4:7 worship me. The devil was tempting Jesus to avoid the sufferings of the cross, which he came specifically to endure (see Mk 10:45 and note). The temptation offered an easy shortcut to world dominion.

\*

Q: Do you agree that this temptation was to do with avoiding the cross?

A: Not at all. The temptation is clearly stated, although, if one wants to go into hypotheticals, that would be the result. If the devil could have gotten the Lord

to worship him (the biggest "if" in the history of the world and absolutely impossible), Satan would have won. That is what the devil wanted. Viewed from his evil perspective, lust for world dominion was the perfect, tempting bribe to get that surrender. Only viewed from a godly perspective (which the devil lacks) would the cross even come into the equation.

\*\*\*

Luke 4:16 (NASB)

16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

a) NIV SB: Lk.4:16-30 Luke apparently moved the Nazareth sermon forward from a later point in Jesus' life (see Mk 6:1-6) to serve as an introduction and overview of Jesus' ministry. Notice that Jesus refers to his ministry in Capernaum (v. 23) even though he has not yet gone there according to Luke's Gospel (v. 31).

\*

Q: Do you agree with the point made here? Wouldn't it again violate the statement about the order of Luke's account being chronological and make the gospel somewhat harder to read if our Lord was quoted as referring to an event which has already taken place, but is yet to be described?

A: Luke 4:31 does NOT say or imply that our Lord had never been to Capernaum before or had not had some ministry there before. Although the greater part of the gospels detail the three and a half years of our Lord's earthly ministry, the lion's share has to do with the last year "of opposition". There were clearly many more events that took place than are preserved for us. As John says, "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (Jn. 21:25 NIV).

\*\*\*

b) NIV SB: Lk.4:16: as was his custom. Jesus' custom of regular worship sets an example for all his followers. to read. Jesus probably read from Isaiah in Hebrew, and then he or someone else paraphrased it in Aramaic, one of the other common languages of the day.

\*

Q: How can we know this?

A: This is supposition. Reading in Hebrew is what happens in Orthodox synagogues today. Greek, as well as Aramaic, was a language in common use in Palestine in those days. Hebrew was spoken and understood in Judea, and particularly in Jerusalem, but probably much less so in the north (Galilee). What the practice was in the synagogue in which Jesus read we don't know. The "scroll" of Isaiah He was given was most likely in Hebrew; the note assumes that, and also that there would have then been a translation into Aramaic (based on a questionable reading of Neh.8:4-13 – which I take to refer to teaching not translating). So I don't absolutely disagree with the note, although "possibly" would be a better qualifier to use here than "probably" in my opinion.

\*\*\*

Luke 4:17 (NASB)

17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the [b]book and found the place where it was written,

NIV SB: Lk.4:17 the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. See this essay. The books of the OT were written on scrolls, kept in a special place in the synagogue and handed to the reader by a special attendant. The passage Jesus read about the Messiah (Isa 61:1-2; see notes there) may have been one he chose to read, or it may have been the assigned passage for the day.

\*

Q: Which one of the two was it in your view - a passage assigned for the day, or one chosen by Jesus?

A: Since our Lord searched out the particular passage, and since it was particularly chosen by Him to demonstrate that He was fulfilling the prophecy, it would seem that it was the latter.

\*\*\*

Luke 4:19 (NASB)

19 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

NIV SB: Lk.4:19 the year of the Lord's favor. Not a calendar year, but the period when salvation would be proclaimed—the Messianic age. This quotation from Isa 61:1-2 alludes to the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8-55), when once every 50 years slaves were freed, debts were canceled and ancestral property was returned to the original family. Isaiah predicted primarily the liberation of Israel from the future Babylonian exile, but Jesus proclaimed liberation from sin and all its consequences.

\*

Q: Could you comment on this note - is Isaiah here referring to the Year of Jubilee? Is he referring to the liberation from Babylonian exile also? And since our Lord quotes this verse, wouldn't it mean that it has a triple application?

A: The Year of Jubilee, was, as far as we can tell from scripture, never actually applied by Israel – which is one of the reasons that the Babylonian captivity lasted 70 years so that the land might enjoy the Sabbaths of which it had been deprived in the past (Lev.26:34; 2Chron.36:21). However, there is no justification for linking the passage to that year. The Year of Jubilee was itself a shadow of the "Day of the Lord", His "favorable year", that is, the Millennial reign of Christ, and it is to that primarily that the passage read by our Lord refers. No doubt His hearers were surprised that He would say this passage had been fulfilled, but it had been in that the Messiah, the King who will usher in the millennial kingdom was there in their presence, demonstrating by this healing miracles that He was the One sent to bring in that time of glory. Rejected by those to whom He had come (Jn.1:11), the ultimate and practical fulfillment of the Millennium is still future. So you are correct that there is fulfillment of this passage yet to come.

\*\*\*

Luke 4:23 (NASB)

23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'"

\*

Q: What events at Capernaum is our Lord referring here to?

A: These would be miracles which are not specified in scripture. Our Lord was based in Capernaum at this time, and it was His practice to heal the sick; whereas in His home town He did not do many such healing miracles "because of their unbelief" (Matt.13:58). So the proverb our Lord cites here refers to a desire on the part of His townsfolk to benefit from Christ's healing without at the same time accepting Him for who He was or putting any faith in Him.

\*\*\*

Luke 4:30 (NASB)

30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

NIV SB: Lk.4:30 walked right through the crowd. Luke does not explain whether the escape was miraculous or simply the result of Jesus' commanding presence. In any case, his time (to die) had not yet come (see Jn 7:30 and note).

\*

Q: Which one of the two was it in your view?

A: It was clearly a miracle!

\*\*\*

Luke 4:44 (NASB)

44 So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of [a]Judea.

a. Luke 4:44 I.e. the country of the Jews (including Galilee)

\*

Q: Could you explain this footnote, since Galilee isn't a part of Judea?

A: Luke uses the word *Ioudaia* in a broad sense often, as for example in the beginning of the gospel:

There was in the days of Herod, ***the king of Judea***, a certain priest named Zacharias.

Luke 1:5a NKJV

So this means other places in Galilee (namely, Herod's portion of "Judea", the territory of "the Jews").

\*\*\*

b) NIV SB: Lk.4:44 This summary statement includes not only what has just been described (from v. 14 on) but also what lay ahead in Jesus' ministry. No express mention is made in the Synoptics of the early Judean ministry recorded in John (2:13-4:3), though it may be reflected in 13:34 (see note there) and Mt 23:37. Judea. Some manuscripts, as well as the parallel accounts (Mt 4:23; Mk 1:39), mention Galilee instead of Judea. In writing to a Gentile (see Introduction:Recipient and Purpose), Luke possibly used "Judea" to refer to the whole land of the Jews (see 23:5 and note; Ac 10:37; 11:1, 29; 26:20).

\*

Q: Similarly here - why is Judea mentioned instead of Galilee?

A: See previous answer. The reason may be that Luke is emphasizing our Lord's ministry to all of Israel rather than letting himself be limited by political and geographic descriptions of the time.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:1 (NASB)

5 Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret;

NIV SB: Lk.5:1 Lake of Gennesaret. Luke is the only one who calls it this. The other Gospel writers call it the Sea of Galilee (see Mk 1:16 and note), and John twice calls it the Sea of Tiberias (see Jn 6:1 and note; see also NIV text note on 21:1).

\*

Q: Is there a reason why Luke uses a different name?

A: I can't say why. It is one of several contemporary names for the lake, as the note correctly states. Some scholars suggest that this name was first applied to the fertile plain which abuts the lake. But this is a good example of the gospels combining to give us a fuller picture than any one could have done.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:8 (NASB)

8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' [a]feet, saying, "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!"

a. Luke 5:8 Lit. knees

\*

Q: Should it be feet or knees?

A: The Greek has "knees". Scripture doesn't say that Peter did so, but beseeching a person by falling to one's knees and grabbing the knees of the person being supplicated was a standard practice in the ancient world.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:9-10 (NASB)

9 For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men."

\*

Q: How should we understand the beginning of verse 10 - "and so also were" (*homoios*)? Does it mean "and so James and John were also amazed", or simply that "James and John were also there"?

A: The adverb modifies a verbal action, and the verbal idea just preceding is that of their amazement, not merely of their presence.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:11 (NASB)

11 When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

NIV SB: Lk.5:11 left everything and followed him. This was not the first time these men had been with Jesus (see Mk 1:17 and note; Jn 1:40-42; 2:1-2). Their periodic and loose association now became a closely knit fellowship as they followed the Master. The scene is the same as Mt 4:18-22 and Mk 1:16-20, but the accounts relate events from different hours of the morning.

\*

Q: Do you agree that the scene is the same as in Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20?

A: Thomas and Gundry in *A Harmony of the Gospels* see Luke 5:4-11 as what they term a "second call". That accords with the idea of the note above, if not its final conclusion. The events as related in Luke are different enough to accept T & G's order.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:12-16 (NASB)

12 While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 13 And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him. 14 And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." 15 But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. 16 But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

NIV SB: Lk.5:12-16 The healing of the man with leprosy is described in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, but the setting is different in each.

\*

Q: Do you agree that setting is different here than in Mark 1:40-45 and Matthew 8:2-4 where this healing is described also?

A: The event is related differently by all three synoptics but without any contradiction. I don't see any evidence that "the setting" is in any way different (or any problem arising from assuming the same "setting").

\*\*\*

Luke 5:20 (NASB)

20 Seeing their faith, He said, "[a]Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

a. Luke 5:20 Lit Man

\*

Q: Should it be Man or Friend? The Greek says *anthrope*, was this term ever used with the meaning of "friend"?

A: Translation is never a perfect science. The point is that Greek is not English, so that what we mean when we say "O Man" today (influenced by its journey through the 1960's) is different from what our Lord meant. "Dear chap" (UK) may be closer; "my dear fellow" sounds a bit too formal; "pal" is too colloquial; "friend" strikes the right tone: it is a general address but it does bring out the fact of the person's humanity – which of course naturally results in the sin, disease and death under which we all suffer in this life, and condemnation thereafter absent God's forgiveness.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:27 (NASB)

27 After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named [a]Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me."

a. Luke 5:27 Also called Matthew

\*



Q: Why is it both Levi and Matthew?

A: The possession of dual names was a commonplace in that society, and it seems – at least from my personal observation – that such is often the case for people living in multilingual cultural environments. For example, many of the Chinese people I have known in my life have had in addition to their given Chinese name also an "American name" which is easier for us here to remember and pronounce. Some systems of names wherein the person has multiple names (as in this country where a first, middle and last name is the most common situation) may give rise to a person being known best by one name to some people and another to others. For example, many people I've known from the USMC I was most likely to call/know by their last name – but not in all cases. One finds this in Roman circles too where the *praenomen*, *nomen*, or *cognomen* might be "the name" by which the person was best known. "Levi" may be Matthew's *nomen gentilicium* "tribal name"; in any case, it is a less "Greek" transliteration than "Matthew" (which of course is also Hebrew derived).

\*\*\*

Luke 5:28 (NASB)

28 And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him.

NIV SB: Lk.5:28 left everything and followed him. Since Jesus had been ministering in Capernaum for some time, Levi probably had known him previously (see note on v. 11).

\*

Q: Would you agree with this note?

A: It seems clear at least that this was not the very first time that Matthew had laid eyes on our Lord. Certainly he had heard Him before and had believed in Him – and our Lord knew the right time and place to "collect him" for the ministry.

\*\*\*

Luke 5:31 (NASB)

31 And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

\*

Q: Does our Lord here by "righteous" mean those who perceive themselves as righteous, since none can really claim to be righteous in God's eyes?

A: I think you are on the right track. This statement is true but also somewhat "tongue in cheek" in that the Pharisees and company who found fault were not really righteous in God's eyes (since faith in Christ is the only way to attain to God's righteousness), but they thought of themselves as such, having established a false system of works-righteousness. So their first response will have been that our Lord's answer made perfect sense (and they would/should have been a little abashed at it when considering His mercy to sinners and their lack of concern); but on reflection those of them who were not too far gone ought also to have given some consideration to how these sinners were going to become righteous through their response to Jesus – and consequently whether they themselves were so in fact as they had assumed, given their reluctance to respond to Him.

\*\*\*

Luke 6:11 (NASB)

11 But they themselves were filled with [a]rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

a. Luke 6:11 Lit folly

\*

Q: Should it be "rage" or "folly"?

A: The Greek word *anoia* (lit., "non-mindedness"), means both, so perhaps "madness" would not be a bad translation here as that word covers both anger and insanity. However, "rage" leading to "insanity" is the idea in this context. N.B., we do the same thing in English where the word "mad" can mean angry **or** insane – and it is certainly true that when a person is in the grip of anger normal restraints of behavior which any sane person would otherwise exhibit are often thrown to the winds (e.g., "road rage").

\*\*\*

Luke 6:14 (NASB)

14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and [a]James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew;

I) NIV SB: Lk.6:14-16 Lists of the apostles appear also in Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:16-19; Ac 1:13. Although the order of the names varies, Peter is always first and Judas Iscariot last.

\*

Q: Should we take it as a proof of preeminence of Peter and unbelief of Judas?

A: In Judas' case of being listed last, I think it is a clear indication of his spiritual status of unbelief from the beginning; but that is emphasized as well in all three of the synoptic gospels where the disciples are listed by declaring that he was the one who betrayed our Lord (Matt.10:4; Mk.3:19; Lk.6:16). I believe we have spoken before about Peter. He was the erstwhile administrative leader during the early days of the Church, but that is something quite different from "preeminence". After James, the Lord's brother, began to assert his authority, James seems to have become the functional administrative head of the Jerusalem church instead of Peter (cf. Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal.2:11-14). Also, Peter's behavior at Antioch does not suggest that he was being treated like a "pope" or that he thought of himself that way (Gal.2:11-14).

\*\*\*

II) NIV SB: Lk.6:14 Bartholomew. Seems to be (in the Synoptics) the same as Nathanael (in John). Nathanael is associated with Philip in Jn 1:45.

\*

Q: Do you agree that Bartholomew and Nathanael is the same apostle?

A: Yes. Bartholomew is probably a patronymic (*bar* meaning "son" and in this combination "son of"); so here we probably have the last and first names of this disciple respectively.

\*\*\*

Luke 6:17 (NASB)

17 Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place; and there was a large crowd of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon,

NIV SB: Lk.6:17 stood on a level place. Perhaps a plateau, which would satisfy both this context and that in Mt 5:1 (see note on Mt 5:1-7:29).

\*

Q: Could you clarify this point - the note says that "level place" satisfies the context here and in Matthew 5, but Matthew 5:1 says "He went up on the mountain"?

A: I prefer to see these as different incidents. Our Lord said many things not recorded, and no doubt He repeated many things, both for the sake of repetition, a necessary thing in teaching, and also because the audience was different from occasion to occasion. The call of the twelve follows the "sermon on the mount" in Matthew (it is in chapter ten, whereas the "sermon" is in chapter five), but the "sermon" follows the call directly in our context in Luke.

\*\*\*

Luke 6:20-49

NIV SB: Lk.6:20-49 Luke's Sermon on the Plateau, apparently parallel to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7). Although this sermon is much shorter than the one in Matthew, they both begin with the Beatitudes and end with the lesson of the builders. Some of Matthew's sermon is found in other portions of Luke (e. g., 11:2-4; 12:22-31, 33-34), suggesting that the material may have been given on various occasions in Jesus' preaching.

\*

Q: What is your take on reconciling the two accounts?

A: In accord with the previous answer, our Lord taught for over three years, and clearly repeated His core teachings many times – in just the right and perfect way. The gospels record part of that ministry – in just the right and perfect way – but could never have been expected to capture all of it:

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

John 21:25 NIV

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Luke 6:37-38 (NASB)

37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. 38 Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

\*

Q: What is the meaning of verse 38? Since it follows the message of verse 37, should we understand the "good measure" not as a gratification in positive sense, but rather an identical standard in assessing our shortcomings to the one we used to assess the failings of others? Most interpretations I have seen take it in the positive sense, as the NIV SB (i.e., reference to 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

A: This is definitely meant in the positive sense of reciprocation for giving (whether from others or from the Lord, whether in material terms or in spiritual ones); the negative reciprocation of finding fault with others in the previous verse is what is being contrasted here.

\*\*\*

NIV SB: Lk.6:38 See 2Co 8:1-5;. poured into your lap. Probably refers to the way the outer garment was worn, leaving a fold over the belt that could be used as a large pocket to hold a measure of wheat.

\*

Q: What does our Lord mean by the measure being "pressed down, shaken together, and running over"? Do you agree with the NIV SB that the reference is to a fold over the belt?

A: To take the latter first, in the ancient world everyone wore as a basic over-garment the "tunic" (Greek *chiton*, Latin *tunica*, Hebrew *chethoneth*). This was a square or oblong sheet with a hole for the head, bound at the waist with a "girdle" or belt. It was not uncommon to gather up the material in the front below the belt to carry things, especially things not solid (there were no plastic bags in the ancient world, after all). So our Lord is referring to a commonplace custom in His day wherein the person in the example holds out the fabric of the lower part of his garment in order to receive the offering of flour. In terms of the threefold description, the flour is "pressed down" when weighed so that it is all flour and no air; "shaken out", that is, strained through a colander or sieve, so that there are no impurities when it is poured out; and "overflows", so that the measured portion is a "baker's dozen", as we might say, as much as the person can hold, a full as well as a fair measure. If we want this kind of gift/reward, we should be fair and generous ourselves in the first place.

\*\*\*

Luke 6:39-40 (NASB)

39 And He also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? 40 A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

\*

**Q:** Can you explain why our Lord uses these words at this particular place? How are they related to the context and to what has been said?

**A:** If one goes to a church today and hears a "sermon", it may be theoretically based upon a Bible verse, but even if so the preacher often uses that as a launching pad for all manner of stories, illustrations, and questionable conclusions that have nothing to do with the point. Our Lord's teaching was not like this, for He taught "as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt.7:29). In other words, when He had made the point, He moved onto the next point. Everything He said is the truth, and He had a good deal to teach every audience to which He came. If He had accommodated Himself to standard conventions the job could not have been done. For those who didn't get the point, He always repeated; for all who wanted to get the point, there was truth in store beyond expectation – and we are still gleaning from it today of course. All this is to say that, in addition to the fact that the gospels are selective (through the Spirit), it is also true that our Lord was not bound by the conventions taught in rhetoric et al., so we might miss the point of a given teaching if we labor to find immediate connections between points which might not be there in any sort of specificity so as to draw conclusions from the collocations.

**Q2:** Just one more question on these two verses - some commentators link verse 40 with verse 39, which would mean that the pupils from verse 40, who, after they have been fully trained, will become like their teachers, need to become much more than that, as otherwise they will fall to the pit, like the blind guides teaching them. Barnes draws a following conclusion based on this:

This seems to have been spoken to show them that they were not to expect that their disciples would go "beyond them" in attainments; that if they were blind, their followers would be also; and that therefore it was important for them to understand fully the doctrines of the gospel, and not to be blind leaders of the blind.

Others take the teacher from verse 40 to be our Lord - what do you think?

A2: Luke 6:39 is speaking about those who are not genuine teachers of the truth at all. Following them will land a person in the ditch very quickly. Luke 6:40 is talking about genuine teachers of the truth. Our goal is to get as close to the Lord as we can. He is our teacher. The verse also has application to all pupil/teacher relationships. Until a pupil becomes a teacher in his own right, the best that can be hoped for is to keep pace with the teacher. That is motivation for humility on the part of students and for hard work on the part of teachers – to always be giving their students something more to learn. Ideally, through this process followed diligently, we will all "reach that unifying [goal] of belief in and full-knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Son of God, that each of us might be a perfect person, that is, that we might attain to that standard of maturity whose "attainment" is defined by Christ" (Eph.4:13).

Q3: So would you not say that verse 40 could be linked to 39 which is speaking about those who were not teachers, but rather blind guides? On the one hand, I'm aware that these words were spoken by our Lord in Matthew 10:24 and John 15:20 in a clear relation to Himself, which bears the meaning you have described in the last answer. I'm just wondering whether in Luke 6:40 the saying couldn't go "either way", so to say, as referring both to true teachers and those who are no teachers at all. I may be wrong here, of course, but the context doesn't seem to preclude that - verse 38 says that it will be measured to us according to our measure, application of which is that if we are generous, we will also receive generously and if not, then we won't; verse 39 speaks of the blind guides, then we have verse at hand and after that comes the passage on hypocritical judgement, so a positive application of verse 40 would make it stand out slightly as the only positive one. I know I asked several context-related questions in the previous set and I'm aware that the link does not need to be direct and often isn't, particularly as the record of all said by our Lord is not complete. It just made a degree of sense to me to link these two verses here - "when a blind man follows a blind guide, both will fall into the pit and those who follow are not greater than those who lead, so think whom you are following, because if you follow and learn from the blind, you will fall into the pit too. And if that is the case, then you have to surpass your teachers and go beyond their false teaching". Similarly in Meyer:

*The rationale of the preceding statement: Both shall fall into a ditch, -therefore not merely the teacher, but the disciple also. Otherwise the disciple must surpass his teacher - a result which, even in the most fortunate circumstances, is not usually attained. This is thus expressed: A disciple is not above his teacher, but every one that is fully prepared shall be AS his teacher, i.e. when he has received the complete preparation in the school of his teacher he will be equal to his teacher. He will not surpass him. But the disciple must surpass his teacher (in knowledge, wisdom, disposition, etc.) if he were not to fall into perdition along with him.*

Let me know if this is in your view at all possible and if the verse could have a double application here - the one described, referring to the false teachers from the preceding verse and one referring to the Lord as the true teacher.

A3: I really don't see this as a possibility. Meyer's explanation is very tenuous, it seems to me, and he seems to be bending over backwards to make a connection which isn't present. In my view, being blind is a bad thing – if you are a guide and purporting to be able to see so as to lead people forward – because not only will you yourself fall into a ditch (as the Pharisees had) but anyone ill-advised enough to follow you will fall in as well. In the analogy, the students are just as blind as the teachers; so even if they were to be in some modest respect better or greater, it wouldn't change the facts that 1) they were blind and would fall into the ditch even on their own; and 2) they are said to be following so they will fall in in any case. That is the point. What is needed is not "being greater" than the teacher – that is impossible (except when the student becomes a teacher in his own right, and even then it is a rarity); what is needed is an end to spiritual blindness. Blindness, in the context, is a stubborn refusal to accept the truth that God is trying to make clear through the *parousia* "advent", presence, miracles and teaching of His Son our Lord. Unless and until there is a "born again" experience and the veil of blindness is lifted (2Cor.3:13-18), all of those who have followed the legalism of the Pharisees are going to continue to be walking around in the dark (just as Nicodemus did not have a clue what our Lord was talking about until he was saved: Jn.3:1-12). Jesus is the Light of the world, but those who close their eyes to the light are as good as blind (Jn.9:39-41).

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

John 1:9-11 NIV

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Luke 7:3 (NASB)

3 When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.

NIV SB: Lk.7:3 elders of the Jews. Highly respected Jews of the community, though not necessarily rulers of the synagogue. They were willing to come and plead for the centurion. In Matthew's account (Mt 8:5-13) the centurion speaks with Jesus himself, while in Luke's account he speaks with Jesus through his friends (see note on Mt 8:5). Matthew often abbreviates in this way.



Matthew 8:5 (NASB)

5 And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, imploring Him,

\*

Q: How can these two accounts be reconciled?

A: Here I think that the note is correct. In the fuller version given here, the centurion sends two sets of friends; on the second occasion we also cannot say that the centurion himself did not "come forth" from his house in anticipation of the Lord's arrival, then sent his second set of friends ahead to deliver the message. In any case, Matthew's shorter rendering is consistent with Luke's.

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Luke 7:24 (NASB)

24 When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"

NIV SB: Lk.7:24, 26 What did you go ... to see? John was not a weak messenger, swayed by the pressures of human opinion. On the contrary, he was a true prophet.

\*

Q: Do you agree that by the words "reed shaken by the wind" our Lord means "a weak messenger, swayed by the pressures of human opinion"?

A: It's a fine application, but I think our Lord's words merely mean "you didn't go all the way out into the wilderness to see nothing, did you?"

\*\*\*

Luke 7:28-30 (NASB)

28 I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God's justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.

\*

Q: Words from verse 29 sound as if people acknowledged God's justice having heard Jesus' words about John - Is that how we should understand them? I thought that this is a summary statement about those who responded to John's

ministry and those who didn't, but then I don't know how to interpret the beginning - "When all the people and tax collectors heard this"?

A: You are correct that the verses following the quote show the divergence between those who acknowledged that John's baptism was of God and those who did not (the meaning of *dikiaoo* here). So the people who did acknowledge John's authority were happy to agree with our Lord's confirmation of that authority, but those who were not did not (cf. our Lord's use of His knowledge of their lack of acceptance of John's authority to refute these same officials later on: Matt.21:23-27).

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Luke 8:2 (NASB)

2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out,

NIV SB: Lk.8:2 Mary (called Magdalene). Her hometown was Magdala. She is not to be confused with the sinful woman of ch. 7 or Mary of Bethany (Jn 11:1).

\*

Q: I take it you disagree with the fact that Mary Magdalene "is not to be confused with the sinful woman of ch. 7 or Mary of Bethany"? Is the same person meant in all these three places?

A: It's one and the same person. As I say in BB 4A about the cognomen asked about here, it is not a place name:

However, as may be seen from other Greek adjectives, it is certainly possible that the entire ending -ene is a suffix. This would make the Aramaic word *magdal* (Hebrew *migdol*), meaning "tower", the root of this adjective (rather than the hypothetical town names usually proposed). As such, this title for Mary is not a gentilic describing her place of birth or city (she was in fact from Bethany), but rather an honorific (explaining why she was "called" Magdalene: Lk.8:2), bestowed upon her for the stalwartness of her faith displayed before, during, and after the crucifixion when she stood firm "like a tower" when many others gave in to despair.

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Luke 8:4 (NASB)

4 When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable:

NIV SB: From parables Jesus' enemies could find no direct statements to use against him.

\*

Q: Would you agree that this is one of the reasons our Lord taught in parables?

A: This is an added "benefit" that is part and parcel of the hardness in Israel that the Messiah's ministry of grace encountered:

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.  
John 1:11 NKJV

The reason for the parables was, as Isaiah predicted . . .

And He said, "Go, and tell this people:  
'Keep on hearing, but do not understand;  
Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'  
Make the heart of this people dull,  
And their ears heavy,  
And shut their eyes;  
And hear with their ears,  
And understand with their heart,  
And return and be healed.  
Isaiah 6:9-10 NKJV

The parables give truth to those willing to accept in (being then enlightened by the Spirit), but for those who are hardened against it . . .

"So they come to you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain. Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them."  
Ezekiel 33:31-32 NKJV

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Luke 8:13 (NASB)

13 Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

NIV SB: Lk.8:13 They believe for a while. This kind of belief is superficial and does not save. It is similar to what James calls "dead" (Jas 2:17, 26) or "useless" faith (Ja2:20; see notes on Jas 2:14-26).

\*

Q: Do you agree with this interpretation? There doesn't seem to be a reason here to doubt the genuineness of the faith discussed here by our Lord, even if it's very short-lived and lacking foundation, but I'm not sure. Also, what do you think about the comparison with the faith discussed by James?

A: The note is a typical and dangerous misreading. These types do have faith; however, they lose their faith when it is put under pressure. That is the definition of apostasy. "Fall away" here is the Greek *aphistemi* from which our word "apostasy" is derived, and it doesn't merely mean "fall away" so much as it means "rebel" (i.e., the action is not passive in nature but active, coming from the will of the person in question). This group chooses to abandon Christ when they feel disappointed by God in some way – feeling unfairly persecuted or not sufficiently protected in trouble, e.g. James chapter two is also very often misinterpreted. In fact, all who believe are believers, and that means by definition that they trust God – and such trust is evident in all they think, say and do (so that their faith does produce "results" or "works", at least to some small degree). There is no such thing as "dead faith": a person either believes in Christ and is a believer, or is not.

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Luke 8:16-18 (NASB)

16 "Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. 17 For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. 18 So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

\*

Q: Could you explain these three verses, what is their relationship to one another and to the context? The beginning of verse 17 ("For") seems to suggest that it is directly linked to verse 16, content of which might be regarding the parable of the sower. And the beginning of verse 18 ("So") hints that it refers back to what was just said in verse 17, but I'm not clear as to how all this goes

together. Also, it seems these words are used by our Lord in different contexts elsewhere:

Mark 4:21-23 (NASB)

21 And He was saying to them, "A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not brought to be put on the lampstand? 22 For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

Matthew 10:24-27 (NASB)

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household! 26 "Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops.

Luke 12:1-3 (NASB)

12 Under these circumstances, after so many thousands of people had gathered together that they were stepping on one another, He began saying to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. 3 Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have[c]whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.

I may be wrong here, but Luke 18:17 seems to be referring to not hiding the message of the gospel, which also appears to be the case in Mark 4:21-23, but in Matthew 10:24-27 and Luke 12:13 the meaning looks more to do with all the hypocrisy eventually being disclosed?

A: As to other contexts, Matthew 10 and Luke 12 both affirm that things hidden at present will all come to light. Everything will come to light, for there will be judgment at the end of time for all, believers and unbelievers alike (though the Church's judgment occurs at the beginning of the Millennium). Mark 4 is parallel but does not have the additional point contained in Luke 8:18, our context. You are correct about *gar* and *oun*: these three verses are a unity and are to be taken together, but they don't go back to the parable of the Sower (a self-contained teaching). Verse 16: the purpose of making a light is for it to give light; therefore instead of hiding our light, we are to "let it shine" inasmuch as

we are "light in the Lord" (Eph.5:8) and "shine as lights in the world" (Phil.2:15); how is this done? It is done by responding to Jesus Christ: growing, progressing in our faith, and helping others to do the same – not by calling attention to ourselves in foolish ways or making "a big splash" the way those who are friends with the world are wont to do; not by engaging in "charity" as the world defines it – but by ministering the truth as the Lord would have it. And "this is important" (v.17 *gar*), because everything will be revealed in the end "in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel" (Rom.2:16 NKJV). So "therefore" (v.18 *oun*) we need to be careful to receive the truth and do so in the correct way, in humility, in the Spirit, in belief of the truth we hear, in treasuring and applying it the way we should. If we do, we will be given more and more (along with all that comes with growth); if we go the other way, we may find that our faith dries up to the point of apostasy where "even what we have will be taken from us".

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Luke 8:26 (NASB)

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.

NIV SB: Lk.8:26 region of the Gerasenes. The Gospels describe the location of this event in two ways:(1) the region of the Gerasenes (see note on Mk 5:1); (2) the region of the Gadarenes (see note on Mt 8:28). Some manuscripts of Matthew, Mark and Luke read "Gergesenes" (see NIV text note here), but this spelling may have been introduced in an attempt to resolve the differences.

\*

Q: How can these differences be reconciled in your view?

A: From "[Matthew Questions](#)":

All three of the synoptic gospels mention this place, and they all spell it slightly differently (at least in the original hand in Aleph). This is, in my opinion, much ado about nothing. When we have disciples called by different names entirely, it is not too much to understand that certain places with difficult names were variously pronounced (and spelled), according to the preference of the one doing the writing. I doubt any of the gospel writers had ever seen the place spelled in a text, so they each transliterated it into Greek as it seemed best to them. In the LXX, the town Megiddo is spelled dozens of different ways – a problem of making Hebrew names into Greek (which as we know is a problem with all Hebrew names coming into Greek, and Aramaic ones too). The point is that it is the same place, whether or not we wish to come up with a standard

English transliteration – which will be different in Greek from whatever we decide is "right" – the town/region is the same in any case.

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Luke 8:28-30 (NASB)

28 Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, "What business do we have with each other, 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 seized him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert. 30 And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him.

\*

Q: I'm not clear about the sequence of events here. It seems that the demon's question ("What business . . .") is asked following the words of our Lord ("For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out . . ."), and in the next verse Jesus asks "What is your name?", which seems more fitting for the beginning of the conversation.

A: Our Lord only asks the name when instead of an immediate response there is a quibble. We know from elsewhere in the gospels (Matt.17:21; Mk.9:29) that some demons are more resistant to exorcism than others; the fact that there was a "legion" of demons in this person did not exempt them from being cast out, but it apparently gave them a moment of delay until our Lord interrogated them.

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Luke 8:39 (NASB)

39 "Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

\*

Q: Could this passage be taken as supportive of our Lord's deity? Does Jesus here mean "great things God (myself) has done for you" or "great things God (through me) has done for you?"

A: I think you have a point that this is not something anyone but the Messiah would be likely to say, because who else would be so confident that what he himself had done was something that God had entirely done? Still, that is the

perspective we all should have whenever we are given to do anything for the Lord and His Church, so at least here we see our Lord as our perfect model in humility.

\*\*\*

Luke 8:52 (NASB)

52 Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep."

a) NIV SB:

not dead but asleep. Jesus meant that she was not permanently dead (see Jn 11:11-14 for a similar statement about Lazarus).

\*

Q: Is that how we should understand Jesus' words?

A: The statement is true, but I fear it misses the point in our Lord's less than direct response to the crowd. Our Lord knew plenty about celebrity and its deleterious effects (cf. Jn.2:25). He intends to bring the young girl back to life, and doing so will be an exceptional miracle. Some will have the correct attitude of praise as a result, but others would – without some consideration of the family's privacy which our Lord seeks to preserve here – make this girl and her parents a *cause celebre*. This in turn could ruin the life just saved, and our Lord seeks to prevent that. We need only look to the case of Lazarus who likewise was raised from the dead, and in a very public way, to see another negative aspect of the celebrity involved in being a recipient of such an exceptional miracle from the hands of our Lord:

But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

John 12:10-11 NKJV

Q2: I grasp the meaning of your response, but it's just this first sentence that I'm unclear about. If my understanding is now correct - the note is right that our Lord knew that she was physically dead, but He purposefully calls it "sleep", since the death is not permanent and so as to avoid publicity.

A2: I'm not sure that is what the note is saying, but that is my understanding of the situation described in Luke as well



Q3: In Matthew this miracle is described in chapter 9 and the parable of the sower in chapter 13, but Luke's order is opposite. I take it that it's Luke's order that is chronological? Do we know what criteria were used by Matthew and Mark when arranging their accounts?

A3: Of course the renditions are slightly different, and if this was a focus of our Lord's during this time period, it would make sense if He had preached this parable both before and after the event in question. For reasons discussed above, we cannot impose strict chronological tests on the order of all of the events in the gospels. To reprise two of the main issues: 1) order is sometimes legitimately changed for purposes of emphasis (as in the order of Satan's temptations discussed above); 2) parables and other teaching themes were repeated no doubt many times over the course of the three and a half year ministry of our Lord, and this often explains minor differences between them. In terms of the methods employed by the evangelists, we have only the gospels themselves, along, of course, with much scholarly speculation over the last two centuries in particular. Many scholars have made a career out of "deconstructing" the gospels according to all manner of questionable and more often than not demonstrably false standards. Even with four gospels, we obviously only have a very short treatment of such an intensive ministry which spanned three and a half years (e.g., Jn.21:25). So while there is some value in seeking to harmonize the events (the two best works on this in my view are Kurt Aland's *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum*, and Thomas and Gundry's *A Harmony of the Gospels*), on the one hand there will always be instances where establishing the precise sequence is problematic, and on the other hand in some cases we may be dealing with similar events rather than the exact same event. What we can be sure of, however, is that what we have in these four gospels is the perfect message, perfectly constructed by the Holy Spirit, given for our edification in the truth of the Word of God in this special portion of it wherein we see the Son of God face to face, having thrown in His lot with us in order to save us from our sins and vouchsafe us life eternal.

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Luke 8:56 (NASB)

56 Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.

\*

Q: How can Jesus give this instruction if on the way to the official's house crowds were pressing on Him

A: He put them all outside in v.54 and only allowed the parents and the twelve to view the miracle – that way, the "she is only sleeping" report would shield the girl and her family from unwanted attention in the future.

Q2: Could you clarify:

a) Since verse 51 only mentions Peter, John and James, how do we know that all twelve were there?

b) Do you mean that only the parents and the disciples were told that the girl was asleep? If so, would it be girl's parents who are laughing in verse 53, since others were already sent out? I always assumed it was the crowd, but I'm not sure how to reconcile it with the narrative.

A2: a) You are correct – only this smaller inner-circle of disciples was admitted; b) The statement was for the benefit of her parents and her, but it was made generally to the crowd (who laughed initially but who would be left to ponder latter).

Q3: Ok, just the last question here - I'm not sure who is laughing in verse 53. In verse 51 Jesus sends everyone away apart from Peter, James, John and girls' parents and yet in verse 53 his words are laughed at. I'm trying to envisage this situation - did our Lord go into the house with the five people mentioned, with the rest of the crowd staying outside the house, but there were some people (e.g., mourners) inside too? It seems that the words from the beginning of the verse 52 "Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her" could refer to such a group who were inside, but not of the five closest people who were allowed to go in. Let me know how we should understand this.

A3: In Luke 8:40-42, we are told that the father had sought our Lord out and was with Him as they were coming back to the home (this is when the woman with the flow of blood touched Him and was miraculously healed). When they get back to the home, the mourners (all manner of friends, relatives and neighbors) were holding a wake in the house as was traditional. Our Lord does not allow the crowd that was following Him to enter into the house (where the mourning party is present already), only the inner circle of disciples and the girl's parents. It is now that our Lord informs the mourners that the girl is not dead and they ridicule Him. But it does turn out exactly that way (for all the world to see), so that the young girl will not be a focus of unnecessary attention in the future (something that our Lord must have known would not be a good thing in her case).

\*\*\*

Luke 8:42 (NASB)

42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him.

and there was a loud commotion in the house

Mark 5:38 (NASB)

38 They \*came to the house of the synagogue official; and He \*saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing.

Luke 9:1-6

NIV SB: Lk.9:1-6 A new phase of Jesus' ministry began when he sent out the apostles to do the type of preaching, teaching and healing they had observed him doing (Mt 9:35). This was the third tour of Galilee by Jesus and his disciples (see note on 8:1). On the first tour Jesus traveled with the four fishermen; on the second all 12 were with him; on the third Jesus traveled alone after sending out the Twelve two by two.

\*

Q: Do you agree that there were three tours of Galilee in our Lord's ministry?

A: Our Lord began His ministry in Galilee, and returned there consistently after attending the festivals in Jerusalem. Given that we are privy to only some of the events of those three and half years, in my view it is inadvisable to speak of "three tours" – that was where our Lord lived and ministered when He was not on His way to or in Judea or Jerusalem (or occasionally to some other place as in the region of the Gadarenes or Syro-Phoenicia), and there were at least three such journeys per year by mandate of the Law (see the link: "[John and Jesus](#)").

\*\*\*

Luke 9:10-17

NIV SB: Lk.9:10-17 The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle besides Jesus' resurrection that is reported in all four Gospels (see notes on Mk 6:30-44; Jn 6:1-14).

\*

Q: Since this miracle is reported in all four gospels, all four authors must have considered it significant enough to include - why do you think that is?

A: It demonstrates God's absolute sufficiency and faithfulness in providing for His people, both materially and spiritually. Whatever we need, even if it seems impossible to get, God provides. They needed food and our Lord provided it miraculously – and in superabundance for all so that all were satisfied and much was left over besides; and they needed spiritual sustenance as well, and they had been provided with the most sublime teaching of the truth by the Son of God Himself, for He is the true Bread of Life whose blood washes away the sins of the world. John includes this miracle to bring in this important point in order to connect it with the symbolism of the bread and the wine, the Body and Blood of Christ whereby all who eat and drink (a representation of acceptance by faith of who He is and what He has done for us) are saved. The fact that all who came were likewise satisfied shows that there is no limit on the grace of God – only such as we place on ourselves by rejecting His gracious provision.

\*\*\*

Luke 9:28 (NASB)

28 Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

NIV SB:

onto a mountain. Although Mount Tabor is the traditional site of the Mount of Transfiguration, its distance from Caesarea Philippi (the vicinity of the last scene), its height (about 1,800 feet) and its occupation by a fortress make it unlikely. Mount Hermon fits the context much better by being both closer and higher (over 9,000 feet; see Mk 9:2). pray. Again Luke points out the place of prayer in an important event.

\*

Q: Do you agree with the content of the note?

A: It is speculative. Just as there are reasons why we are told certain things, there are also reasons why we are not told them. When it comes to such things as geographical places where miraculous things took place, it is clear from history that people have a tendency to venerate and idolize the place thus losing the point of the miraculous event. Were the mountain known, it would no doubt long ago have become a focal point for legalistic pilgrimages and false veneration.

\*\*\*

Luke 9:30 (NASB)

30 And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah,

NIV SB: Lk.9:30 Moses and Elijah. Moses, the great OT deliverer and lawgiver, and Elijah, the representative of the prophets. Moses' work had been finished by Joshua, Elijah's by Elisha (another form of the name Joshua). They now spoke with Jesus (whose Hebrew name was Joshua) concerning the "exodus" he was about to accomplish, by which he would deliver his people from the bondage of sin and bring to fulfillment the work of both Moses and Elijah (see notes on 1Ki 19:16; Mt 17:3).

\*

**Q:** Do you agree with the point made here about the name Joshua? It seems quite an interesting observation.

**A:** It is true that there is no difference between the Greek spelling of our Lord's name and that of Joshua's. It is also true that Joshua is a type of Christ. I don't find any special reason to bring that up here nor to bring it into any interpretation of the verse, however (any more so than other places).

\*\*\*

Luke 9:31 (NASB)

31 who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

NIV SB: Lk.9:31 departure. Greek exodos, a euphemism for Jesus' approaching death. It may also link Jesus' saving death and resurrection with God's saving of his people out of Egypt.

\*

**Q:** Would you agree that a link between these two events should be made here?

**A:** The word "link" suggests that this is a necessary or fundamental part of the interpretation of the verse. While I think that it is a fine application, and also fine to bring up similarities and parallel's, tying the two events, the exodus and the cross, too closely as if they were inextricably interpretatively bound in this verse, would be incorrect in my view. The exodus is about the redemption of the children of Israel – they are the ones who experience "exodus" from Egypt. Moreover, this event parallels the second advent more directly than the first, and it was precisely such confusion, between the cross and the crown, that caused so many of our Lord's generation to stumble; that stumbling continues to the present day, for it is not possible to be saved without accepting the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, even for those who await a conquering Messiah.

\*\*\*

Luke 9:33 (NASB)

33 And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah"-not realizing what he was saying.

\*

**Q:** A question about Transfiguration occurred to me - how did Peter recognize Moses and Elijah?

**A:** We know that he did, since scripture is unmistakable on that point. Since there was no way for Peter to have been able to recognize them from their appearance (we surmise), and since it is doubtful that at this point Peter understood enough about eschatology to know that these would be the two witnesses of the Tribulation (that seems clear enough), I would conclude that he must have listened to the conversation for a while after awakening, long enough at least to realize who the two men were.

\*\*\*

Luke 9:47-50 (NASB)

47 But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side, 48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."

49 John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us." 50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you."

\*

**Q:** Our Lord talks about receiving the child in His name and then verse 49 says that "John answered" Him by making a mention of someone casting out the demons in His name. How are John's words related to what Jesus was saying (since the passage says "John answered")?

**A:** The Greek verb *apokrinomai* does mean "answer", but can be used somewhat flexibly. That is doubly true in the NT where it represents the Hebrew *'anah*, where the meaning here probably is "take up the conversation by saying" instead of "give a direct response to what had just been said". So there may be no relation other than the fact that this when John chimed in to add this report. However, in the context, our Lord has just given a lesson on accepting all those who are willing to come to the truth. Perhaps this pricked

John's conscience for his outright rejection of those doing as he reports "because he does not follow along with us".

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b) NIV SB: Lk.9:49 not one of us. Jesus shifts the pronoun to "you" in v. 50, which may mean that the man had a relationship to Jesus of which the disciples were unaware (see note on Mk 9:38).

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Q: I'm not clear about the point with shifting of the pronoun. Do you agree that using the pronoun "you" by our Lord means that this man could have had a relationship with him?

A: You are right not to be clear. Our Lord could only have said "us" or "you" here. The only thing to be derived from the use of "you" is that our Lord is stressing the conduct of the disciples and their activity (rather than emphasizing the commonality of the ministry between Him and His disciples). Given the easy transition between these two points of view throughout the NT (and in literature generally), I would be reluctant to make much of the difference. I will say that there is no difference here between Greek and English usage, so if it makes a reasonable difference in English, it is the same in the Greek and vice versa. In other words, there is no special "magic" in the use of the Greek pronouns here.

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Luke 9:51-53 (NASB)

51 When the days were approaching for His ascension, He was determined to go to Jerusalem;52 and He sent messengers on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. 53 But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem.

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Q: Why did the Samaritans not receive our Lord knowing that He was traveling toward Jerusalem?

A: The Samaritans – who were established in the land by the king of Babylon as replacements for the Jews during their Babylonian captivity – were rivals of the Jews in many ways. As such, they wished Samaria to be the seat of worship, not Jerusalem; and as such, they helped and encouraged leaving it, and did what they could (passively) to hinder anyone who was bound for that city.

Q2: What arrangements did Jesus have in mind?

A2: The Greek has *hetoimazo*, meaning simply to "make ready" or, as here we understand, "make preparations". This would be food and lodging.

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Luke 9:59 (NASB)

59 And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."

NIV SB: Lk.9:59 bury my father. If his father had already died, the man would have been occupied with the burial. But evidently he wanted to wait until after his father's death, which might have been years away. Jesus told him that the spiritually dead could bury the physically dead and that the spiritually alive should be busy proclaiming the kingdom of God (see Mt 8:21-22 and note on 8:22).

\*

Q: It's the first time I see an interpretation according to which the man was waiting for his father's death - what do you think of it?

A: I ascribe to this interpretation as well. But whether dead, or ill, or merely advanced in years, this is really an excuse by the person in question not to follow at our Lord's command. Those who adopt that point of view will never get around to believing, will never get around to growing, and will never get around to serving the Lord – because there will always be another good excuse.

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Luke 10:1 (NASB)

10 Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come.

NIV SB: Lk.10:1 appointed seventy- two. Recorded only in Luke, though similar instructions were given to the Twelve (Mt 9:37-38; 10:7-16; Mk 6:7-11; cf. Lk 9:3-5). Certain differences in early manuscripts make it unclear as to whether the number was 72 or 70 (see NIV text note). Jesus covered Judea with his message (see note on 9:51) as thoroughly as he had Galilee. The number 72 (or 70) may be meant to signify the Gentile nations, since the table of nations in Ge 10 had 72 names (in the Greek OT; 70 in the Hebrew). Just as the first missionary journey of the Twelve signified the mission to Israel, so this mission signifies the mission to the Gentiles. two by two. During his ministry in Galilee, Jesus had also sent out the Twelve two by two (see 9:1-6; Mk 6:7 and notes), a practice continued in the early church (Ac 13:2; 15:27, 39-40; 17:14; 19:22).

\*

Q: Do you agree with the reference of the number sent to the number of Gentile nations in Genesis 10?



A: From the posting "Satan's Fall from Grace":

The Greek manuscripts of Luke 10:18 disagree on this point, being about equally split in terms of numbers and quality of witnesses to the text. However, on the one hand the earliest evidence is for the seventy plus the number "two" being part of the original text (e.g., Bodmer papyrus p75 – 2/3 cent.), and on the other hand it is easy to see from a text-critical point how the "two" might have fallen out: first, the word order is *kai dyo kai* (inviting haplography); secondly, *dyo* occurs again a few words later (inviting correction of the text on the grounds that the first *dyo* might have been a case of dittography).

The fact that this whole event is a deliberate parallel of the ministry of the 144,000 (so that the number ought to bear some relation), is for me decisive in tipping the balance. Also, there are "theological" reasons why some might have preferred 70 (so as to assume "72" was a mistake): 1) as a multiple of seven, 70 "seems" more likely as a spiritually significant number; 2) there are, traditionally, 70 nations of the world (in biblical terms), so that 70 witnesses would seem the right number from that point of view as well (although this rationale ignores the fact that both these witnesses and the 144K are sent to "the lost sheep of Israel", not to the gentile nations).

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Luke 10:12 (NASB)

12 I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.

NIV SB: Lk.10:12 more bearable ... for Sodom. Although Sodom was so sinful that God destroyed it (see Ge 18:20 and note; 19:24-28; Jude 7 and note), the people who heard the message of Jesus and his disciples were even more accountable, because they had the gospel of the kingdom preached to them. that day. Judgment day.

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Q: I have previously asked you why our Lord denounced the whole cities in Matthew 11:21-23 and Luke 10:13-15:

Luke 10:13-15 (NASB)

13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.<sup>14</sup> But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!

Question: Why does Jesus denounce whole cities? Is it because not one single person there repented?

Answer: That certainly does seem to be the implication. After all, our Lord contrasts these towns with Sodom and Gomorrah, and Lot seems to have been the only "righteous" one there (in addition to, perhaps, his daughters, but their behavior later on makes one wonder). We should distinguish here between genuine and lasting repentance leading to an enduring faith and those who were temporarily enthusiastic (cf. the plant which springs up and later dries out in the parable of the Sower).

But wouldn't you say that the NIV SB note to Luke 10:12 also offers part of the reason - namely that the cities condemned by our Lord heard the message directly from our Lord? Similar point is made in the note for Luke 10:14:

Lk.10:14 Tyre and Sidon. Gentile cities in Phoenicia (see note on 6:17), north of Galilee, which had not had opportunity to witness Jesus' miracles and hear his preaching as had the people in most of Galilee (see note on v. 12)

A: The main point, not contradicted as far as I can see by the SB notes or your questions/comments – nor inconsistent with my previous answer – is the lack of repentance. The fact that some places have a more understandable rationale for lack of repentance than others do is not an excuse. The same fundamental choice of existence confronts every single human being who has ever lived, regardless of circumstances we deem favorable or unfavorable to hearing and responding to the gospel. God is well-aware of all these circumstances and has perfectly crafted every life situation for maximum response. The fact that few respond even so merely demonstrates the reality of their free will used, in all such cases, to reject God's plan for them and thus lose out on their potential salvation.

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Luke 10:18 (NASB)

18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

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Q: Should we take this passage literally, as referring to Jesus in His deity observing the fall of Satan before the creation of man?

A: In His humanity our Lord is a prophet; more than that, He is ***the*** Prophet destined to come to Israel (Deut.18:15). As such, all manner of things were revealed to Him even in His humanity. Since He is speaking from His humanity in which He was subject to *kenosis* at this time (see the link), I would prefer to see this as a prophetic revelation, one that was perfectly applicable to receive and mention here since these witnesses are types of the tribulational witnesses whose ministry precedes the second half of the Tribulation at the outset of which Satan is cast down (Rev.12:9). In other words, their experience prefigures that of the 144,000 of whom they are biblical types, and our Lord here calls attention to that fact.

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Luke 10:19 (NASB)

19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

NIV SB: Lk.10:19 snakes and scorpions ... power of the enemy. The snakes and scorpions may represent evil spirits; the enemy is Satan himself.

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Q: Would you agree that snakes and scorpions should be taken symbolically here rather than literally?

A: This is clearly meant in a literal way since at the end of the verse our Lord adds (in the emphatic Greek *ou me* plus the subjunctive construction) "nothing will injure you".

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Luke 10:29 (NASB)

29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

NIV SB: Lk.10:29 to justify himself. The answer to his first question was obviously one he knew, so to gain credibility he asked for an interpretation. In effect he said, "But the real question is: Who is my neighbor?"

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Q: How should we understand "wishing to justify himself"? What is meant in the note by "to gain credibility"?

A: This is meant in the sense we find at Luke 18:14 (same word in Greek), namely, to be justified before God. This is the "justification by works" which Paul inveighs against in Romans and Galatians in particular – "for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16; same verb). This man felt that because of his works he was "justified", that is, righteous in God's sight – whereas in fact we can only be righteous in God's sight by grace "through faith" in Christ (as in Abraham's example explained by Paul in Romans chapter four). Clearly, this man had an inkling of the problem with his theory since he asks the question hoping to have Jesus tell him that he was justified by his works – but of course he gets the opposite answer, one that makes clear that no one can be totally just and righteous in this life without God's intervention.

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Luke 10:31-33 (NASB)

31 And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,

NIV SB: Lk.10:31-33 priest ... Levite ... Samaritan. It is significant that the person Jesus commended was neither the religious leader nor the lay associate but a hated foreigner. Jews viewed Samaritans as half-breeds, both physically (see note on Mt 10:5) and spiritually (see notes on Jn 4:20, 22). Samaritans and Jews practiced open hostility (see note on 9:52), but Jesus asserted that love knows no national boundaries.

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Q: Do you agree that this is the reason why Jesus spoke about the Samaritan in this parable - to assert "that love knows no national boundaries"?

A: I think rather that our Lord's point in choosing a Samaritan who, because of his race, would be considered by a legalistic Jew such as this as incapable of being righteous in the first place. The fact that by his conduct the Samaritan acts more righteously in fulfilling this commandment than the legalistic Jews who pass the wounded man by shows not only that racial distinctions are not important to God, but also that it is true actions of love which God commends instead of formal, passive legalism. The effect of this story is to explode the notion that a person can be saved by keeping the Law; it demonstrates that the true standard even briefly considered will reveal that the contemporary theory of salvation through selective and personally interpreted Law-keeping fell far short of God's righteousness.

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Luke 10:35 (NASB)

35 On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'

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**Q:** According to NIV SB this would keep a man in an inn for up to two months. This seems like a rather long period of time for two days' wages - do you agree with this estimation?

**A:** I think that the point here is that in doing the right thing we don't also have to be stupid. The Samaritan was not stupid, even though he was compassionate (many people out there in the world mistake compassion for stupidity, and wrongly so). He recognized that the inn-keeper, whose character he had no doubt not had time to assess, might well try to take advantage of his kindness. So he crafts a bargain that is reasonable: the inn-keeper receives more than enough to get the wounded man through the critical period, and is also given hope of more (although not more yet), with the promise of repayment later on – no doubt after submitting proof of additional expenditures. This wise action on the Samaritan's part gives the inn-keeper every incentive to do what is right, and little opportunity to cheat either the wounded man or the Samaritan – who will be back for an accounting.

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Luke 11:1 (NASB)

11 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

NIV SB: Lk.11:1 Jesus was praying. Not only on special occasions (e. g., baptism, 3:21 [see note there]; choosing the Twelve, 6:12; Gethsemane, 22:41) but also as a regular practice (5:16; Mt 14:23; Mk 1:35; see Introduction:Characteristics). teach us to pray. The Lord's model prayer, given here in answer to a request, is similar to Mt 6:9-13, where it is part of the Sermon on the Mount. Six petitions are included in the prayer as given in the Sermon on the Mount by Matthew, whereas five appear in the prayer in Luke.

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**Q:** Is Luke presenting here the same prayer as Matthew in Matthew 6:9-13 in an abbreviated version, or is it a different occurrence?

**A:** There are some definite differences, and the timing also definitely seems to be different. What we can glean from this is that while this is a prayer that we should be praying every day, it is the content and meaning of it which deserve

our full attention, not necessarily the precise form or words. This ought to be obvious inasmuch as the prayer is recorded (in two forms) in Greek, so that of necessity we are not repeating precise wording – and also for this reason the wording will differ according to the language into which the Greek is translated and according to the version we are accessing (with many options in English). Yet this is one of those special parts of scripture which is sometimes treated in a somewhat superstitious way. Praying this prayer – the essence of what this prayer says and means – is the important thing; whereas if we repeat "our version" of it in a rote way without ever giving much thought to what it means we are only deceiving ourselves. This prayer wonderfully encapsulates the correct point of view a believer should have, looking first to the Father's control of all things, that He is just and holy in all that He does, that His WILL will win out, and that the kingdom we long for is our proper focus rather than the temporary world we now see, and will arrive on schedule despite anything the evil one may think to do – and then reminding us that He is providing for us today, He does forgive us all of our sins of yesterday, and He will deliver us no matter what may befall tomorrow (n.b., the so-called "doxology" is not part of the original Greek text but is a late addition). For more on this see the link: ["The Lord's Prayer"](#)

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Luke 11:2 (NASB)

2 And He said to them, "When you pray, say:

'[a]Father, hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

a. Luke 11:2 Later mss add phrases from Matt 6:9-13 to make the two passages closely similar

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Q: I take it that the phrases added from Matthew 6:9-13 are not a part of the scripture?

A: The only substantive "omissions" in Luke are "who art in heaven" after "Father" (and we know clearly from the context here that it is the heavenly Father being addressed), and "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" – and since this follows "thy kingdom come", the added phrase only emphasizes what will clearly happen once the kingdom of the Father is established on earth – of course His WILL will be done, and completely too. This part, long or short,

focuses our attention on the eternal realities which are coming and cannot be prevented wherein all the troubles we currently face will become merely things of the forgotten past.

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Luke 11:11 (NASB)

11 Now [a]suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a [b]fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?

- a. Luke 11:11 Lit which of you, a son, will ask the father
- b. Luke 11:11 Two early mss insert loaf, he will not give him a stone, will he, or for a

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**Q:** Regarding the second footnote - should it be a fish or a loaf?

**A:** The correct reading has both (i.e., fish/snake and bread/stone).

**Q2:** How should the entire verse read then? Are bread and stone added as another sentence at the end which repeats the same form as the one with fish and snake?

**A2:** The ASV has the correct rendering: "And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent?".

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Luke 10:28 (NASB)

28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

Could you explain our Lord's answer? He knew that no one could be saved by the law, so He must mean something more than a mere fulfillment of it.

Some commentators use the story of the good Samaritan to teach that salvation comes by grace through faith rather than through works - it seems that this could be right, but I'm not sure it is directly implied here.

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A: As James says, faith without works is dead; therefore works is the proper counterpart of faith just as the spirit and the body are counterparts of "life". Anyone who acts in a righteous way out of a genuine respect for God and His will is going to be a believer, in that time through anticipating God's redemption to come, and in this day through believing in Jesus Christ – otherwise said person could not really "do good" according to God's evaluation of what is good. This is not salvation by works. This is genuine, godly works testifying to the actual faith present in the heart of the spiritually reborn person who does them. When making this point it is necessary to emphasize one side of the equation or the other. When our Lord says "that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have life eternal" (Jn.3:16) it is not with the idea that such believers should never ever grow spiritually or help others do so; and when our Lord says here "do this and live" it is not with the idea that those who hear should do fleshly works totally apart from genuine faith which must motivate them. The two things are inseparable in fact, and neither statement obviates the other half of the equation – in fact, correctly read and contemplated, they each require the other half.

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Luke 10:29-37

Q: I have asked you a number of times about Luke 10:29-37, as the lawyer asks the question "And who is my neighbour?" and our Lord in the parable shows that it is the Samaritan who has proved himself the neighbour. And yet most people interpret the wounded man to be the neighbour, which, it seemed to me, was not really the thrust of the story. I have finally found the answer to this, Meyer proving helpful here:

Instead of giving to the theoretical question of the scribe, Luke 10:29, a direct and theoretical decision as to whom he was to regard as his neighbour, Jesus, by the feigned (according to Grotius and others, the circumstance actually occurred) history of the compassionate Samaritan, with all the force of the contrast that puts to shame the cold Jewish arrogance, gives a practical lesson on the question: how one actually becomes the neighbour of ANOTHER, namely, by the exercise of helpful love, independently of the nationality and religion of the persons concerned. And the questioner, in being dismissed with the direction, *καὶ σὺ ποίει ὁμοίως*, has therein indirectly the answer to his question, *τίς ἐστὶ μου πλησίον*; namely: Every one, without distinction of people and faith, to whom the circumstances analogous to the instance of the Samaritan direct thee to exercise helpful love in order thereby to become his neighbour, thou hast to regard as thy neighbour. This turn on the part of Jesus, like every feature of the improvised narrative, bears the stamp of originality in the pregnancy of its meaning, in the insight which suggested it, and in the quiet and yet perfectly frank way in which the questioner, by a direct personal appeal, was put to the blush.



So the point in the story is that our Lord here makes a transition. From the lawyer's question "Who is my neighbour?", He moves to "go and do likewise", Bengel's Gnomon captures this:

[100] The one infers the other. Jesus' mode of answering implies, that it is of more consequence for us to ask, Have we the true neighbourly spirit of love in ourselves? than to ask, What is the qualification needed in him (the neighbour) to whom we show that love?-ED. and TRANSL.

So, taken together, our Lord doesn't say "It is the Samaritan who has proved himself the neighbour - you need to love him". But he rather says "So you see that the Samaritan proved himself the neighbour. And yet I'm not telling you to love just him, because he is your neighbour, but what I'm telling you is this - go and do likewise. Go and show help to anyone who is in need, because anyone who is in need is your neighbour. So the question is not about who is your neighbour, but rather how you should help him".

Hopefully this all makes sense.

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A: It has always seemed clear to me that our Lord is telling us to act as the Samaritan acted without making nice distinctions about whom we should help and whom we can ignore.

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Luke 11:19 (NASB)

19 And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges.

I) NIV SB: Lk.11:19 by whom do your followers ...? Jesus did not say whether the followers of the Pharisees (see Mt 12:24) actually drove out demons (see note on v. 24); but they claimed to drive them out by the power of God, and Jesus claimed the same. So to accuse Jesus of using Satanic power was implicitly to condemn their own followers as well. your judges. They will condemn you for your accusation against them.

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Q: Do we know if the followers of Pharisees really drove out demons? Should Jesus' words here be taken to mean that they did?

A: There is no indication of any successful exorcisms at this time prior to our Lord's ministry. What our Lord's words mean is that contemporary Jews did recognize that demon possession was common enough in their day and did make efforts to cast them out – one would think by invoking the Name of the

Lord – so that it was completely hypocritical of them to say that what He was doing successfully was somehow inappropriate even as they approved of what their followers tried to do ineffectually.

Q2: What is meant by "they will be your judges"?

A2: Those who criticized our Lord for doing something effectively which others whom they approved of were actually unable to do were thus indirectly condemning their own judgment: Jesus establishes with these words that He is doing nothing other than what Jews in very good repute were trying to do – except that He was not vainly "play acting". Clearly, criticizing Him for this (in blasphemous terms) was completely inconsistent with applauding others who vainly tried to do the same thing.

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Luke 11:24 (NASB)

24 "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

NIV SB: Lk.11:24 impure spirit comes out. Jesus is perhaps referring to the work of Jewish exorcists, who claimed to cast out demons (cf. v. 19 and note) but who rejected the kingdom of God and whose exorcisms were therefore ineffective. See Mt 12:43-45, where Jesus makes a similar comment about the Jewish nation of that day.

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Q: Do you agree that the reference here could be to an ineffective Jewish exorcism?

A: No. In an ineffective exorcism, the demon would not leave (e.g., Acts 19:14-16). The point is that casting a demon out of someone who has no intention of turning to the Lord thereafter is pointless because they will just go back to their old ways, only things will get worse for them as the demon returns with others (there being nothing to prevent reentry since the person is still not a believer). So even if these Jewish exorcists could do what they claimed to be able to do, there would be no profit in it for the unbelieving recipient of their efforts.

Q2: Ok, understood. But could you just clarify what is the circumstance here - did the demon leave of his own accord or is it a case of an exorcism that was successful?

**A2:** Our Lord is not referring to a particular case but speaking in general terms. The statement proves the pointlessness of exorcizing demons from unbelievers, even if that were possible; but exorcism is something that only our Lord could do along with those He directly commissioned to do likewise – a sign of the incipient kingdom which He will bring in.

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Luke 11:25 (NASB)

25 And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order.

NIV SB: Lk.11:25 finds the house swept clean. The place had been cleaned up but left unoccupied. A life reformed but lacking God's presence and power is open to reoccupancy by evil.

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**Q:** Would you agree that this is the meaning here?

**A:** No. The "cleanness" refers only to the absence of demonic presence. There is no indication of "reform" – no indication of salvation. And that is why the demon can return (demons are not allowed to possess believers – afflict, yes; possess, no).

**Q2:** Would you say that "sweeping" and "putting in order" here could refer to some outward changes, but, as you wrote - without faith?

**A2:** Anyone suffering under demon possession would certainly be better off mentally and physically immediately after the demon's departure (as we see in the cases of legitimate exorcism in the gospels). Without spiritual rebirth, however, reversion to the prior state would be possible with the end worse than the beginning.

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Luke 11:30 (NASB)

30 For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.

NIV SB: Lk.11:30 as Jonah was a sign. Just as Jonah's preaching was a sign to the Ninevites, so Jesus' message of the kingdom was a sign to his generation. For a different application of Jonah as a sign, see Mt 12:40 and note.

Matthew 12:40 (NASB)

40 for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

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**Q: Why does the note say that the application of Jonah's sign in Matthew 12:40 is different? Don't both Luke and Matthew refer the same incident here?**

**A: You are correct. It is the same sign. Matthew's version is merely a fuller account but in verse forty-one he writes the same thing essentially as Luke does here.**

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Luke 11:31-32 (NASB)

31 The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

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**Q: I thought that maybe these two verses could be used as references for resurrection in some of your studies?**

**A: Thank you. They are clearly talking about the resurrection.**

**"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."**

**John 5:28-29 NKJV**

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Luke 11:33-34 (NASB)

33 "No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. 34 The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

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Q: I'm not clear about the relationship between verse 33 and 34. It seems that the former is about the testimony to the truth, which shouldn't be hidden, the second refers to the perceptive faculty, as you describe it. I read that it is possible that verse 33 could be linked to what our Lord said in previous verses rather than beginning a new teaching and this take does seem to make some sense. What do you think?

A: It's not either or. The common theme is "light" – which is the truth. The first verse (33) deals with sharing one's light (ministering the truth); the second verse (34) deals with learning the truth – without which no one can minister the truth. How we receive the truth depends upon our attitude towards it. If we view it with a jaundiced eye, hearing but not believing, we are not benefitted at all so that any "light" in us is "darkness", because only by believing the truth we hear does that truth become real and usable to us and to the Holy Spirit (as *epignosis*). Please see the link: "[Epignosis and Epistemology](#)"

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Luke 11:41 (NASB)

41 But give that which is within as charity, and then all things are clean for you.

NIV SB: Lk.11:41 everything will be clean. Giving from the heart makes everything else right. If one gives to the poor, one's heart is no longer in the grip of "greed and wickedness" (v. 39).

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Q: Would you agree that Jesus here refers to charity as a cure for greed mentioned in verse 39? If so, why did He choose this particular aspect of the change of heart? Your explanation of this whole verse will be appreciated.

A: Matthew has a similar passage in the "seven woes" (Matt.23:25-26), and doesn't say anything about giving alms as we have here. The essential meaning is that what is on the outside is not important but what is on the inside is: the superficial appearances of the Pharisees meant nothing to God. Cleaning the outside of plates means nothing. Cleaning oneself *inside* is what is important to God. Since greed and wickedness constitute the beginning of our Lord's complaint in verse thirty-nine (which in context is unrighteous behavior, including financial malfeasance in things related to God and to the Law), hitting the Pharisees where they will hurt the most – thus giving them the maximum incentive to see the error of their ways and repent – is at the heart of this mention of giving alms. The Pharisees loved money and were greedy, and

any "charity" they might think to do in terms of giving money to others would be minimal and staged for maximum public adulation. For that reason, tying this complaint of their inner uncleanness to a sinful behavior of which they were preeminently and characteristically guilty was a natural thing to do. This is along the lines of our Lord's command to the rich young ruler who wished to justify himself and is told by our Lord to "sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Matt.19:21; cf. Lk.18:22): since money was at the heart of the person's reluctance to believe in the Lord, our Lord cuts right to the nub of the problem and challenges the person to trust in Him instead of in money. Analogously, since these Pharisees saw only ritual uncleanness related to dirt, our Lord challenges them to remove the cause of the true uncleanness by giving to the poor in a genuine way – something that runs counter to their current thinking completely and could only be accomplished by a genuine, internal change of heart.

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Luke 11:44 (NASB)

44 Woe to you! For you are like concealed tombs, and the people who walk over them are unaware of it."

Matthew 23:27(NASB)

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

NIV SB: Lk.11:44 unmarked graves. The Jews whitewashed their tombs so that no one would accidentally touch them and be defiled (cf. Nu 19:16; Mt 23:27 and note). Just as touching a grave resulted in ceremonial uncleanness, so also being influenced by these misguided religious leaders could lead to moral uncleanness.

\*

Q: Could you explain the difference between the tombs being concealed in Luke 11:44 and whitewashed in Matthew 23:27? Isn't the meaning directly opposite? Are both gospel writers giving account of the same words of Jesus in these verses, or are these two separate instances? Do you agree with the explanation offered by the NIV SB?

A: They are different points. The grave which is unseen makes the point that people don't necessarily realize there is uncleanness present (when they step on an unmarked grave or when they have converse with a Pharisee who appears to be righteous); the whitewashed tomb represents, when applied to the Pharisees, making efforts to have something which is really unclean look presentable, just as the Pharisees developed an external "righteousness of

appearance" which was designed to hide the fact that inside they were sinners – and even worse than average since their entire approach was based upon hypocrisy.

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Luke 11:47-48 (NASB)

47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and it was your fathers who killed them. 48 So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs.

\*

Q: Even though I know the meaning of these verses, I'm not clear about why our Lord uses the expression He uses. He says "So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs", as if the approval of their Fathers' deeds was expressed in building the tombs of the prophets rather than in the fact that they rejected Jesus, just as their Fathers rejected their prophets.

A: Our Lord's point is that the Pharisees and company can't have it both ways. They want to criticize their ancestors for killing the prophets, but they also claim and boast about their heritage and their traditions to the point of calling these men their "fathers" and preserving their memories – which shows in fact where their true loyalties lie and that they would indeed have helped these "fathers" stone the prophets if they had been alive in those days, standing with the legalistic establishment instead of with those few brave souls sent by the Lord to rebuke them – just as they were presently doing in opposing our Lord Jesus.

Q2: Understood. The passage seems clear now, but I wanted to know the purpose of building the tombs, because the expression "so you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs" seems to carry with itself an implication opposite to what we would expect. We would expect that building the tombs honours the prophets rather than showing approval, but our Lord says the exact opposite - that by building these tombs, the Pharisees are "witnesses and approve the deeds of their fathers". That's the part I couldn't understand. There are two additional explanations I wanted to get your opinion on, as they seem to be reasonable.

Meyer stresses the word *huioi* here when commenting on Matthew 23:39-31:

ὥστε μαρτυρεῖτε ἑαυτοῖς, κ.τ.λ.] Thus (inasmuch as you say τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν) you witness against yourselves (dative of reference, Jam 5:3), that you are the sons, etc. υἱοί? contains a twofold meaning. From τῶν πατέρ. ἡμ., in which the Pharisees point to their bodily descent, Jesus likewise infers their kinship with their fathers in respect of character and disposition. There is a touch of sharpness in this pregnant force of υἱοί, the discourse becoming more and more impassioned. "When you thus speak of your fathers, you yourselves thereby testify to your own kinship with the murderers of the prophets." De Wette's objection, that this interpretation of υἱοί would be incompatible with what is said by way of vindicating themselves at Matthew 23:30, does not apply, because Jesus feels convinced that their character entirely belies this self-righteous utterance, and because He wishes to make them sensible of this conviction through the sting of a penetration that fearlessly searches their hearts and reads their thoughts.

This sounds like a valid conclusion (again - please correct me if I'm wrong). Our Lord here emphasises the sonship, which, although not present in the Luke passage, does explain both passages.

And secondly, I came across what seems to clarify Luke 11:48 and the purpose of building the tombs (by [Bob Deffinbaugh](#)):

Our first impression might be that the Pharisees build tombs for the prophets, which would seem to indicate that they accepted them as from God and their message as true. Our text, however, reads in such a way as to say that their building of tombs for the prophets proves their hatred of the prophets. Why would the Pharisees build magnificent tombs for people whose message they respected, and who, according to Jesus they would have put to death?

Have you ever been to a cemetery and looked at all the kinds of markers which are placed at the grave? I do not mean to suggest that this is true in all cases, but sometimes a very elaborate funeral and tomb is evidence of guilt, more than of love. Some people go overboard with the burial of those about whom they feel guilty, or to make it look as if they loved them when they did not. It seems that this was the case with the experts in the law. They went to great lengths to show honor to the prophets, lengths which only revealed their own guilt. This was a kind of Freudian slip, and Jesus pointed it out.

But how could these experts in the law be guilty of the blood of prophets whom their forefathers had slain? I think that Jesus is pointing out at least three ways. First, they had rejected the teaching of the prophets, just as their forefathers had done. Second, they were presently rejecting Jesus' teaching, which was consistent with (and the fulfillment of) the teaching of the prophets. Soon, they would kill Him. And third, some of those prophets and apostles who are yet to come (namely Jesus' disciples), after the death and resurrection of Christ, will be rejected, persecuted, and sometimes killed by them. All of this puts these experts in the same category of sinners, just like their forefathers. They were not the spiritual elite, they were just like the rest, just like those who had gone before them. The very things they condemned they were guilty of themselves.

So here I would say it does make a lot of sense to build the tombs for exactly the opposite reason than what we would expect - not to honour the prophets, but to cover the guilt deep inside their hearts, to hypocritically build an edifice (similarly as our Lord calls them "whitewashed tombs") which covers their true attitude - and not only in the eyes of others, but, I would perhaps speculate - in their own too, showing the magnitude of self-deception and hypocrisy.

So the verse would go:

So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers (they are not just your fathers physically, but spiritually too - you are their spiritual seed and here we can bring the *huioi* also from Matthew passage);



because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs ("Yes - they killed them and you, out of your unwillingness to own up that you are their spiritual seed and are about to kill me too, build these edifices out of sheer hypocrisy, to cover up what really is in your hearts. In this way, by building them, you testify not that you are different, but you testify that you are the same and this whole empty exercise of building stems from you willing to conceal before others and yourselves too that you are the same - as you will show when you crucify me").

What do you think?

A2: I don't think it's a matter of guilt. Pointless religious activity to prove one's own religious bona fides is nothing new under the sun. We could point to any Catholic cathedral and ask whether or not this edifice isn't a wonderful testimony to God's glory, *et al.* But in fact building such things has nothing whatsoever to do with the kingdom of heaven, and reflects an earthly point of view divorced from the truth of scripture. The prophets, had they been brought back, would have no doubt condemned the excesses and the false motives behind these activities, calling the people to love the truth of the Word, not ritual and religious pageantry.

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Luke 11:49 (NASB)

49 For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and some they will persecute,

NIV SB: Lk.11:49 God in his wisdom said. Not a quotation from the OT or any other known book. It may refer to God speaking through Jesus, or it may be referring in quotation form to God's decision to send prophets and apostles even though he knew they would be rejected.

\*

Q: If this is not a quotation from the Old Testament, then how should we understand these words? As God speaking through Jesus or in a different way?

A: The companion passage in Matthew says at the outset "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes . . ." (Matt.23:34 NASB). The periphrasis our Lord uses here makes it clear that this is indeed a prophecy (even though it has not been previously given in the Old Testament). So these words are added by our Lord for clarity and emphasis so that the Pharisees and company listening to Him may understand that they and all who follow their lead will be destroyed when the Great Day of the Lord comes for their opposition to the truth and to those sent by God to speak the truth.

**Q2:** Could we say that this is a prophecy of our preincarnate Lord (where wisdom is taken as the divine Logos), as some commentators suggest:

**Meyer:**

Accordingly, it is to be supposed (Neander, L. J. p. 655; Gess, Person Chr. p. 29; comp. also Ritschl, Evang. Marcions, p. 89) that Jesus is here quoting one of His own earlier utterances (observe the past tense εἶπεν), so that He represents the wisdom, of God (Wis 7:27; Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:35) as having spoken through Him. Allied to this is the idea of the λόγος. According to this, however, the original form of the passage is not to be found in Luke (Olshausen, Bleek); for while Matthew gives this remarkable utterance in a directly present form, Luke's method of recording it transfers to the mouth of Jesus what rather was a later mode of citing it, and gives it in the shape of a result of reflective theology akin to the doctrine of the Logos.[149]

**Barnes' notes:**

The wisdom of God - By the "wisdom of God," here, is undoubtedly meant the Saviour himself. What he immediately says is not written in the Old Testament. Jesus is called "the word of God" John 1:1, because he is the medium by which God "speaks" or makes his will known. He is called "the wisdom of God," because by him God makes his wisdom known in creation (Colossians 1:13-18 and in redemption 1 Corinthians 1:30. Many have also thought that the Messiah was referred to in the Proverbs 8:1 of Proverbs, under the name of Wisdom.

**A2:** I don't object to this. It is certainly true that our Lord is the revealed Person of the Trinity and that all truth comes from the Father mediated by the Spirit as the Word who is the Son. Why this is being emphasized here by the commentators when it could be said of any Old Testament quotation, however, is a bit odd. I would imagine it is because of the unusual phrasing, "the Wisdom of God". I take this wording to mean that this is a true prophecy which is not in the Old Testament, so our Lord gives it the authority of prophecy by this unique introduction rather than citing a prophet because it is not in the prophets.

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Luke 11:50 (NASB)

50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation,

**Q:** What is the meaning of this passage? Why was the blood of all the prophets from the foundation of the world to be charged against this generation? Do you agree with Jamieson-Fausset-Brown commentary where the parallel is drawn between Pharisees and the "iniquity of the Canaanites":

50. all ... required of this generation-As it was only in the last generation of them that "the iniquity of the Amorites was full" (Ge 15:16), and then the abominations of ages were at once completely and awfully avenged, so the iniquity of Israel was allowed to accumulate from age to age till in that generation it came to the full, and

the whole collected vengeance of Heaven broke at once over its devoted head. In the first French Revolution the same awful principle was exemplified, and Christendom has not done with it yet.

A: It's an interesting parallel, but the Canaanites never were believers, never were specially called out by God, and never killed His prophets in spiritual rebellion. The more pertinent point is that the stored-up wrath will be unleashed upon "this generation" because they not only killed the previous prophets (in principle) but were about to kill THE Prophet. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem and its complementary siege and devastation in the Tribulation (also destined to fall upon "[this generation](#)"; see the link) would unleash all the pent-up wrath of God, patiently reserved until the time of complete rejection of Him and His Son by those who should have humbly accepted Him: the "time" begins at the cross but is fulfilled when Israel is brought to the fore again during the Tribulation.

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Luke 12:3 (NASB)

3 Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.

NIV SB: Lk.12:3 inner rooms. Storerooms were surrounded by other rooms so that no one could dig in from outside.

\*

Q: I cannot understand why the footnote makes the point that no one can dig in from outside into the store room if the passage is about whispering rather than storing? Is it to do with a concealed position of this room?

A: Greek and Roman houses had rooms for more public use where conversation would be not be secret or meant as "your ears only" communication. Our Lord contrasts the most private place to the most public one to demonstrate that all will be disclosed at the judgment regardless of what measures may be taken now to hide what we say or do. On that day, the motives of the Pharisees will be exposed for what they truly were – and the same is true with all of us as well (even though our judgment as believers will be one for determining reward, not one for demonstrating that no "works" were sufficient to justify a person's sins).

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Luke 12:8-9 (NASB)

8 "And I say to you, everyone who confesses Me before men, the Son of Man will confess him also before the angels of God; 9 but he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

\*

Q: Why is our Lord here referring to His confession "before the angels of God" rather than before God Himself, as it is said in Matthew 10:32-33 (NASB): 32 "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

A: These are two ways of saying the same thing since the angels appear before the Lord (e.g., Job 1:6; Dan.7:10; Rev.5:11); the reason for the difference may be the greater focus in Matthew, a book written to a Jewish audience, on the Father as the authority figure (making it clear in this way for the benefit of this audience that our Lord Jesus is the true Son of the Father); "Father" occurs ca. 97 times in Matthew but only ca. 42 times in Luke (n.b., not all of these refs. are to *the*Father in either book).

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Luke 12:14 (NASB)

14 But He said to him, "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?"

\*

Q: Why does Jesus answer here in this way?

A: This answer shows that if Jesus really is worthy to be judge and arbiter over Israel, then He must be the Messiah; so if the answer is "God the Father Himself", then that means the person asking for this intervention is accepting our Lord as *the*Lord. However, the fact that this person is tied up in knots over earthly things and is merely trying an additional venue (no doubt having already tried other ways to get what he wants), demonstrates pretty clearly that he does not accept our Lord as the Messiah, the Son of God. This approach is perfectly consistent with what our Lord always did in making the issue the truth and its acceptance (analogous to asking the Pharisees, "Was John's ministry from God or not?", since in that case also a "yes" accepts also the authority of Christ).

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Luke 12:20:

12:20 εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς Ἄφρων ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σοῦ ἃ δὲ ἡτοίμασας τίνοι ἔσται

Q: Why is the verb in plural? Zerwick and Grosvenor suggest it is to avoid the name of God, but then it is used at the very start of the verse anyway.

A: This indicates to me that God Himself is not going to be the immediate Agent of this man's demise but others will do it. Whether these others are angels or demons or human criminals or invaders or agents of justice is not specified, no doubt in order to remind us all that there are many things that can happen in this life and that disaster can arise from all manner of sources, seen and unseen, anticipated and unanticipated. Hence the great folly of relying on material wealth instead of making God one's fortress.

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Luke 12:31-32 (NASB)

31 But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. 32 Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.

NIV SB: Lk.12:31 seek his kingdom. Since v. 32 suggests that Jesus is speaking to believers, who already possess the kingdom, this command probably means that Christians should seek the spiritual benefits of the kingdom rather than the material goods of the world (see Mt 6:33, which says, "seek first his kingdom" [emphasis added]).

\*

Q: Would you agree that our Lord here speaks to believers and the purpose of these words is to direct their attention to the kingdom of God and things eternal?

A: This statement is appropriate for unbelievers too. If we are worrying about anything, we are not trusting God, and for all people, unbelievers as well as believers, trusting God is the beginning, middle and end of what are supposed to be doing here on earth. Believers do have "the kingdom", but we are still "striving after it" as long as we are here on earth, whereas unbelievers are "seeking after it" in the first place – or should be – as the first order of business.

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Luke 12:41-42 (NASB)

41 Peter said, "Lord, are You addressing this parable to us, or to everyone else as well?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"

\*

**Q:** Could you clarify why our Lord answers in this way, which doesn't seem to be directly related to Peter's question?

**A:** Our Lord never allowed Himself to be boxed in by either/or questions; rather, He always gave the perfect answer. If He had said "no", it would have relieved Peter and co. from having to keep in mind the concern to continue doing a good job for the Church as long as they were on this earth (and we all need to keep that in mind); if He had said "yes", it would have given the false impression that Peter and co. were not doing their jobs right at all (which was not the case even though we could all always be doing better). Answering in this way is the perfect "if the shoe fits, wear it" response but done in precisely the right indirect way so as to reinforce the point in absolute objectivity. This is a very important principle that all teachers (and prospective teachers) of the Word of God need to keep in mind. People have a tendency to "take things personally" when they personally know or have some close relationship with the individual who is communicating with them. That has its good points, but it also makes the issue of being objective in the reception of truth from a pastor/teacher more difficult at times. The person receiving the information may, exactly as Peter did, out of guilt or some other subjective emotion feel that the teacher is saying what he is saying not because he is teaching a universal principle of truth but because he has some personal offense or failure of the hearer in mind (pastor's wife: "Is he preaching the sermon like this today because I burned the toast this morning?"). We all fail, and so we all have a tendency to magnify our failures in guilt feelings, especially where others we care about are concerned; and even if we do not feel we are in the wrong, we may feel that we are being unfairly evaluated by the person doing the teaching. Of course, if we don't know the teacher personally "from Adam", then there will be no such issue at all; but for those with face to face ministries, or for any situation where there is a relationship which has developed, those receiving the truth need to hold onto their objectivity and not take the teaching they are receiving as being any more directed at them personally than it is to anyone else who is listening/reading. And I can certainly tell you from personal experience that teachers are chastened by the truth they teach just as much as listeners are – since we all have our shortcomings and the truth chastens us all.

On the other side of things, any pastor/teacher who is worth his salt would never teach a principle or doctrine "at" anyone in particular – and should be petrified at the consequences of altering anything in scripture, even a little, to make it more pointed with one individual recipient in mind (or more palatable either, for that matter). If a pastor/teacher is aware of anything in one of his parishioners/listeners/readers which is problematic to the point of needing correction, he must have the courage (as well as good judgment in "picking his spot") to say so directly and without ambiguity – precisely so that everyone can rest assured that all the teaching received from said source is absolutely objective (as much as is humanly possible at any rate). And our Lord does give Peter that assurance: by answering the way He answers, that is, without saying directly "yes" and then explaining what the specific problem might have been (had there been one), our Lord gives Peter the assurance he needs but without vitiating the correctness of this important principle of consistency and steadfastness maintained to the end to earn a good reward. And if our Lord had had some issue with the way Peter or the other disciples were doing their jobs, He would have told them outright in just the right way and at just the proper time (e.g., Judas had to wait for his own direct reproof – in order for the plan of God be fulfilled in precisely the right way).

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Luke 12:47-48 (NASB)

47 And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, 48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

\*

Q: How should we interpret these words? Who does Jesus mean by the slave who didn't know his master's will?

A: Even though "not knowing" what the Lord wants us to do is culpable, "knowing **and** not doing" is worse. In terms of believers, we are all the Lord's servants, so everything in scripture we are supposed to "do" (which of course includes many things we are *not* supposed to do – in which case "doing" equals sanctification, for example) would be included. A Christian, for example, who has not been exposed to good teaching and so has not taken advantage of something unknown to him/her will be worthy of less reproach at the judgment seat of Christ than someone who was exposed to it, knew it was

available, but was slack in making use of it. The person who "didn't know" could have found out, of course, and reward will come for actual spiritual growth, actual progress in walking with the Lord through the fire, and in actual production for Him in helping others do likewise. So neither of these situations is desirable, but sinning in ignorance is in principle less culpable than sinning in cognizance – which explains the harsher judgment on Adam, for example, as opposed to that leveled on Eve.

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Luke 12:49 (NASB)

49 "I [a]have come to cast fire upon the earth; and [b]how I wish it were already kindled!

a. Luke 12:49 Or came

b. Luke 12:49 Lit what do I wish if...?

\*

**Q:** What is the best way to render the expression which is here given as "how I wish it were already kindled"? The literal version of it given in the footnote isn't clear to me - is it a Greek or Hebrew idiom? Does by the fire our Lord mean the cross?

**A:** The fire is the Tribulation and the judgments which follow. Our Lord desires as we all do for all of this future history to have already began and to have already run its course – so that our eternity may begin. But He had first to undergo the "baptism" of the cross where He was "baptized into" the sins of the world, being judged for them all in our place. As to the grammar, the point depends on the translation of the Greek interrogative *ti*; here it appears to be used in the same sense as the Hebrew interrogative *mah*, which sometimes means "how!" (as well as "how?" and "what?"), so "*How* I wish . . ." is the best translation: "what do I wish if" is not even English so it is not a valid translation.

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Luke 12:49-59 (NASB)

49 "I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! 51 Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; 52 for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father,



mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." 54 And He was also saying to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it turns out. 55 And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it turns out that way. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time? 57 "And why do you not even on your own initiative judge what is right? 58 For while you are going with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. 59 I say to you, you will not get out of there until you have paid the very last cent."

\*

**Q:** Our Lord here talks first about the division that He brings, then about analyzing the present time and finally about settling with an opponent. These teachings are given one after another, but is there a link between them?

**A:** Yes. Both in terms of general eschatology and in terms of personal eschatology. In terms of eschatology overall, during the Tribulation the truth will divide people more sharply than ever before with so many choosing for antichrist; those who do should know better since the signs and scriptures are plentiful so as to be able to avoid that fatal trap, were it only a matter of knowledge in reading them; once the Lord returns there will be no further chance to repent, and even those who believe once they see Him face to face will have to wait for their resurrection at that point for a thousand years. On the personal level, truth is divisive even now, and those who were listening to our Lord would have to choose Him or the opinions and continued good will of their friends and family who were rejecting Him; and clearly there were more than enough signs done by Him and prophecies about the Messiah to make it crystal clear who He was, absent willfully ignoring the truth. Once life is over for each of us, there is no longer any opportunity to change what we have done or are doing in this life, so for anyone concerned to avoid eternal judgment, the time to reconcile with God through Christ is now, while we are still on the journey to prison/hell, not once there (when there will be no escape).

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Luke 12:56 (NASB)

56 You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?

\*

**Q:** Why does Jesus call the lack of discernment hypocrisy here?

A: Because the ministry of John the baptist in testifying to Jesus, the volume and the nature of the miracles our Lord was performing, and the power of His words and witness were all more than sufficient to make it crystal clear that He was the Messiah and that this was **the** visitation – more clear in fact than the most obvious of meteorological signs which everyone knows how to interpret.

\*\*\*

NIV SB: Lk.12:57 judge for yourselves. Despite the insistence of the Pharisees, despite the Roman system and even despite the pressure of family, a person must accept God on his terms. The signs of the times called for immediate decision-before judgment came on the Jewish nation.

\*

Q: Do you agree with the NIV SB explanation of verse 57, that by saying "judge for yourselves" or "on your own initiative" our Lord here means facing the truth despite it being difficult for a number of reasons?

A: I think our Lord's point in saying this is to cut through their nonsense and remind them that they are individually and personally responsible for their rejection of Christ and that they know in their hearts that accepting Him is the right thing to do. This question removes all objections based upon the plea of insufficient information: "I wasn't sure He was the Messiah" will not wash, as our Lord tells them "You see perfectly well what is right".

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Luke 13:1 (NASB)

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.

Luke 13:4 (NASB)

Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem?

\*

Q: What event is being referred to here and in Luke 13:4?

A: This event is recorded for us only here (it is not referenced elsewhere in scripture or in secular literature). This is the equivalent to us today referencing an accident where multiple people have been killed – such as the recent

apartment building collapse in Taiwan following an earthquake – in order to remind people that death may come at any time, and that all die, the righteous and the unrighteous alike. That being the case, we ought to live our lives in the light of eternity knowing that eternity may begin for us at any moment – and for unbelievers that means that reconciling immediately to God the Father through the Son is the prudent thing to do. The use by our Lord of a mass accident of this nature makes it clear that a sudden end to life is not merely the possible fate of a "sinner" as the self-righteous among His audience might otherwise suppose so as to avoid drawing the correct conclusions about the evanescence of life and their own individual need to get right with God through faith in Christ right away – because no one can know what tomorrow will bring.

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NIV SB: Lk. 13:1 Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Pilate had evidently slaughtered some Galileans, perhaps during an act of protest in the temple. Such an action would be in line with Pilate's reputation for cruelty.

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Q: How do we know about Pilate being cruel?

A: Both Flavius Josephus and Philo, non-Christian, Jewish writers, attest to Pilate's cruelty and insensitivity towards Jewish customs. His ten year rule as prefect of Judea was apparently a relatively bloody one. However, both of these men clearly had an ax to grind against Pilate, and both, because of their individual circumstances, would be eager to demonstrate that Jewish resistance to Roman rule was caused by poor governance and was not the result of any rebellious spirit among the Jewish people. We can say with assurance that there were in fact many zealots who were eager to be rid of Roman rule, even if it had been entirely permissive. Note that our Lord's response here does not indict either the slain Galileans nor Pilate. Jesus' entire focus in responding is to make it clear that all will perish – absent turning to God through faith in Him. Therefore lamenting the deaths of those who may have seemed innocent – or may even have been innocent – misses the point that since we are all sinners none of us is truly innocent before God and all of us will perish absent salvation through the blood of Christ. We may take this report to our Lord and His response as evidence that some Galileans were killed while in Jerusalem offering sacrifices, but we cannot say with any confidence whether or not they were innocent of plotting rebellion. Given the efficiency of the Roman system, the intelligence of Pilate (as evidenced from

the descriptions of him in the gospels), and need for the Romans to stay on top of any such movements bent on independence (and there were of course many such, the most famous of which led to the destruction of Jerusalem some thirty-five years later), it would be imprudent to suggest that Pilate had these individuals murdered on a whim. It would be clever and effective to allow a group which was known to be plotting against the government to come to Jerusalem of their own accord at one of the festivals, and then to eliminate the threat when they were all gathered together in the open and at their most vulnerable. That would be less cruel, at least, than destroying villages and towns wherein many of the occupants would be innocent parties, including women and children.

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Luke 13:11 (NASB)

11 And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all.

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Q: Why is quite unusually past perfect used here in the NASB - "had had"?

A: The NKJV renders the two words "was bent over". The NASB's rendering of the perfect participle in conjunction with the imperfect of the verb "to be" as a pluperfect is overly literally. While it is true that this is indeed a common way to construct a pluperfect passive in Greek (i.e., using a periphrasis consisting of a participle and the imperfect of "to be"), it is also possible – and better – to take the participle as having its own adjectival force: "[in the state of being] bent over". That is clearly what is meant, so that conveying the true meaning in English is the better part of valor in translation.

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Luke 13:23 (NASB)

23 And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them,

NIV SB: Lk.13:23 only a few ... saved? Perhaps the questioner had observed that in spite of the very large crowds that came to hear Jesus' preaching and be healed, there were only a few followers who were loyal. Jesus did not answer directly but warned that many would try to enter after it was too late.

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Q: Do you agree that this question could have stemmed from the questioner's observation?

A: It is possible. However, this is a question many Christians have today inasmuch as only God truly knows the heart of anyone. That is the point. If "many are saved" or if "most are saved" or if "all Jews are saved" – as many in Israel at that time optimistically believed, quite apart from scripture – then perhaps one did not need to take all this very direct teaching of our Lord with all of its "hard sayings" too seriously after all. But our Lord immediately explodes the premise behind the question by making it clear that it doesn't matter what other people do: it matters what YOU do. Many people in fact assume in their wishful thinking – having blinded their own hearts in arrogance – that they will be saved because of their good works or their good looks (or from whatever personal justification). But we know that there is only "one way" of salvation, and unless a person enters by that demanding and precise "gate" – of faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ – there can be no salvation because the will of the Father will then have been rejected (Jn.6:29). Probably more than any other rationalization, relying on what other people do or on the numbers of religious people who are worse than oneself is one of the main ways people have always deceived themselves (willfully) about their status in God's eyes.

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Luke 13:24 (NASB)

24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

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Q: Since those who really seek, find, how should we interpret the words that many "will seek to enter and will not be able"?

A: I think it should go without saying that everything depends on **what** we seek and **how** we seek it:

God "will repay each person according to what they have done." To those who **by persistence in doing good seek** glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are **self-seeking** and who **reject the truth** and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the

Jew, then for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism.  
Romans 2:6-11 NIV

The "many" in our context of course wanted heaven, but they wanted it without having to obey or pay serious attention to God and His will; they wanted eternal life in a world where they were their own gods, free to do as they pleased without any interference from God Himself. That is what Satan wants. But it is impossible, no matter how desperately the devil or the many who "reject the truth" of Jesus Christ may seek it.

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Luke 13:31 (NASB)

31 Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, "Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You."

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Q: Since the Pharisees contributed greatly to our Lord's death, why are they here warning Jesus about Herod? Why does Herod want to kill Jesus, if not long ago he was keen to see him?

A: The two things are intimately connected. The Pharisees want to be rid of Jesus. It would have been simpler for them had they been able to frighten Him away – and this they try to do here. As to Herod himself, these words come from the Pharisees and cannot be taken as God's truth – they did say this to Jesus, but whether or not it was really true we cannot say. When Herod finally did have the Lord in his power, he did not kill Him but sent Him back to Pilate, after all. This is not to vindicate Herod Antipas in any way; he did kill John the baptist for a trivial reason, and would certainly have been happy to kill our Lord if he had perceived any serious threat from Him. So whether Herod in his mercurial way had really ever expressed this sentiment or whether the Pharisees had merely picked up a rumor (or created it themselves), their intent was to have an easy way to send out Lord packing away from Jerusalem – which of course He was not going to do, regardless of threats (Jn.8:29).

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NIV SB: Lk. 13:31 Herod wants to kill you. See note on Mt 14:1. Jesus was probably in Perea, which was under Herod's jurisdiction (see note on 3:1). The Pharisees wanted to frighten Jesus into leaving this area and going to Judea.

\*

Q: Do you agree with the explanation provided here?

A: On the motive, yes; see directly above. On the location, I don't think we should ascribe absolute adherence to such niceties of jurisdiction or assume that contemporaries made such assumptions. Herod was very powerful and could no doubt have enemies arrested legally or illegally widely throughout the land; once they had been brought to him, he could do with them as he wished. That is what happened to John, after all.

\*\*\*

Luke 13:34 (NASB)

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

NIV SB: Lk.13:34 how often I have longed to gather. This lament over Jerusalem may suggest that Jesus was in Jerusalem more often than the Synoptic Gospels indicate (cf. Jn 2:13; 4:45; 5:1; 7:10; 10:22). However, the statement in vv. 34-35 may have been uttered some distance from Jerusalem, i. e., in Perea. According to Mt 23:37-38, the same utterance was spoken on Tuesday of Passion Week. Jesus repeated many of his teachings and sayings.

\*

Q: Do you agree that Jesus was in Jerusalem more often than the Synoptic Gospels indicate? Aren't these words a statement referring to God's efforts and opportunities given to Jews from the beginning? Do you agree that Luke 13:34 and Matthew 23:37-38 refer to two different occurrences?

A: First, I agree with you that our Lord's words here are not necessarily evocative of the comment in the note; I prefer your analysis. I would also disagree with the statement in the note that the synoptic gospels "indicate" what is suggested (that is the wrong way to put it). The synoptics are not as concerned with the details of the chronology as John's gospel is and for that reason do not make as clear as John's gospel does the movements of our Lord over the three and one half years of His public ministry before the cross (and even John's remarks take some thought; please see the link: "[Comparative Chronology](#)").

On the timing, we have seen before that our Lord said similar things on many occasions – as all good teachers do – and that no short work such as a gospel could possibly include everything He said (Jn.21:25). Matthew 23:37-38 takes

place in Jerusalem (cf. Matt.24:1ff.); Luke 13:34 is more difficult to place, but it does seem to predate our Lord's arrival in Jerusalem for the last Passover (cf. Lk.14:25). Thomas and Gundry, *A Harmony of the Gospels* (1978) in. loc. adopt the same approach as the NIV SB here and suggest that the quotation in Luke was given at or around Perea.

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Luke 14:5 (NASB)

5 And He said to them, "Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?"

NIV SB: Lk. 14:5 child. See NIV text note. The reading "donkey" matches well with the "ox that falls into a well." But in Dt 5:14 the law is specified for both humans and animals; one category opens with "son" and another with "ox." Jesus' action was "unlawful" only according to rabbinic interpretations, not according to the Mosaic law itself (cf. note on Mk 2:25).

\*

**Q:** Why does NIV SB say here that "Jesus' action was "unlawful" only according to rabbinic interpretations, not according to the Mosaic law itself "?

**A:** In SB's take on the interpretation of the Law in Jesus' day, they are speculating that these teachers would have made an exception only for a human being. But in fact of course it's not even a question of them refusing to rescue anyone (or any animal) from a pit. Our Lord uses this comparison to demonstrate their total hypocrisy: they don't want to allow helping *people* on the Sabbath, but would not hesitate to help one of their own *animals*.

\*\*\*

Luke 14:14 (NASB)

14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

NIV SB: Lk.14:14 resurrection of the righteous. All will be resurrected (see Da 12:2; Jn 5:28-29 and notes; Ac 24:15). Some hold that the resurrection of the righteous (1Co 15:23; 1Th 4:16; Rev 20:4-6) is distinct from the "general" resurrection (1Co 15:12, 21; Heb 6:2; Rev 20:11-15).

\*

**Q:** What is meant by the resurrection of the righteous being distinct by the "general" resurrection



A: As 1st Corinthians 15:23-24 makes clear, there are three phases to the resurrection of the living (or "righteous"): First Christ, then the Church (this happens at Christ's return), and the Millennial believers (at the end of history). Unbelievers are not resurrected until the end of the Millennium, and theirs is a not a resurrection "unto (eternal) life" but unto "death" (i.e., after the Last Judgment they will be consigned to the Lake of Fire). SB seems to use "general" because its authors may be confused about the details of, e.g., the Sheep and Goats judgment where the "sheep" – who are the believers of the Millennium – are evaluated first (i.e., before the goats, who are all the unbelievers from Cain to the end of history).

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Luke 14:18 (NASB)

18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'"

NIV SB: Lk.14:18 bought a field. The initial invitation must have been accepted, but when the final invitation came (by Jewish custom the announcement that came when the feast was ready), other interests took priority.

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Q: Do you agree that "the initial invitation must have been accepted"?

A: No. When the king summons you for whatever reason, even to a "party", this is what is known in our country as a "command performance". Just as in the military or probably any hierarchical business there are certain social obligations which a person can miss only at his/her great peril, in the case of an absolute ruler there is no excuse for failing to attend – because it's tantamount to rejecting his authority. God, of course, if the ultimate Absolute Ruler, and to reject His Gift is the ultimate insult to Him – especially when we taken into consideration what it cost Him to offer up His one and only beloved Son, and what it cost Jesus Christ to die in the darkness for the sins of the entire world, even for those of the people who are refusing to "come to the banquet".

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Luke 14:28 (NASB)

28 For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?

NIV SB: Lk.14:28 estimate the cost. Jesus did not want a blind, naive commitment that expected only blessings. As a builder estimates costs or a king evaluates military strength (v. 31), so people must consider what Jesus expects of his followers before they commit their lives to him.

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Q: Do you agree with the point of Jesus not wanting a "blind, naive commitment"?

A: Our Lord is only being truthful in presenting the gospel. We know, as seasoned Christians, that the Christian way of life is not without its challenges. That is to say, it is "through many tribulations [that] we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22 NASB). In this His presentation is of course perfect, and it does call into question many gospel presentations I have heard. If we try to promise unbelievers the garden of Eden *now* or heaven on earth *now*, we will not be doing them any favors. Salvation is the most wonderful thing, obviously. But once a person becomes a believer through accepting the Gift of Jesus Christ, that person will have his/her faith tested every day, and we know that it is only those who persevere to the end who will be saved. I think that the writers of this note are approaching the issue from the false standpoint of "once saved – always saved", and they have to find a way to explain the severity of these words; they do so (wrongly and falsely) by suggesting that there is such a thing as "partially believing" or "not fully committing" which is very misleading and dangerous. A person either believes or doesn't. There are only two types of people in this world, believers and unbelievers. Unbelievers can change their status simply by putting their faith in Christ. Believers have to maintain their status by maintaining their faith in Christ. There is a category of seed, the second one in the parable of the Sower, which starts well but later dies, scorched by the heat of the day (i.e., faith wilting and dying out under pressure). That is, there is such a thing as apostasy or falling away from the faith after once believing (Lk.8:13). Our Lord is warning all who are willing to come to Him that there will be pressures and challenges ahead, and that there is no point in beginning to suffer for Him if a person is not willing to see it through to the end (cf. 2Pet.2:20).

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Luke 14:31 (NASB)

31 Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?

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Q: Does Jesus use this proportion of forces on purpose to show that those who do want to follow Him will experience difficulty? Or is there in your view no meaning attached to the ten and twenty thousand men?

A: I believe you are correct. The point is that the Christian life is not entirely easy. If the proportions used by our Lord here were reversed, it would be as if He were saying that there will be no serious problems for the believer which cannot be handled in the ordinary course of things. But we know that throughout the believer's life there will be many obstacles to spiritual growth and many times of testing wherein we will be insufficient to the trial without relying on Him and His provision (Phil.4:13). Generally speaking, taking on superior numbers in a military conflict requires being deathly serious about the battle ahead and striving with every sinew to win in spite of the disparity. That is the attitude we ought to have in fighting this fight which is the fight of faith. We are not at all in doubt about the outcome, but we also realize that it is a fight and not a "cake-walk".

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Luke 15:7 (NASB)

7 I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

NIV SB: Lk.15:7 rejoicing in heaven. God's joy over the sinner's repentance is set in stark contrast to the attitude of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law (v. 2). righteous ... do not need to repent. Probably irony: those who think they are righteous (such as the Pharisees and the teachers of the law) and feel no need to repent.

\*

Q: Would you agree that our Lord's statement could have been ironic?

A: By this standard all of our Lord's remarks could be taken as ironic since He was continually contrasting the truth to the hypocritical actions of the Pharisees. I don't see this statement as more ironic than usual so as to merit comment on that grounds.

Q2: That's a good point. Should we then take then interpret this verse similarly as some others similar to it - "than over ninety-nine of those who think they are righteous (but really are not) who need no repentance", or could our Lord really mean righteous here? The latter seem somewhat less likely to me, as we all need repentance.

A2: It's not wrong to mention this, but in my estimation it's not the central point our Lord is making. Therefore if we make too much of "irony", we are likely to diminish this central point in the understanding of those we are trying to teach. If it were such a big part of the interpretation that overlooking the mention would be confusing, that would be another story.

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Luke 15:12 (NASB)

12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.

NIV SB: Lk.15:12 share of the estate. The father might divide the inheritance (double to the older son; see 12:13; Dt 21:17 and notes) but retain the income from it until his death. But to give a younger son his portion of the inheritance upon request was highly unusual. Cf. Pr 20:21 and note.

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Q: Do you agree that giving the inheritance portion to the younger son upon request was unusual?

A: The note correctly mentions the double portion going to the eldest. I don't think that we have enough information to call this "highly unusual" – just because we don't know how things generally worked in this regard in our Lord's day in every jurisdiction with which His listeners would have been familiar. The fact that our Lord presents the situation without explanation would seem to argue that it was not something His listeners would find odd. Compare a similar sounding situation used likewise as an analogy by Paul:

What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.

Galatians 4:1-2 NIV

This seems to indicate that predetermined distributions did occur in some cases (and we need not imagine that a death has occurred in this hypothetical case).

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Luke 15:28 (NASB)

28 But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him.

NIV SB: Lk.15:28 older brother. The forgiving love of the father symbolizes the divine mercy of God, and the older brother's resentment is like the attitude of the Pharisees and teachers of the law who opposed Jesus (v. 2).

Lk.15:31 "everything I have is yours." The father loved both brothers. The parable shows a contrast between the self-centered exclusiveness of the Pharisees, who failed to understand God's love, and his joy over the repentance of sinners.

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Q: Do you agree with the symbolism here proposed?

A: I do think our Lord has the Pharisees in mind to some degree. They were unforgiving of "lesser people" while they themselves were far from God's righteousness. But this is a secondary application and we cannot press the analogy too far. After all, both brothers are "sons" but the Pharisees were not actually believers. The prodigal had need of forgiveness in the parable – and he received it graciously. That is how the Lord deals with us too. However, the older brother, while guilty of a lack of mercy on his brother's return (as well as a *parti pris* framing of the facts that is probably disingenuous), is seen as an otherwise upstanding part of the household – the Pharisees only seemed that way but in fact were not.

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Luke 16:3 (NASB)

3 The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

NIV SB: Lk.16:3 What shall I do now? The dishonest manager (v. 8) had no scruples against using his position for his own benefit, even if it meant cheating his master. Knowing he would lose his job, the manager planned for his future by discounting the debts owed to his master in order to obligate the debtors to himself. Interpreters disagree as to whether his procedure of discounting was in itself dishonest. Was he giving away what really belonged to his master, or was he forgoing interest payments his master did not have a right to charge? Originally the manager may have overcharged the debtors, a common way of circumventing the Mosaic law that prohibited taking interest from fellow Jews (see Ex 22:25-27; Lev 25:36 and notes; Dt 23:19-20). So, to reduce the debts, he may have returned the figures to their initial amounts, which would both satisfy his master and gain the good favor of the debtors. In any event, the point remains the same: He was shrewd enough to use the means at his disposal to plan for his future well-being.

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Q: What is your take on the points made here?

A: Other than the point about shrewdness – which is the obvious point – they seem nonsensical to me. I would imagine they are proposed by those who wish

to apologize for our Lord's praising of a person who was clearly involved in sinful activity: doing a poor job in the first place and then acting dishonestly though in a clever way when he is about to suffer the consequences. But our Lord is neither recommending nor condoning dishonest behavior. Rather, He is drawing a comparison between how unbelievers act and how believers act. He is telling us that if we were as realistic about our situations as this unbeliever is, we would act differently in many cases than we are doing. If we really did act on the truth we know, namely, that this life is meaningless especially as compared to eternity, we would then be putting our all into building up our treasures in heaven even at the expense of whatever treasures we have here on earth. We understand the motives and the actions of the unjust steward, yet we often act as if there were no judgment seat of Christ where our conduct will be evaluated. The unjust steward sees what is coming and acts accordingly. If an unbeliever can do that, shouldn't we believers be able to do so as well?

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Luke 16:8 (NASB)

8 And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

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Q: Why would the master of this manager praise him if he reduced the amount of goods that people were due to him?

A: Different people react differently in different situations. No two masters are the same. This one, in the parable, is an intelligent man with a sense of humor who appreciates the cleverness with which the steward had acted – perhaps being a crafty man himself. It's not an impossible situation therefore; but remember: it is a parable. Assuming that there was a historical antecedent here (and that is certainly not necessarily the case), it's not told to us what the master did *after* praising the steward.

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Luke 16:9 (NASB)

9 And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.

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Q: I asked about this parable and this verse in particular and your answers helped me finally grasp the message here. One aspect of this teaching I still wanted to understand is whether there is commendation of almsgiving present in these words of our Lord. So could we for example understand helping the poor as one of the deeds which shows the genuineness of our faith which will result in us being accepted into eternal dwellings? I thought that maybe the context could make such reading acceptable, as the parable of the rich man and Lazarus follows shortly after. Such an interpretation is also suggested by the NIV SB:

Lk.16:9 use worldly wealth. God's people should be alert to make use of what God has given them. to gain friends. By helping those in need, who in the future will show their gratitude when they welcome their benefactors into heaven ("eternal dwellings"). In this way worldly wealth may be wisely used to gain eternal benefit

A: Clearly, our salvation is not dependent upon works, nor – even more clearly – is it dependent upon the good will of those already in heaven. This statement does indicate what the interpretation advanced in the previous question indicates, namely that if we are seeing the world as clearly as the clever unbeliever does – but from the correct, divine point of view – then we will make use of what we have here on earth to best effect in order to gain the best possible eternal reward. It's not a question of salvation. When we do cross the finish line, this godly approach will be a cause of rejoicing:

(13) But to the degree that you are [truly] participating in Christ's sufferings, be joyful about it, so that at His glorious revelation, you may also rejoice with great gladness (i.e., in realization of reward).

1st Peter 4:12-13

Here is what I find in Ephesians:

(8) For you have been saved by [God's] grace through faith [in Christ]; and this did not come from you – it is God's gift. (9) Nor did it (i.e., salvation) come from what you have done (i.e., "works"), lest anyone should boast. (10) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for [the purpose of accomplishing] good works, which [very works] God has prepared ahead of time for us, that we might walk in them (i.e., live our Christian lives in the accomplishment of them).

Ephesians 2:8-10

Note well: Salvation does not come from good works (v.9); good works are a result of salvation – and a proper faith response by the believer who grows, progresses and ministers in anticipation of a good reward.

Q2: I understand the parable now and I've been trying to work out the meaning of our Lord's expression "make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings" - should we thus take them metaphorically, so that as He was just referring to the friends of the unrighteous steward receiving him, He uses this expression to draw a parallel to the spiritual realm, but one that is not to be pressed word for word? Perhaps this might be right, as the way you explain this parable, which has definitely helped me finally grasp it, would indicate that we have two parallel situations here - earthly debtors receiving the steward because of his shrewdness which stands for us using all resources available to us to grow in the truth and maximise the production as we keep the impending judgment constantly before our eyes. And in the same vein the ending is parallel, so when our Lord says "make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings", we know that it's God on whom our reception to eternal dwelling depends (I think pretty much all commentators without exception are dwelling on the difficulty of who is meant by "they" here, just as I have done) so the verse is to be taken as a metaphor, just as the whole parable - "therefore be reconciled to God by all means you can, so that when your time is up, you will be received to the eternity with Him".

How should we understand the words "so that when it fails" in this verse?

A2: I'm sticking with my view, nicely summarized by yourself, that we aren't meant to take this as a one for one comparison on all points but as a parable wherein there are critical points of analogy but not necessarily direct unities between the parable and the lesson our Lord is teaching. After all, we are not literal stewards, we are not unjust, we are not going to be deposed from our positions, and we are not going to act in a scurrilous way as a result. But just as the unjust and worldly unbeliever knows how to make the most of the situation he is in with an eye to the future, so also we believers who are righteous through the blood of Christ need to be looking forward prudently – as the unjust steward did – in order that our time and effort here on earth might be wisely spent "so that when it fails" (i.e., when our lives are over and we face our life-evaluation) we may receive a "well-done" from our Lord.

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Luke 16:14-18 (NASB)

14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him. 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God. 16 "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. 17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail. 18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.

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Q: Our Lord here makes a few points one after another, but I cannot see the link between them?

A: Verse fifteen answers verse fourteen (the Pharisees love money, but God detests what they esteem). The next three verses have independent points. The "but" in the NASB version in verse seventeen is an over-translation of the *de* in the Greek (in fact there is no special relationship between verses sixteen and seventeen). Also, the phrase "and everyone is forcing his way into it" in verse sixteen is not part of the original text. All Greek sentences are supposed to be connected to the preceding sentence by a conjunction; violation of this rule (asyndeton) provokes attention as unusual. Together, however, all of these verses do provide an introduction to the story of Lazarus. Together, they demonstrate 1) the fact that the new message of good news is not inconsistent with the Law if the Law is properly understood and applied, and that 2) the Pharisees neither understand it nor value it in truth. The story of Lazarus then goes on to demonstrate the eternal ramifications of rejecting the truth (by the Pharisees) as exemplified in the Law when rightly understood and applied, and the eternal ramifications of accepting the message of good news, even if in this present world a person may be vilified for doing so by those who have set up a false system of religion. It is better to be poor and seen as nothing by the world in this life than to be rich and esteemed by the world in this life – provided one is born again unto eternal life (as Lazarus was).

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Luke 16:30-31 (NASB)

30 But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

NIB SB: Lk.16:30 someone from the dead. The story may suggest that Lazarus was intended, but Luke's account seems to imply that Jesus was speaking also of his own resurrection (cf. v. 31; 9:22). If people's minds are closed and Scripture is rejected, no evidence-not even a resurrection-will change them.

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Q: Do you think that this parable could be a reference to raising Lazarus from the dead in John 11? Or is it only to do with our Lord's resurrection?

A: The Lazarus in John's gospel was not a poor man; he was the brother of Mary and Martha, a wealthy family from Bethany. What Abraham says to the rich man is true in every respect, of course in the case of the resurrection of Christ from the dead to which His contemporaries did not respond (and even today those of the seed of Abraham suffer for the most part from "hardness of heart" regarding accepting the true Messiah: Rom.11:25). Abraham's words are also true of the other Lazarus whom Jesus brought back from the dead (that miracle provoked only a desire to kill Lazarus on the part of the rulers in Jerusalem: Jn.12:10), and they are true in the case of all the other individuals our Lord and the apostles brought back to life – and also true in the case of those resuscitated after the crucifixion (Matt.27:52); further, the words will prove true when Moses and Elijah come back during the Tribulation (the world will still follow antichrist). So salvation is not a matter of information, even if a person witnesses an undeniable return from the dead; salvation is a matter of "obedience [consisting] of faith" (Rom.1:5; 16:26). The important thing to point out about these comments in the SB and similar things one hears is that the story of Lazarus in Luke is **not** a parable but a completely accurate rendition of a historical event. So the rich man actually said what he said, and to the extent that it is prophetic of what happened later (which it is), that is unintendedly ironic (because God wants all to be saved).

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Luke 17:5-7 (NASB)

4 And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." 5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" 6 And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you. 7 "Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'?"

\*

Q: Could you explain the relationship between these verses? In verse 4 Jesus tells the apostles to forgive, to which they reply "Increase our faith" and I don't

know how that stems from what has already been said. According to the NIV SB it is to do with them lacking the belief to put our Lord's command into practice:

Lk.17:5 Increase our faith! They felt incapable of measuring up to the standards set forth in vv. 1-4. They wanted greater faith to lay hold of the power to live up to Jesus' standards

Then our Lord, having in verse 6 spoken about faith, moves to the nature of servitude and again, I'm not sure why He does that.

A: The teaching about being unworthy servants occurs only in Luke (Lk.17:7-10), although Matthew, for example, does have the verse about rebuking one's brother and also about forgiving "seven times" (actually seventy times seven in Matt.18:21). We have already established that our Lord taught many principles of truth in a variety of orders. So I do not think that there must necessarily be a thematic connection between verses six and seven (verse seven begins a new teaching). Clearly, however, we can say that the need for proper humility (the lesson of vv.7-10) is applicable to one's attitude of forgiveness (the problem addressed in verse four). The principle that even a little true faith is sufficient to do wondrous things (v.6) is a response to the disciples wrongly concluding that they are unable to be so forgiving because of a lack of faith; rather, they are choosing not to wish to forgive – if they were willing, this would easily be possible.

\*\*\*

Luke 17:14 (NASB)

14 When He saw them, He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed.

NIV SB: Lk.17:14 show yourselves to the priests. Normal procedure after a cure (see Lev 13:2-3; 14:2-32).

\*

Q: Since it was the normal procedure after the cure, why does Jesus tell the lepers to go to the priests before they were cured?

A: The way our Lord worked this miracle served to demonstrate both the faith and the gratitude of those involved. It took faith to go to the priests as Jesus told them to do even before being healed; it took genuine gratitude to God to come back and give glory to Jesus for the cleansing. All had faith; only one really appreciated what God had done. So it is today. Many believe, but not

many are willing to respond to God's gracious salvation in the Gift of Jesus Christ so as to do what God wants done: spiritual growth, spiritual progress, spiritual production for the benefit of the Church of Christ.

\*\*\*

Luke 17:19 (NASB)

19 And He said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has made you well."

a) Since "you" is in singular in Greek, how should the healing of the other 9 lepers be explained (since verse 14 indicates they were all cleansed)?

b) NIV SB: Lk.17:19 your faith has made you well. See Mt 9:22. The phrase may also be rendered "your faith has saved you" (7:50; see note on Mk 5:34). The fact that the Samaritan returned to thank Jesus may indicate that he had received salvation in addition to the physical healing all ten had received (cf. 7:50; 8:48, 50 and notes).

\*

Q: Do you agree that the one leper who came back received salvation?

A: In Greek, "saved" also often means "healed", because while the Bible does use this word-complex (built on the morpheme *so-* in Greek) technically for being delivered from sin so as to have eternal life (i.e., "saved" from condemnation), it is also used much more flexibly in Greek generally and also in the Bible for deliverance from any sort of danger or trouble . . . or disease (i.e., "saved" from physical trouble). The latter is what we have here. That does not mean that this man was not "saved" in our soteriological sense of the word. This Samaritan put His faith in Jesus' ability to heal him – something which can only be done by the power of God. So I do see indications that his man , who not only had the faith to trust that he would be healed, but also demonstrated the depth of that faith and appreciation by coming back to Jesus to throw himself at our Lord's feet and give Him thanks, is our brother in Christ.

Q2: Ok, understood. What is your take on the "you" being in the singular here?

A2: Our Lord is addressing the only one (sing.) person who came back to give Him the glory – and perhaps also the only one "saved" in the spiritual sense as well as in the physical sense.

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Luke 17:22 (NASB)

22 And He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

\*

**Q:** What does Jesus mean by "one of the days of the Son of Man"?

**A:** As hard as things no doubt were for the disciples during these days "of the Son of Man", the time when our Lord was with them on this earth, in times to come they would face stiffer opposition and more difficult labor, all without the visible presence of our Lord to guide them and encourage them. But we also cannot and must not overlook the fact that while we too long for His presence, the gift of the Spirit is so substantial that we are actually more effective with the Spirit even though we do not now see Jesus face to face – as He Himself said:

"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."  
John 16:7 NASB

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Luke 17:23 (NASB)

23 They will say to you, 'Look there! Look here!' Do not go away, and do not run after them.

NIV SB: Lk.17:23 Do not go running off after them. Do not leave your work in order to pursue predictions of Christ's second advent (see note on 1Th 4:11).

\*

**Q:** Do you agree with this note? I thought that rather than telling not to leave our work, our Lord rather warns that we should not be deceived by false messiahs?

**A:** I agree with you. The point is that the return of our Lord will be impossible to miss, for it will be visible from one end of the heavens to the other (not to mention that we who survive to see it will be resurrected immediately after His return). So if someone says that He has returned, that cannot be true if we have to make some journey or go to some secret place in order to "see Him". In that case, it cannot be Him.

\*\*\*

Luke 17:31 (NASB)

31 On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back.

NIV SB: Lk.17:31 on the housetop. It was customary to relax on the flat rooftop. When the final hour comes, however, the individual there should not be thinking of going into the house to retrieve some material objects. Matthew and Mark refer similarly to flight at the fall of Jerusalem, and indirectly to the end time (Mt 24:17-18; Mk 13:15), but here the reference is explicitly to Jesus' return (see v. 30; cf. 21:21).

\*

**Q:** Do you agree that the reference in Matthew 24:17-18 and Mark 13:15 is to the fall of Jerusalem rather than to the Second Coming?

**A:** All of these passages (along with Lk.20:21-24) refer to the incipient capture of Jerusalem by antichrist at the Tribulation's mid-point. It is true that this passage, Luke 17:31ff., is part of a "telescoped" treatment of the end times that begins with a refutation of Pharisaical expectations about the coming of the Messiah, through the crucifixion, the Tribulation and then to second advent proper – in order to teach the truth about these matters and also to prevent misunderstanding and subsequent fatal error. That is the point of the verses in context, namely, to prevent anticipating the return of the Lord before due time. At the Tribulation's mid-point, believing Israel must flee to the desert (Rev.12:1ff.), not remain in Jerusalem. Finally, by "fall of Jerusalem" these notes in the SB are referring to the Roman siege that ended in the destruction of the city in 70 A.D. None of these passages refer to that event.

\*\*\*

Luke 17:35 (NASB)

35 There will be two women grinding at the same place; one will be taken and the other will be left.

NIV SB: Lk.17:35 taken. Could refer to being "taken to/from destruction" or "taken into the kingdom." What is clear is that no matter how close two people may be in life, they have no guarantee of the same eternal destiny. One may go to judgment and condemnation, the other to salvation, reward and blessing.

**Q:** How should we interpret "taken" here? Is it about being taken to be with the Lord just prior to the Armageddon (1 Thessalonians 4:17)?

**A:** Yes. It's not good to be "left behind". The Greek verb equally means "abandoned"; and since it is also the verb for rebellion and apostasy, merely

translating "left behind" which is deceptively neutral in English and misses the inflection point here.

\*\*\*

Matthew 24:17-18 (NASB)

17 Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.18 Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

Mark 13:15 (NASB)

15 The one who is on the housetop must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house;

Luke 17:37 (NASB)

37 And answering they \*said to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body is, there also the vultures will be gathered."

\*

**Q:** The NIV SB note on Matthew 24:28 says that this proverb is used in different sense in these two passages. What is the difference?

**A:** These passages all refer to the same event, namely, the resurrection when all believers will rise to the sky to join our dear Lord Jesus. The SB's confusion comes from its trying to reconcile this passage with the synoptic apocalypse in an incorrect way.

\*\*\*

Luke 17:36 (NASB)

36 [Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other will be left.]

\*

**Q:** Is Luke 17:36 a part of the scripture?

**A:** No – not in this place, at least. It is an assimilation to Matthew 24:40. The origin might be a marginal gloss or expansion giving the reader the additional information in Matthew (which was then mistakenly added into the text here too in some later mss. traditions).

\*\*\*

Luke 18:7-8 (NASB)

7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, [a]and will He delay long over them? 8 I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

a. Luke 18:7 Or and yet He is very patient toward them

\*

Q: Could you explain the first footnote? It seems the alternative rendering conveys a different meaning?

A: The problem is that the Greek verb *makrothumeo* ("to be patient") is in the present tense here, connected by what precedes by *kai* ("and"). Translators have struggled to connect the two clauses as equivalent, but it seems clear to me that the *kai* begins a new sentence: "Indeed, He (God) is [even] patiently bearing with them [until such time as He does bring about their deliverance]".

Q2: One question on this - since in the next verse our Lord says:

8 I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly.

Would it not be somewhat against the thrust of these words spoken by our Lord to say that "He is bearing with them"? Do any of the following renderings sound possible to you?

"Will not God bring justice to His elect... and is He delaying long over them?/and is He putting them off?/and is He being slow towards them?"

A2: They are all fine. By using three dots and the word "and" followed by the present tense, a break in the sense is indicated. Inaccurate use of two futures in English with a simple connective obscures the distinction between the two separate sentences.

Q3: Ok, do you mean that the break in the sense should be indicated and that it gets lost if two futures are used? The reason I have put forward these three renderings - "and is He delaying long over them?/and is He putting them off?/and is He being slow towards them" is that it seemed to me that the point our Lord is making is that God is in fact not delaying (as the next verse would indicate), so I thought that taking the end of verse 7 as a question would make best sense here.



A3: Yes – there should **not** be two futures in an English translation as is the case in the printed NASB text (the footnote in that version has a more literal rendering). The alternative offered is not impossible, although the switch of tenses makes this very unlikely in my view. That is why most versions have sought to ignore the grammar and render as two futures. The only other "way out" of the solution I proposed (which is based on grammar and the meaning of the actual vocabulary as we know it and have it) is to do what you are suggesting. I still prefer:

"Indeed, He (God) is [even] patiently bearing with them [until such time as He does bring about their deliverance]".

The perceived contradiction, i.e., the "long" or *makro-* in *makrothumeo* vs. the "quickly" of verse eight, is really that: merely perceived. Christians ought to know very well that when it comes to waiting on the Lord we see things one way while He sees them another. We want instant help – instant in human terms; God provides timely help – timely in divine terms. We may have to wait a very long time from the human-viewpoint; Abraham certainly did – but in divine terms it happened certainly and it happened swiftly. After all, what is a thousand years when measure in the light of eternity? The help/deliverance/vindication would only be "not timely" if the believers in question were destroyed before it came – but our Lord is always faithful in delivering us, just as He was with Abraham (even though as we look in from the outside we see that it took a long time – in human terms):

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead **he is patient** with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2nd Peter 3:8-9 NIV (cf. Ps.90:4)

Incidentally, the highlighted phrase above, "He is patient" is precisely the same verb as we have in Luke 18:7 (it's even precisely the same form). And we know that, for example, the Tribulation was then (just as it is now) "coming quickly" (Rev.1:1; 22:6 – same phrase in Greek exactly as we have in Lk.18:8; cf. Rev.22:7; 22:12; 22:20). No doubt for this very reason our Lord closes with the following important addition:

But when the Son of Man returns, will He find faith [still existing] on the earth?  
Luke 18:8b

Jesus will deliver all of us who have been destined not to be martyred in the Tribulation – and very quickly too (even in human terms, seven years is not an eternity). But as we grind it out here on earth, a day can seem like a thousand years instead of the other way around. We need to remember, therefore, that our God and Father will "quickly" bring about just recompense on our behalf, even if in human eyes it seems that He is "exercising patience"; He is in fact working it out in just the right way and at just the right time. WE are the one who have need of patience . . . and of faith, so that our Lord will find us maintaining complete confidence in Him, His Word, His promises, His integrity, His faithfulness, when He returns.

(35) So do not throw away this conviction of yours - it leads to a great reward. (36) You need to keep persevering so that you may carry off in victory what has been promised - after you have accomplished God's will. (37) For yet a little while, how short, how [short the wait], and He who is coming shall come, nor will He delay. (38) "Then shall my righteous one live by his faith, but if he shrinks back, My heart takes no pleasure in him (Hab.2:3-4)." (39) Now we are not possessed of cowardly apostasy which leads to destruction, but we have faith which leads to [eternal] life.

Hebrews 10:35-39

We have to have faith that God's deliverance is certain and sure, and that it will come in a timely way – even if from our earthly perspective things are not happening as quickly as we should like. That is, after all, the most common situation inasmuch as we human beings notoriously lack patience even though God is incredibly patient with us. Loss of patience sometimes equates to loss of faith, and at no time will this virtue of patience in order to maintain faith be more critical than during the Tribulation – where we will have to wait to the very end for our deliverance. The widow in our context is an example of precisely the faith we need to have. We need to keep on petitioning our Judge until we receive our deliverance, doing so in absolute faith that He will deliver us, even though this may not happen as quickly as **we** would choose for ourselves (in ignorance of all of the other myriad pieces of the Plan of God for us and for others).

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Luke 18:11 (NASB)

11 The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.'

\*

Q: Do our Lord's words "was praying this to himself" indicate that the Pharisee was not heard?

A: God of course hears everything; but He responds to those who belong to Him who approach Him in humility and truth. I doubt that this particular "thanksgiving" was found acceptable before the Lord. In any case, we have it from our Lord that it fell short of what the tax collector had said:

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Luke 18:14 NIV

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Luke 18:35 (NASB)

35 As Jesus was approaching Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road begging.

NIV SB: Lk.18:35 approached Jericho. See note on Mk 10:46. blind man. His name was Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46). Matthew reports that two blind men were healed (see note on Mt 20:30). Mark and Luke did not record the presence of the other.

\*

Q: Is this the same incident in all three accounts?

A: Yes. While the other writers usually concentrate on the most important person in the story, the one who responds in faith, Matthew frequently gives the technically correct number (often "two", as, for example in the case of the Gadarene: Matt.8:28). This is a good point to remember in terms of God's mercy being widely distributed but not all who are so blessed even so being willing to respond to Him and to His truth

\*\*\*

Luke 19:5 (NASB)

5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

NIV SB: Lk.19:5 I must stay at your house. Implies a divine necessity.

\*

Q: Do you agree that divine necessity is here implied?

A: I would have to know what the SB people mean. Everything that happens has been ordained in the plan of God; to that degree, everything is "a divine necessity". The SB people are probably just trying to explain why our Lord says "must" here. "It's right/proper" would be a legitimate translation, indicating the natural result of this person's faith response to our Lord.

\*\*\*

Luke 19:13 (NASB)

13 And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.'

\*

Q: The parable starts with the master calling ten slaves, but later only the actions of three are described?

A: A good example of legitimate shorthand in telling a story, as in English where we might say "and so forth" to save time in not having to say the obvious (i.e., eight to eight, seven to seven, six to six, etc., if they all happened in same proportional way).

\*\*\*

Luke 19:14 (NASB)

14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'

\*

Q: Why is a delegation sent? Is it because the citizens were afraid to openly say it to their master before he left?

A: This is prophetic of the rejection of Christ, the Messiah and legitimate ruler of Israel, by the powers that be in Jerusalem at this time (reflecting the wishes of most of the people); when our Lord returns, all those who opposed Him will be destroyed (as in this parable: "But those enemies of mine who did not want

me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.",  
Lk.19:27 NIV).

\*\*\*

Luke 19:27 (NASB)

27 But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence."

NIV SB: Lk.19:27 those enemies of mine ... kill them. Perhaps a reference to Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70. The punishment of those who rebelled and actively opposed the king (see v. 14 and note) was much more severe than that of the negligent servant.

\*

**Q:** Do you agree that the reference is to Jerusalem's destruction rather than the Second Coming and Armageddon?

**A:** No. It's a reference to the second advent.

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Luke 19:28-44

NIV SB: Lk.19:28-44 Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as King occurred on Sunday of Passion Week (see this chart, and map; see also notes on Mt 21:1-9; Mk 11:1-10; Jn 12:12-15).

\*

**Q:** How do we know that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem occurred on Sunday?

**A:** The dating of the events of "passion week" is a knotty problem. In my calculation of things, it was more likely a Saturday. See the link: "[Palm Sunday](#)". For more comments on the events of this week see the link: "[The Last Passover](#)".

\*\*\*

Luke 19:43-44 (NASB)

43 For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

\*

Q: Is Jesus here referring to His second coming? Could you explain our Lord's explanation of these events - "because you did not recognize the time of your visitation"?

A: In addition to being a tribulational reference, this passage does have an additional *application* to the destruction of Jerusalem not many years hence (in 70 A.D.). The word "visitation" is the Greek *episkope* ("inspection") and is the Greek translation of various forms of the Hebrew root *paqadh* ("take notice of officially"). When there is a census of Israel, redemption money must be paid, because when God "visits" or "inspects" us, we cannot otherwise stand muster. This was the time when God sent His only Son to "officially see" the spiritual status of Israel, and of course they failed the test miserably. This failure of Israel, disaster for her at that time, turns out to be the "riches of the gentiles" (Rom.11:12) as the mystery of the Church Age is then brought in as a result.

The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. The day God visits you (*pequddah*) has come, the day your watchmen sound the alarm. Now is the time of your confusion.

Michah 7:4 NIV

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Luke 20:16 (NASB)

16 He will come and destroy these vine-growers and will give the vineyard to others." When they heard it, they said, "May it never be!"

\*

Q: How should we interpret the response "May it never be"? Were those who said this unaware that they were doing exactly what has just been said in the parable? Or were they aware of it and said these words meaning that they don't want to be punished for it?

A: The latter rather than the former. This is an asseveration or oath that is commonly invoked to distance oneself from the sentiment or outcome envisioned. Paul uses it often (*me genoito* – KJV: "God forbid!"). The validity of the oath depends entirely on the person saying it and their motives (as you rightly intuit). These individuals swear / wish for this not to happen, but it was in their power to avoid it through a change of heart – the only thing that would have prevented it.

\*\*\*

Luke 20:20 (NASB)

20 So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor.

NIV SB: Lk.20:20 authority of the governor. Fearing to take action themselves, the Jewish religious leaders hoped to draw from Jesus some statement that would bring action from the Roman officials and remove him from his contact with the people.

\*

Q: Do you agree that Pharisees' actions were driven by fear?

A: We hear later (Lk.22:2) that these officials "feared the crowd" and their reaction. It was also illegal for them to put someone to death themselves and without due process. We also know that they were worried about a Roman reaction which would dispossess them of their status (Jn.11:48). But their main motivation was jealousy (Matt.27:18).

\*\*\*

Luke 20:39 (NASB)

39 Some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well."

NIV SB: Lk.20:39 Well said, teacher! Even though there was great animosity against Jesus, the teachers of the law (who were Pharisees) sided with Jesus against the Sadducees on the matter of resurrection.

\*

Q: Do you agree that his answer only has political value in it, or could it be a sign of acceptance of Jesus' teaching on part of at least some?

A: The SB is making the point that the Pharisees were happy to agree with our Lord on the few points where they agreed, yet without accepting the rest of the truth or Him as the Truth.

Q2: I thought it maybe could have been a sign of some openness of heart on part of some of the scribes, but that seems very unlikely.

A2: Only a few believed; but a few did believe (e.g., Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea). Since this verse gives a corporate answer, I think we have to

understand it as representing the corporate mind-set of most of the Pharisees (i.e., of not accepting our Lord as the Messiah).

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Luke 20:47 (NASB)

47 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

\*

Q: Does this passage mean that there will be different degrees of condemnation in the lake of fire (i.e., "greater condemnation")?

A: I don't find any indication of that where scripture speaks of either the last judgment or the situation of the condemned in the lake of fire, nor do I think that the wording here necessitates that conclusion. "Incur a sterner judgment" seems to me to be the correct sense here. It may be argued that there is little comfort to those who will have a "less stern judgment" if all such judgment upon unbelievers ends in the same place, the lake of fire. That is certainly true. However, the true intended effect of our Lord's words "sterner judgment" here is to turn those who engaged in such activity – or those who are impressed by them – away from this false appreciation of reality in order that they may be saved, if they be but willing.

\*\*\*

NIV SB: Lk.20:47 devour widows' houses. They take advantage of this defenseless group by fraud and schemes for selfish gain. punished most severely. Cf. 12:46-48 and note. The higher the esteem received from others, the more severe the demands of true justice, and the more hypocrisy (Mt 23:1-36), the greater the condemnation.

\*

Q: NIV SB seems to base the hypocrisy based on unfulfilled standards of true justice as perceived by others, but isn't this verse first of all about Pharisees' own self-esteem in the first place and hypocrisy resulting from it?

A: You are exactly right. We are judged based upon what we do, think and say. SB seems to be trying to make the point (if altogether too obliquely) that "teachers face a higher standard" (Jas.3:1), and that is certainly true as well.

\*\*\*



Luke 21:6 (NASB)

6 "As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down."

NIV SB: Lk.21:6 not one stone ... left. Fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans took Jerusalem and burned the temple (Mt 24:2; see note there).

\*

**Q: Do you agree that the destruction of Jerusalem is meant here rather than the Second Coming?**

**A: While, loosely speaking, as with the other passages asked about early this passage has a general *application* to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., this entire passage – including this verse – is speaking about the Tribulation and the second advent.**

\*\*\*

Luke 21:9 (NASB)

9 When you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately."

NIV SB: Lk.21:9 the end will not come right away. Refers to the end of the age (see Mt 24:3, 6). All the events listed in vv. 8-18 are characteristic of the entire present age, not just signs of the end of the age.

\*

**Q: Do you agree that the events listed are characteristic of the entire present age, rather than referring specifically to the Tribulation?**

**A: Again, this passage is to be interpreted as referring to the events of the Tribulation, even though, obviously, there are similar things that have happened in the Church Age. The point is for believers during *that* time not to over-think the magnitude of the events that befall the world and so assume that the second advent will happen immediately, since the entire period lasts seven years. Wrongly interpreting the events of that time will make believers more vulnerable to the false representations of antichrist who will claim to be Christ.**

\*\*\*

Luke 21:14-15 (NASB)

14 So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; 15 for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.

\*

**Q:** Could you explain why preparation stands in the way of being given utterance by God?

**A:** Supernatural times will call for supernatural intervention. We do well to remember these words of our Lord so as to fully benefit from the special blessing of direct, Holy Spirit intervention on our behalf if we find ourselves in this situation. It is a blessing to be able to put aside all worry on this point so as to rely completely on the sufficiency of God and not at all on our own talents, preparation or devices.

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Luke 21:16-18 (NASB)

16 But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, 17 and you will be hated by all because of My name. 18 Yet not a hair of your head will perish.

NIV SB: Lk.21:18 Although persecution and death may come, God is in control, and the ultimate outcome will be eternal victory. not a hair of your head will perish. In view of v. 16, this cannot refer to physical safety. The figure indicates that there will be no real-i. e., spiritual and eternal-loss.

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**Q:** Do you agree that our Lord here could refer to the spiritual loss being prevented by God rather than physical? You take a different view in "[Not a Hair](#)", where you state that two separate groups are meant here by our Lord - one meant to die in martyrdom and the other to be delivered.

**A:** While what the note says about no loss even for martyrs is true, the verses are speaking about two separate groups. Even for the martyrs, they will only be allowed to be killed at God's precise, correct time.

**Q2:** Just one more question on this - I'm not sure how from these verses we can distinguish between the two groups rather than taking verse 18 as referring to eternal life which holds true for both those martyred and those who will survive until the Lord's coming?

**A2:** The expression "not a hair on your head will be lost" is deliberately physical in nature and refers primarily to physical deliverance. For those

meant to last until the Lord's return, this will be literally true in every sense. It is also true that some will be martyred; the statement has to apply to them too, but in their case we have to make allowances for their physical death and suffering. For these individuals, their rewards are guaranteed as well as a special blessing for dying for the Lord. Since the spiritual aspect is more important than the physical, we are within our rights to see this statement as essentially true even for the sub-group of martyrs.

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Luke 21:24 (NASB)

24 and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

NIV SB: Lk.21:24 times of the Gentiles. The Gentiles would have both spiritual opportunities (see Mt 24:14 and note; Mk 13:10; cf. Lk 20:16; Ro 11:25 and note) and domination of Jerusalem, but these times will end when God's purpose for the Gentiles has been fulfilled.

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Q: This note isn't clear to me - our Lord seems to be referring to unbelieving Gentiles, perhaps associated with the Antichrist, but the note puts together Gentile believers who were to fill the Church with those responsible for Jerusalem's destruction. I find it quite confusing and unnecessary, but maybe I'm misunderstanding what is being said here.

A: The note is unclear to me too (it strikes me that the editors felt the need to comment on this phrase but didn't really understand it or know what to say). The phrase "times of the gentiles" refers to that period of time, the Church Age, when Israel would not be functioning as God's "priest" in a national way (there has always been a remnant of Jewish believers). During this period we have witnessed the great influx of non-Jewish believers into the Church – whereas before the vast majority since Abraham had been Jewish.

Q2: I assumed that since these words are spoken in the context of the Tribulation (verses 20-23), this verse is also to be applied to that time?

A2: That is correct. The Tribulation, a joint period of overlap in the Church Age and Age of Israel, begins the end of the "times of the gentiles" (cf. Rev.11:2 where the "trampling" will continue almost until the return of our Lord).

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Luke 21:32 (NASB)

32 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place.

NIV SB: Lk.21:32 this generation. If reference here is to the destruction of Jerusalem that occurred about 40 years after Jesus spoke these words, "generation" is used in its ordinary sense of a normal life span. "All these things" would then have been fulfilled in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem. On the other hand, if reference here is to the second coming of Christ, "generation" might refer to a future generation alive at the beginning of "these things." It does not mean that Jesus had a mistaken notion that he was going to return immediately.

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**Q:** How should we understand "this generation" in this verse? Could it refer to the generation of people who will be witnessing the events described in previous verses, which would mean that the generation experiencing the Tribulation will be the generation who will see Christ's Second Coming? Or does our Lord mean the generation to whom He is speaking and the destruction of Jerusalem?

**A:** Just because in modern English the word "generation" means a particular age-group tied to a (relatively) small window of time doesn't mean the same is true in Greek – and it is not. Our Lord means "this type", namely, the hardened of heart who refuse to accept the Messiah.

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

Romans 11:25 NIV

Throughout the "times of the gentiles", physical Israel will be mostly be resistant to the gospel; that is "the type" which versions often confusingly translate "generation".

**Q2:** I know from your responses that by "this generation" we should understand the generation of unbelievers, but the interpretation which applies these words to the destruction of Jerusalem also seems a possibility.

**A2:** I think the fact that our Lord says here "all these things" (*panta*) shows that He is referring not just to the near-term destruction of Jerusalem but also to the entire end times sequence of events. After all, "this generation" has not passed away yet as we can see with our own eyes; that was as prophesied:

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.

Romans 11:25 NIV

So if there is a special, partial application to the individuals of our Lord's day, that limited application is now no longer in play; and it certainly doesn't invalidate the larger point that those of the physical seed of Abraham would in large part remain hardened to the truth until the Lord returns.

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Luke 21:35 (NASB)

35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.

NIV SB: Lk.21:35 whole earth. The second coming of Christ will involve the whole of humankind, whereas the fall of Jerusalem did not.

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Q: If that's the case, then why does NIV SB, together with other commentaries, persist at referring these verses to the destruction of Jerusalem?

A: It's a serious inconsistency born of the fact they don't seem to understand certain basic principles of the interpretation of prophecy. It was common in the Old Testament prophets to "telescope" all of future eschatology into one whole ("[prophetic foreshortening](#)"), but the ultimate events (i.e., the Tribulation and the second advent) are always the primary focus, with more near term applications (such as in this case the Roman siege) being explained by analogy to the more famous and more important future events ("[the day of the Lord paradigm](#)"). See the two links.

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Luke 21:36 (NASB)

36 But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

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Q: How should we understand the "strength to escape all these things that are about to take place"?

A: As the verse says, spiritual alertness is the key to having the ability/power/opportunity to "escape" all the pitfalls of the Tribulation so as to experience the living resurrection at our Lord's return (martyrdom, of course, is excepted – genuine martyrdom is the highest compliment to a believer's faith). It is also important to point out that such alertness is impossible without a good measure of prior spiritual growth. So any believers who is generally concerned about this in reading this verse should draw the proper conclusion and "get cracking" with spiritual growth and progress in his/her walk with Jesus now, so as to be ready for whatever comes then – which is precisely what we should all be doing anyway.

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Luke 22:3 (NASB)

3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.

NIV SB: Lk.22:3 Satan entered Judas. In the Gospels this expression is used on two separate occasions:(1) before Judas went to the chief priests and offered to betray Jesus (here) and (2) during the Last Supper (Jn 13:27; see note there). Thus the Gospel writers depict Satan's control over Judas, who had never displayed strong commitment to Jesus (see Jn 13:2; see also notes on Jn 17:12; 1Co 15:2). called Iscariot. See Jn 6:71 and note.

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Q: Why is it that Satan entered Judas on two separate occasions?

A: I have addressed this issue at the link: "[Judas](#)". The simple answer as to why the devil did not continually possess Judas in the manner of most demon invasions of unbelievers we see in scripture, either previously or during the interval between these two entrances, is that he was not allowed to do so. Satan would no doubt have been thrilled to be a constant thorn in the side of our Lord's ministry in this way, but that was not permitted. In order to do something as horrific as to betray our Lord, either to agree to it in the first place or carry it out in the second place, required a certain amount of enabling, even for an unbeliever. The reason why the devil was not allowed to be a constant presence in total control of Judas was so that it might be made clear (as well as to be the case) that the decision was in fact Judas' own, and one which he persevered in even when there was an opportunity to repent – therefore the fault and blame for his actions are entirely his without mitigation on the grounds of "possession".

**Q2:** So do you mean here that the temporary possession was needed for Judas to betray our Lord, as otherwise he might not have had the boldness to do that? Similarly as with Pharaoh who was, through his hardening of heart, enabled to disregard the miracles performed by Moses?

**A2:** A good analogy. Divine alteration of the "normal" situation is necessary for both things to transpire, not because of any lack of evil in the human heart, but because of lack of necessary strength and resolve in the face of divine power; special empowerment is necessary to overcome the natural awe of God in both cases.

**Q3:** How should we best reconcile Luke's and Matthew's accounts?

**Luke 22:**

1. Our Lord expresses the desire to eat the Passover with His disciples (14-16).
2. The bread and the blood of the covenant (17-20).
3. Prediction of the betrayal (21-23).
4. Dispute about who is the greatest (24-30).
5. Words to Simon and the prediction of his betrayal (31-34).
6. Question of provisions (35-38).
7. Jesus leaves to Gethsemane together with His disciples (39).

**Matthew 26:**

1. Prediction of betrayal (20-25).
2. The bread and the blood of the covenant (26-29).
3. Jesus leaves to Gethsemane together with His disciples (30).
4. Prediction of disciples being scattered and Simon's betrayal (31-35).

I) It seems that the words about the covenant and the prediction of betrayal are given in opposite order in these two accounts - is it the case of one author reversing the order or the discussion of the betrayal taking place twice?

II) Peter's betrayal is predicted before the departure to Gethsemane in Luke, but after in Matthew?

A3: We've seen before that Luke is sometimes allowed by the Spirit to place events out of chronological order for the sake of emphasis (as in the three temptations of Christ by the devil; see the link: "[The Temptations of Christ](#)"). That is no doubt what we have here as well with Luke emphasizing the New Covenant rather than the betrayal which was well-known and understood by the time his gospel was written (similarly on the second point).

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Luke 22:11-13 (NASB)

11 And you shall say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" 12 And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there." 13 And they left and found everything just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

NIV SB: Lk.22:11 The Teacher asks. This form of address may have been chosen because the owner was a follower already known to Jesus.

Lk.22:13 as Jesus had told them. It may be that Jesus had made previous arrangements with the man in order to make sure that the Passover meal would not be interrupted. Since Jesus did not identify ahead of time just where he would observe Passover, Judas was unable to inform the enemy, who might have interrupted this important occasion.

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Q: Do you agree that the owner of the house could have been a follower of Jesus? Also, is it true that our Lord didn't identify ahead of time where He wanted to observe the Passover in order for the enemy not to be informed?

A: I think from the context it is certain that our Lord made these arrangements ahead of time, and that the individual in question was a follower and no doubt a believer in Christ. I don't see the logic to the other suggestion since the place was in fact designated ahead of time.

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Luke 22:14-30

NIV SB: Lk.22:14-30 It appears that Luke does not attempt to be strictly chronological in his account of the Last Supper. He records the most important part of the occasion first-the sharing of the bread and the cup. Then he tells of Jesus' comments about his betrayer and about the argument over who would be greatest, though both of these subjects seem to have been introduced earlier. John's Gospel (13:26-30), e. g., indicates that Judas had already left the room before the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper were shared, but Luke does not tell when he left.



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Q: If Luke's account of the supper isn't chronological, wouldn't this go against what he says in the introduction?

A: The note is wrong. John's narrative actually does have Judas as a participant in the last supper before going out to betray Christ (Jn.13:30). Also, leaving out things others include is not the same as not following a strictly chronological narrative. Matthew's and Luke's accounts seem to me to be consistent; John doesn't go into the same set of details as the other synoptics, but of course he does provide a wealth of detail on our Lord's last discourses (not found in the synoptics) before His death for us on the cross.

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Luke 22:15-18 (NASB)

15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes."

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Q: Do these verses mean that both the Passover will be eaten and the wine drunk when the kingdom comes?

A: We know for certain (Zech.14:16-19) that the Feast of Tabernacles will be celebrated in the Millennium, and there is some evidence of the other main feasts being reinstated too (e.g., Is.33:20), so I think it is reasonable to suppose that Passover will be celebrated as well – as a memorial to what the Lord accomplished in His victory at the cross (rather than an anticipation of a future sacrifice).

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NIV SB: Lk.22:17 After taking the cup. Either the first of the four cups shared during regular observance of the Passover meal or the third cup.

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Q: Why were there four cups shared during the observance of the Passover? How do we know if it was the first or the third?

A: This is a later Jewish tradition. There is no indication from scripture that it reflects biblical usage or the custom in our Lord's time.

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Luke 22:28 (NASB)

28 "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials;

NIV SB: Lk.22:28 in my trials. Including temptations (cf. 4:13), hardships (9:58) and rejection (Jn 1:11).

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Q: Why does the NIV SB give this example, if our Lord was tested on His own before His ministry started? Similarly, disciples fled from Him before He was crucified, so I'm not sure why He says this.

A: For all their faults, past and future at this point, the disciples were exceptional men. What they did with and for the Lord before the crucifixion was done without the indwelling of the Spirit, and after His resurrection they would do "greater things than these" (Jn.14:12). It's not for nothing that the eleven plus Paul will have their names inscribed on the gates of New Jerusalem. We see their feet of clay, true, but we can also appreciate that they were under terrific pressure as the ones chosen by our Lord to be the foundation of the expansion of the Church to the gentiles.

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Luke 22:31-32 (NASB)

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has [a]demanded permission to sift you like wheat; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

a. Luke 22:31 Or obtained by asking

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Q: a) The alternative reading given in the footnote seems to convey a different meaning - could you explain? b) What does our Lord mean by "once you have turned again"?

A: The note would take the prefix *ex-* on the verb as shifting the meaning from "ask/demand" to "successfully entreat for". I find no parallel in secular Greek where that ever occurs. In secular Greek the compound verb often means

"ask/demand [a slave] for torture", and it does seem clear from the "sift like wheat" part that what the devil was asking for was severe. Also, our Lord says "**but** I have prayed for you", indicating that Jesus by petition overturned Satan's request to be able to destroy the disciples. As to "turn", *epistrepho* means just that, often "turn back", and relates to Peter rallying his faith after failing so miserably on the night of Christ's trials. Once recovering spiritually, Peter is to gather the other disciples and help restore their faith as well.

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Luke 22:36-38 (NASB)

36 And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one. 37 For I tell you that this which is written must be fulfilled in Me, 'And He was numbered with transgressors'; for that which refers to Me has its fulfillment." 38 They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

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**Q:** Jesus tells disciples to buy swords if they don't have them and says that two will be enough before they leave to the garden. How is it then that they were later told not to use them?

**A:** Every tool has a proper use. Peter didn't realize that our Lord was talking about legitimate self-defense in, e.g., the ministries of evangelism the disciples and the generations of Christians to follow would be undertaking wherein many threats to their person would arise as they traveled on many dangerous journeys to spread the gospel. Unlike the missions of the 12 and the 72 which were supernaturally protected in a demonstrable way, nowadays we have to exercise prudence in all things. What our Lord did not mean was that Peter and co. should fight to keep our Lord from being taken, otherwise "how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?" (Matt.26:54 NIV). Learning to do the right thing at the right time and in the right way and avoiding doing the wrong thing at the wrong time in a wrong way is a key element of spiritual growth.

**Q2:** I understand, but I'm still unsure as to why the disciples were to take the swords if they wouldn't use them on this occasion?

**A2:** Clearly, they must have had these two swords present already because they couldn't have had time to go and sell their extra clothing to buy some before the soldiers and Judas arrived. Our Lord is talking to them about the future, not about the present. They misunderstand and apply the words to the present,

oblivious to the major changes in the nature of their ministry which would soon come to pass (even though our Lord had been very clear about these things).

Q3: I'm still not entirely clear about this. In verse 36 Jesus gives the command regarding buying a sword and verse 37 seems to apply what has just been said also to the present circumstances (it starts with λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι). In verse 38 the apostles also give the impression of applying our Lord's command to the immediate situation and instead of rebuking them before the time, He just says "It is enough". Your input here would be appreciated.

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A3: As mentioned, this is a command, and all commands of necessity refer to the future. It's very clear from the circumstances that our Lord did not want the disciples to fight for Him – which would have been the only reason to have swords at *that* time. He told Pilate later that if His kingdom were of this world, His servants would fight; and He told Peter when he drew the sword and hacked off Malchus' ear to put it away. Further, it would seem to indicate a lack of foresight not to have told the disciples this earlier if now was the necessary occasion for the use of violent force. Had they lacked swords entirely or needed more on this occasion, the middle of the night was no time to procure them. If I preface a command to you with "I tell you" it will still be a command. "I tell you, my friend, do not take the mark of the beast!" Clearly, this relates to the future; context and content will provide the guide in all such cases as to when the command is to be carried out. Our Lord is giving commands as regards the differences that will obtain when He is no longer with them (cf. Jn.16:4; 17:12).

Q4: Ok, I understand. And it's a very good point which I didn't consider that clearly our Lord couldn't have meant these words to be applied to the current situation as there would have not been enough time for them to get these swords. My last question would be how should our Lord's response be interpreted. What does He mean by saying "It is enough"? I read the commentaries, but when it comes to these verses they have been largely useless.

A4: "Enough" is misleading for our purposes here because in English this refers to quantity so one might wrongly assume that our Lord is talking about the number of swords. However, the Greek verb *εαο* has nothing whatsoever to do with quantity; it means "allow", or in this context, "let it go" / "leave this topic now" / "that's enough [of that]".

Q5: Is this an "extreme figure of speech" rather than words to be taken literally? The reference to Caesar as the one who "bears the sword" doesn't seem to me directly related to what Jesus says here, because disciples are told to carry sword for protection.

A5: Agreed. There's no parallel here, and our Lord's words are direct – not a "figure of speech". They are meant literally and must be taken literally

Q6: Please explain this footnote - did the disciples really take our Lord's words "too literally"? Are Jesus words meant to be ironic?

NIV SB: Lk.22:38 " ... two swords." "That's enough!" Sensing that the disciples had taken him too literally, Jesus ironically closes the discussion with a curt "That's enough!" Not long after this, Peter was rebuked for using a sword (v. 50).

A6: It's not that they took Him too literally; they misunderstood what He was saying. Our Lord was explaining the policy going forward and the drastic differences between the time when He was with them and what instead would obtain after He was gone. Their response indicates that even after all His teaching on this point the disciples still did not realize that our Lord was about to be crucified (and resurrected), and that things would be quite different on the other side of the cross.

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Luke 22:40 (NASB)

40 When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

NIV SB: Lk.22:40 temptation. Here refers to severe trial of the kind referred to in vv. 28-38, which might lead to a faltering of their faith.

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Q: Do you agree with the note? What sort of temptation does our Lord have in mind here?

A: It seems to me that these prayers are focused upon the trials that will immediately come to pass. As Peter's behavior exemplifies, they largely failed this coming test; perhaps if they had stayed awake to pray they might have been more successful. In any event, our Lord's prayers for them are successful, and they do not entirely fall away after the cross.

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Luke 22:43-44 (NASB)

43 [a]Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

a. Luke 22:43 Most early mss do not contain vv 43 and 44

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Q: Should these verses be included in the scripture?

A: No. It's a later interpolation and not part of the Word of God. Please see the link: "[Drops of Blood](#)"

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Luke 22:45 (NASB)

45 When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow,

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Q: What is meant by "sleeping from sorrow"?

A: Luke is the only gospel writer to explain why they were so sleepy, attributing it (in the Spirit) to "sorrow". I'm no expert in psychology, but it does occur to mean that emotional exhaustion can lead to physical exhaustion, and that seems to be the case here. If the disciples were in a better spiritual place at this point, then they would have potentially been able to do a better job managing their emotions so as to avoid exhaustion and so as to have been able to stay awake and pray. As is often the case in the spiritual life, progress and victory leads to progress and victory, but setbacks and inertia lead to defeats.

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Luke 22:47 (NASB)

47 While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to kiss Him.

NIV SB: Lk.22:47 crowd came up. They were sent by the chief priests, elders (Mt 26:47) and teachers of the law (Mk 14:43; see note there), and they carried swords and clubs. Included was a detachment of soldiers with officials of the Jews (v. 52; Jn 18:3). to kiss him. This signal had been prearranged to identify Jesus to the authorities (Mt 26:48). It was unnecessary because Jesus identified himself (Jn 18:5), but Judas acted out his plan anyway.

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Q: Since Jesus identified Himself, why did Judas still kiss him? It's hard for me to envisage this occurrence - do you know how is this situation best reconstructed?

A: The note assumes that John 18:4 occurs before Judas' kiss. That is not only not necessitated by the content of any of the gospels but also makes less sense than to take things the other way around (in which case there is no contradiction).

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Luke 22:51 (NASB)

51 But Jesus answered and said, "[a]Stop! No more of this." And He touched his ear and healed him.

a. Luke 22:51 Or "Let Me at least do this," and He touched

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Q: Which rendering is correct? Why does Jesus heal the man?

A: It's not a textual issue but an issue of translation. The Greek *eate heos toutou* means "That's enough!" Our Lord no doubt healed the man so as to avoid any repercussions for Peter who had completely misunderstood his proper role in this situation.

Q2: Since *eao* means "allow", some translate "permit thus far", as if our Lord was saying "allow me up to this point", probably meaning "allow me at least to heal the man". But you take it in the sense "allow to this point - and no more", meaning - "this is enough". Is that a Greek idiom?

A2: That is indeed how I understand the Greek (there are no exact parallels I know of that would allow us to pronounce this a "standard idiom").

Q3: Ok, so it's impossible to say with full confidence whether our Lord meant here "permit me at least to heal the man", or rather "allow to this point and no further - stop this now!" - referring not to healing the man, but rather to disciples stopping straight away what they were doing.

A3: For my part, I'm fully confident that it means "stop it!" not "let me at least heal him".

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Luke 23:7 (NASB)

7 And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.

NIV SB: Lk.23:7 Herod's jurisdiction. This Herod is Antipas, who ruled Galilee and Perea (see chart; see also note on 3:1). Although Pilate and Herod were rivals, Pilate did not want to handle this case; so he sent Jesus to Herod (cf. v. 12). in Jerusalem. Herod's main headquarters was in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee; but, like Pilate, he had come to Jerusalem because of the crowds at Passover.

Q: Do you agree that Passover crowds were the reason why both Pilate and Herod came to Jerusalem?

A: SB's contention that this was "because of the crowds" makes no sense to me. Every Jew was supposed to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem at Passover, and Herod and his family claimed to be Jewish (although their line was Edomite). Pilate we know was there on Passover regularly because it was his custom to release a prisoner to the crowd every year (which this year resulted in Barabas being let go free).

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Luke 23:40 (NASB)

40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"

Meyer: *This similarity of position in suffering the judicial condemnation of the cross is the reason wherefore he ought at least to be afraid before God, and not continue to practise blasphemous outrage.*

Q: Do you agree with Meyer here? I wondered why the other criminal used being under "the same sentence of condemnation" as an argument to fear God. Should we take that he meant here an impending death as a reason to at least fear God, as Meyer suggests?

A: I think this is a solution looking for a problem. That the penitent thief remarks in pointing out the irony as well as the blasphemy of what the other thief said seems a natural thing to do: "Don't you have even a little fear of God! Look, you've been crucified too – and you deserve it (but He doesn't)".

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Luke 22:61 (NASB)



61 The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times."

NIV SB: Lk.22:61 The Lord ... looked straight at Peter. Peter was outside in the enclosed courtyard, and perhaps Jesus was being taken from the trial by Caiaphas to the Sanhedrin when Jesus caught Peter's eye. the word the Lord had spoken to him. See v. 34.

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Q: Do you agree that this is when Jesus caught Peter's eye - when He was being taken by Caiaphas to the Sanhedrin?

A: That event takes place during the trial before Caiaphas. Please see the link: ["The Seven Trials of Christ"](#).

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Luke 22:66 (NASB)

66 When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying,

NIV SB: Lk.22:66 At daybreak. Only after daylight could a legal trial take place for the whole council (Sanhedrin) to pass the death sentence (see note on Mk 14:53-15:15).

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Q: Why did it have to be day for Sanhedrin to condemn someone to death?

A: This is a common assertion based (apparently) on Jewish tradition. I've never seen a citation to back it up. That is not important, however, since the reason why this trial takes place when it does has nothing to do with scruples about the law – these individuals were knowingly in the process of committing judicial murder – but because in the passage of time dawn had now come (there is no indication of anyone waiting for daylight or anything else).

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Luke 22:70 (NASB)

70 And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "[a]Yes, I am."

a. Luke 22:70 Lit You say that I am

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Q: Do you agree with the rendering of Jesus' words given in NASB?

A: NASB has the correct sense. I would render: "It is as you say. I am". Luke has both parts of this statement, Matthew has the first part only and Mark has the second part only (compare with Matt.26:64 and Mk.14:62 respectively).

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Luke 23:3-4 (NASB)

3 So Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him and said, "It is as you say." 4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man."

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Q: Since our Lord admitted to being a King, why does Pilate say that he finds no guilt in Him?

A: We know from John 18:36 and following that our Lord had made it clear that "My kingdom is not of this world", and that Pilate had concluded that our Lord's kingship was spiritual – and therefore non-existent in Pilate's secular view of things, thus representing no threat to Rome.

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NIV SB: Lk.23:3 You have said so. Jesus somewhat indirectly affirms that he is a king, but then explains that his kingdom is not the kind that characterizes this world (see Jn 18:33-38 and notes).

\*

Q: Do you agree that our Lord's affirmation is "somewhat indirect"?

A: I don't see any need to characterize it that way. Similarly, people are always complaining that Bible-believing Christians are either "too up front" about their faith or are "hiding it under a bushel".

'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.'

Luke 7:32 NASB

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Luke 23:28 (NASB)

28 But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

NIV SB: Lk.23:28 weep for yourselves and for your children. Because of the terrible suffering to befall Jerusalem about 40 years later, when the Romans would besiege the city and utterly destroy the temple.

\*

**Q: Does our Lord here have the destruction of Jerusalem in mind or the Second Coming?**

**A: It seems clear that this remark is directed to these women personally, and it would be the destruction of 70 AD wherein this prophecy would be fulfilled for them. However, the principle is true for the end times as well, and our Lord makes that reference in verse 30; in other words, this is another instance of the Day of the Lord paradigm wherein prophets warning of contemporary disasters about to befall Israel compared them in the Spirit to the disaster of all disasters, the Tribulation. Note that in verse 30 we see our Lord comparing these women to the unbelievers who will fear His return; from this we may conclude that this mourning ostensibly on His behalf was not for the most part at least being carried out by those who believed in Him. If any of these women took these words of reproach to heart, they had ample opportunity to turn to the truth before the prophecy was fulfilled. Such is the inimitable grace of God.**

\*\*\*

Luke 23:30 (NASB)

30 Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'

NIV SB: Lk.23:30 Fall on us! People would seek escape through destruction in death rather than endure continuing suffering and judgment (cf. Hos 10:8; Rev 6:16 and notes).

\*

**Q: Do you agree that destruction in death is meant here? Revelation 6:16 suggests that hiding might be meant:**

Revelation 6:16 (NASB)

16 and they \*said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

**A: You are correct. I find this note incomprehensible as well.**

\*\*\*

Luke 23:36 (NASB)

36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine,

NIV SB: Lk.23:36 wine vinegar. A sour wine, the drink of laborers and common soldiers. Jesus refused a sedative drink (see Mt 27:34; Mk 15:23 and notes) but later was given the vinegar drink when he cried out in thirst (see Jn 19:28-30 and notes). Luke shows that it was offered in mockery.

\*

Q: Do you agree that Luke 23:36 and John 19:28-30 refer to two different occurrences?

A: Yes. Before darkness descended our Lord was offered a sedative by the soldiers which He refused. It is differently described in all three synoptics and not mentioned by John. This is discussed at the link: "[The Crucifixion](#)":

When they arrived at Golgotha, our Lord was offered wine mixed with some sort of additive to deaden the pain. Mark calls it "myrrh" and Matthew calls it "gall". Both terms are somewhat generic in Greek (i.e., admissive of a wide variety of bitter, aromatic substances). Matthew's choice of the word "gall" is clearly intended to emphasize the fulfillment of part of the prophecy from Psalm 69:21, "They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst" (where the Hebrew word *ro'sh* [translated here "gall"] actually refers to a specific bitter herb, "wormwood", but is often used metaphorically for things producing noxious effects). Mark's use of "myrrh" makes this event more understandable for his Roman audience and also demonstrates for us the reason behind Jesus' refusal to drink it: certain types of myrrh were considered to have sedative properties, and our Lord, though without question by now terribly thirsty after this horrendous ordeal, was yet unwilling to drink anything that would in any way compromise His free will decision to take on the sins of the world – He had to be fully conscious when He bore our sins for the sacrifice to count. As in all the events of this gauntlet He ran for us even to get to the cross, everything He did, He did for us – that we might have eternal life.

The unadorned wine-vinegar is given to our Lord after He bore our sins, not by the soldiers but by one of the bystanders.

\*\*\*

Luke 23:44-45 (NASB)

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. 46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.

\*

**Q:** In Matthew 27:50-51 it seems that the veil is torn after our Lord's physical death and I asked why the veil was not torn after the redemption has been completed. Here, however, Luke presents an account which could mean that the veil was torn after our Lord's payment for the sin, when the way to heaven has been perhaps opened.

**A:** Matthew and Luke's accounts are identical except for the fact that Matthew mentions the splitting of the veil directly after our Lord's final words while Luke puts it directly before. Inasmuch as the two things happened simultaneously, these are the only two ways a writer could report them in relation to a simultaneous event; the combination of before and after shows that it did happen just as our Lord exhaled His spirit.

\*\*\*

Luke 23:46 (NASB)

46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." Having said this, He breathed His last.

\*

**Q:** You wrote: *Lastly, our Lord's final statement from the cross, His quotation of Psalm 31:5, "Father, into your hands I commit My spirit" (Lk.23:46), also demonstrates the successful completion of His mission.* How do we know that these words follow John 19:30 (NASB):

30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

**A:** I suggest this for two reasons. First, John wrote last and places this statement last in an emphatic way (having signaled it with the same language two verses earlier at Jn.19:28). Second, the finality of "finished" relating to the work of salvation is the appropriate capstone to our Lord's first advent, the reason why He came into the world. It is of course possible that He said this

and then quoted Psalm 31:5 "in a loud voice"; the single word of John's gospel seems more likely. Clearly, these two things happened in close conjunction.

Q2: Ok, so maybe we have a misunderstanding here. In the quotation I provided in the question, I thought you meant that the words "Father, into your hands I commit My spirit" were our Lord's last words, but in this reply, from what I understand, you mean that the words "It is finished" were said as last. So first Psalm 31:5 quotation then the words "It is finished".

A2: The two things happened in close conjunction as a comparison of Luke 23:46 with John 19:28-30 shows. Since both gospels give their own version of the last words they record, we have to decide on some basis which preceded which, and I give you my rationale for that in the previous answer. If the precise sequence were a significant point, I'm sure that the gospels would have made that clear.

Q3: What I meant here is that in the original quotation it seems you said that quotation of Psalm 31:5 was probably uttered last (Luke 23:46), but when I asked how we know that it was said last rather than John 19:30, it seems you supported the point that the word from John were said last ("it is finished").

A3: Apologies. "John wrote last" is obviously at cross purposes with this argument. However, I think that it is a strong point that "finished" should be last and that is my view.

\*\*\*

Luke 23:47-48 (NASB)

47 Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent." 48 And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts.

a) NIV SB: Lk.23:47 praised God. See 1:64 and note; either for having seen God publicly vindicate Jesus by mighty signs from heaven, or out of fear (see Mt 27:54) to appease the heavenly Judge and thus ward off a divine penalty for having carried out an unjust judgment. this was a righteous man. Or "this man was the Righteous One." Matthew and Mark report the centurion's words as "this man was the Son (or son) of God." "The Righteous One" and "the Son of God" would have been essentially equivalent terms. Similarly, "the son of God" and "a righteous man" would have been virtual equivalents. Which one the centurion intended is difficult to determine (see note on Mt 27:54). It seems clear, however, that the Gospel writers saw in his declaration a vindication of Jesus, and since the centurion was the Roman official in charge of the crucifixion his testimony was viewed as significant (see also the declarations of Pilate:vv. 4, 14-15, 22; Mt 27:23-24).

\*

Q: What is your view on centurion's words? Could it not be that he said both things?

A: He clearly must have done so. The gospel writers select different parts of what he said.

Q2: Was it true repentance, at least in some cases?

A2: Are you asking about the centurion's reaction? If so, God knew his heart and whether or not having witnessed undeniable proof of the deity of Christ he was willing to put his faith in Him. If so, he was saved, having turned away from the world and relied on the Lord for eternal life instead.

\*\*\*

Luke 24:18 (NASB)

18 One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You [a]the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?"

a. Luke 24:18 Or visiting Jerusalem alone

\*

Q: The alternative rendering given in the footnote seems to convey a slightly different meaning?

A: The footnote's rendering is improbable.

\*\*\*

Luke 24:19 (NASB)

19 And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people,

NIV SB: Lk.24:19 prophet. They had respect for Jesus as a man of God, but after his death they apparently were reluctant to call him the Messiah.

\*

Q: Do you agree that this is the reason why the two disciples call Jesus "a prophet" rather than the Messiah?

A: We can only speculate on their motives. The way they describe our Lord indicates that they still had a lot to learn about His sacrificial death on the cross for all mankind, and about His deity as well.

\*\*\*

Luke 24:21 (NASB)

21 But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened.

NIV SB: Lk.24:21 to redeem Israel. What they probably meant by this was "to set the Jewish nation free from bondage to Rome and so usher in the kingdom of God" (see 1:68; 2:38; 21:28, 31 and note on 21:28; cf. Titus 2:14; 1Pe 1:18 and notes). the third day. A reference either to the Jewish belief that after the third day the soul left the body or to Jesus' remark that he would be resurrected on the third day (9:22).

\*

Q: Do you agree that the disciples were hoping for Jesus to set Jews from Roman bondage? Are their words a reference to the Jewish belief or more probably to our Lord's words?

A: Buying Israel out of bondage from sin was more important and indescribably more costly than buying her out of bondage from earthly oppressors – the latter could be accomplished by God in the blink of an eye; the former required the spiritual death of Christ for every human sin. The nation in general, and even the apostles (cf. Matt.16:21-23), didn't fully understand the necessity of the first requirement (if they did so at all), and were fixated on the second (as also these individuals still seem to have been).

Q2: Ok, understood. How about the second question - did their words come from Jewish belief or are they a reference to what our Lord said during His ministry?

A2: There is plenty in the Old Testament about the second advent and the coming of the kingdom, all of which our Lord's generation consistently and incorrectly applied to their present circumstances, not understanding that the sacrifice of Christ had to come before the national redemption of the nation (upon which such spiritual redemption any physical redemption would have to be based).

\*\*\*

Luke 24:28 (NASB)



28 And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther.

NIV SB: Lk.24:28 as if he were going farther. If they had not invited him in, he apparently would have continued on by himself.

\*

**Q: Why did Jesus act as He was going farther?**

**A: In order to give them the opportunity to demonstrate their true attitude towards the truth He had just presented them with; they passed that test at least, desiring to remain in His company.**

\*\*\*

Luke 24:33-34 (NASB)

33 And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, 34 saying, "The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon."

\*

**Q: Are the words "The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon" spoken by the disciples in Jerusalem or the two who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus?**

**A: By the disciples in Jerusalem (the participle is accusative in Greek and agrees with those with whom the returning men met when they got back).**

\*\*\*

Luke 24:41 (NASB)

41 While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"

\*

**Q: Why was our Lord hungry in His resurrected body?**

**A: It doesn't say He was hungry. It doesn't seem that hunger, in the sense we know it, will be possible in the new bodies we shall occupy forever. Eating, it seems, will be a pleasure and not a necessity. Our Lord asks this in order to**

partake and thus demonstrate the corporal nature of the new body – it is not merely some ghostly apparition.

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Luke 24:45 (NASB)

45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

NIV SB: Lk.24:45 opened their minds. By explaining the OT Scriptures (cf. v. 27).

\*

**Q:** Do you agree that an explanation of OT Scriptures is meant here rather than a supernatural act?

**A:** Yes. The disciples/apostles had to learn truth the same way we do, namely, by listening to it being expounded, and then believing it.

**Q2:** Just to make sure I understand - you agree that by "opened their minds" is meant our Lord explaining the OT Scriptures? I thought that by "opened their minds" some sort of supernatural act could have been meant whereby their understanding has been miraculously enhanced. That's what I'm not sure about - the verse could say "He explained the scriptures", but it says that "He opened their minds".

**A2:** Learning the truth is always supernatural. It's impossible to understand any truth or accept it by faith without the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That has always been the case. And it has also always been the case that this has to happen in conjunction with the free will of the recipient of the truth who has to believe it. Any sort of "supernatural infusion of the truth" would be tantamount to overruling the free will of these believers. That is theologically impossible – and the wording in Greek doesn't necessitate our understanding that such was the case on this occasion. I'm sure that our Lord explained these things to these individuals in a very straightforward, direct and effective way. It may have been the most effective "lesson" in the history of the world. But they still had to believe what He said to truly understand. We use the same sort of idiom today when we say that someone or some teaching "enlightened us" or "opened our minds" to some principle or other.

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Luke 24:47 (NASB)

47 and that repentance [a]for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

a. Luke 24:47 Later mss read and forgiveness

\*

Q: Could you relate to the footnote?

A: The correct reading is *eis* ("for . . . [the purpose of]"); some later mss. have *kai*, "and", in its place; that is most likely because of a somewhat foggy understanding on the part of some copiest of the process of salvation by faith wherein a change of mind leads to forgiveness as part of the seamless grace of God.

\*\*\*

Luke 24:49 (NASB)

49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

\*

Q: Does by "the promise of My Father" our Lord mean the Spirit?

A: Yes (e.g., Jn.14:16; 15:26; cf. Acts 1:4).

\*\*\*

Luke 24:50 (NASB)

50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.

NIV SB: Lk.24:50 Bethany. A village on the Mount of Olives (see notes on 19:29; Mt 21:17; see also map).

\*

Q: Why did Jesus lead them out as far as Bethany?

A: I believe this was to show them in a graphic way that He wasn't going to be with them long; accompanying Him outside of the city and then having Him disappear for a time would make that point in a more pointed way. *N.b.*, the interpolation commonly occurring here at Luke 24:51 ("and He was taken up into heaven") is not part of scripture.

Q2: Could you just briefly explain why doing these things the way they were done by our Lord "would make that point in a more pointed way"?

A2: People often need tangible representations to learn certain principles, and that was probably more true of the very earthy Jewish culture of that day. After all, God could have taught the coming sacrifice of Jesus without resorting to animal sacrifice – but animal sacrifice there was and in abundance. By making the disciples walk out with Him on a journey it conveyed a literal sense of moving away from Jerusalem. He certainly could have just disappeared, but it wouldn't have had the same effect. Our Lord is the best teacher who ever was.

\*

Q: Do you agree with the Resurrection Appearances chart given in the NIV SB (separate graph attached)?

A: Not entirely (for example, He appeared to Peter before He did so to the individuals on the road to Emmaus). I prefer the chronology with discussion given in BB 4A: Christology at the link: "[The Chronology of the Resurrection](#)"

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