

The Gospel According to

LUKE



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY
RICHARD "RUSTY" DAVID RUTHERFORD

The Gospel of Luke in Pericopes

Seeing People With God's Eyes

Indeed, the Son of Man has come to seek and to save people who are lost.
Luke 19:10

A study in the Gospel According to Luke divided into 102 pericopes with comments and questions.

Written and taught by
Richard "Rusty" David Rutherford
Columbus, Texas
January 2021

Copyright Notices and Policies

Scripture text is from the ***GOD'S WORD*** translation. ©1995 by God's Word to the Nations. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Greek and Hebrew transliterated words are from Strong's Concordance made available by www.blueletterbible.org.

All other text is © 2021 The Sudan Family Foundation. All rights reserved. Other than as specifically authorized below, no part of this course book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying or other electronic or mechanical method, without prior written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, please email accessthebible@gmail.com.

You may use this course book for your own personal study or for teaching or participating in a Bible study group or class with others. You may download a copy of this course book to your computer, print or otherwise make paper photocopies for use in your own personal study or use in a Bible study group or class. If you charge for any copies, you may only charge for the cost of copying.

You may NOT make changes to the content of this course book and then attribute the course material to Mr. Rutherford.

Table of Contents

Part One – The Pre-Ministry Events		12
PERICOPE 1	Luke Writes a Gospel to Theophilus	14
PERICOPE 2	The Angel Gabriel Appears to Zechariah	16
PERICOPE 3	The Angel Gabriel Appears to Mary	20
PERICOPE 4	John the Baptist is Born to Elizabeth	25
PERICOPE 5	Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem of Judea	29
PERICOPE 6	Jesus’ Parents Take Him to the Temple	32
PERICOPE 7	At 12 Years Old Jesus Amazes Rabbis	35
PERICOPE 8	John the Baptist Calls Israel to Get Ready	38
PERICOPE 9	The Ancestors of Jesus of Nazareth	42
PERICOPE 10	Satan Tempts Jesus	45
PERICOPE 11	Jesus’ Hometown Rejects Him as the Messiah	47
Part Two – The Galilean Ministry		50
PERICOPE 12	Jesus Exorcises an Evil Spirit on a Sabbath Day	51
PERICOPE 13	Jesus Cures Peter’s Mother-in-Law	53
PERICOPE 14	Jesus Calls His First Disciples	55
PERICOPE 15	Jesus Cures a Leper	57
PERICOPE 16	Jesus Claims Authority to Forgive Sins	59
PERICOPE 17	The Pharisees and Scribes Question Jesus	61
PERICOPE 18	Jesus Appoints Twelve Apostles	66

PERICOPE 19	Jesus' Sermon on a Level Place	68
PERICOPE 20	A Roman Centurion Shows Great Faith	73
PERICOPE 21	Jesus Raises a Man from Death to Life	75
PERICOPE 22	John the Baptist Questions Jesus	76
PERICOPE 23	Jesus Teaches a Pharisee that God Forgives	81
PERICOPE 24	Jesus Is Counter-Cultural	83
PERICOPE 25	Jesus Warns: Be Careful How You Listen	84
PERICOPE 26	Jesus Describes His Genuine Family	88
PERICOPE 27	Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea of Galilee	89
PERICOPE 28	Jesus Appoints the First Gentile Missionary	91
PERICOPE 29	Jesus Heals a Woman with Chronic Bleeding	94
PERICOPE 30	Jesus Brings a Dead Little Girl Back to Life	96
PERICOPE 31	Jesus Sends 12 Apostles to Minister in Galilee	98
PERICOPE 32	King Herod Antipas Wants to See Jesus	99
PERICOPE 33	Jesus Feeds 5,000 Men	100
Part Three – Jesus' Long Walk to Jerusalem		102
PERICOPE 34	Peter Declares Jesus the Long-Awaited Messiah	103
PERICOPE 35	Jesus Describes His Discipleship Requirements	105
PERICOPE 36	Jesus Is Transfigured Meeting Moses and Elijah	107
PERICOPE 37	The Disciples Are Unable to Exorcise a Demon	110
PERICOPE 38	For a <u>Second</u> Time Jesus Predicts His Passion	112
PERICOPE 39	Jesus Explains What It Means to Be His Disciple	115

PERICOPE 40	Jesus Praises God for the Work of His Disciples	118
PERICOPE 41	Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan	120
PERICOPE 42	Mary of Bethany Chooses the Greater Part	122
PERICOPE 43	Jesus Teaches His Disciples to Pray	123
PERICOPE 44	Jesus Is Accused of Using the Power of Satan	125
PERICOPE 45	Jesus Says He Will Give Only the Sign of Jonah	127
PERICOPE 46	Jesus Criticizes for Lack of Inward Goodness	130
PERICOPE 47	Jesus Issues Many Warnings	132
PERICOPE 48	Jesus Teaches Trust God and to Stop Worrying	137
PERICOPE 49	Jesus Warns Be Ready When He Returns Again	139
PERICOPE 50	Jesus Says He Will Cause Conflict Not Peace	141
PERICOPE 51	Jesus Warns People to Repent and Turn to God	143
PERICOPE 52	Jesus Heals a Hunch Backed Woman on Sabbath	145
PERICOPE 53	Parables on the Rapid Growth of God's Kingdom	147
PERICOPE 54	Jesus Tells the Parable of the Narrow Door	148
PERICOPE 55	Jesus Warns Jerusalem They Have Rejected God	150
PERICOPE 56	Jesus Teaches a Pharisee at His Own Banquet	152
PERICOPE 57	Jesus Teaches the Cost of Being His Disciple	155
PERICOPE 58	Three Parables of the Lost and the Found	157
PERICOPE 59	The Parable of the Prodigal Son	159
PERICOPE 60	The Parable of the Wicked Manager	162
PERICOPE 61	Jesus Teaches about the Validity of Scriptures	165

PERICOPE 62	Jesus Teaches about Divorce	166
PERICOPE 63	The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus	167
PERICOPE 64	Jesus Warns: Do Not Cause Others to Lose Faith	170
PERICOPE 65	Jesus Teaches: Forgive Everyone for Everything	171
PERICOPE 66	The Disciples Ask for More Faith	172
PERICOPE 67	Jesus Teaches Servants Must Do Their Duty	173
PERICOPE 68	Ten Lepers Are Healed but Only One Returns	175
PERICOPE 69	Jesus Teaches the Kingdom of God is Within You	176
PERICOPE 70	Jesus Teaches about His Second Coming	177
PERICOPE 71	Jesus Teaches Persistence in Prayer	179
PERICOPE 72	Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector	181
PERICOPE 73	Jesus Teaches Children Are Part of the Kingdom	183
PERICOPE 74	The Rich Ruler Refuses Jesus' Invitation	185
PERICOPE 75	Jesus Predicts His Passion a <u>Third</u> Time	188
PERICOPE 76	Jesus Gives Sight to a Blind Man in Jericho	189
PERICOPE 77	The Director of Taxes Repents	191
PERICOPE 78	The Parable of the Trustworthy Servants	193
Part Four--Jesus in Jerusalem		197
PERICOPE 79	Jesus Comes to the City and Cleanses the Temple	198
PERICOPE 80	Jesus Authority Challenged by the Sanhedrin	202
PERICOPE 81	Jesus' Parable of the Vineyard	203
PERICOPE 82	Sanhedrin Members Attempt to Embarrass Jesus	207

PERICOPE 83	Jesus Warns of the Scribe's Example	210
PERICOPE 84	Jesus Praises a Poor Widow's Contribution	211
PERICOPE 85	Jesus Teaches His Disciples about the Last Days	212
PERICOPE 86	Satan Induces Judas to Betray Jesus	217
PERICOPE 87	Jesus' Last Supper with His Disciples	218
PERICOPE 88	Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane	223
PERICOPE 89	Jesus Is Arrested by the Sanhedrin	225
PERICOPE 90	Peter Denies Jesus	227
PERICOPE 91	Jesus Questioned the High Priest's House	229
PERICOPE 92	The Roman Governor Pilate Questions Jesus	231
PERICOPE 93	Pilate Sends Jesus to King Herod Antipas	233
PERICOPE 94	Pilate Again Declares Jesus with No Fault	234
PERICOPE 95	Jesus Is Led Away to Be Crucified	237
PERICOPE 96	Jesus Is Mocked as He Is Crucified	239
PERICOPE 97	Jesus Dies on the Cross	241
PERICOPE 98	Jesus' Body is Placed in a Tomb	245
PERICOPE 99	God Raises Jesus from Death to Life	247
PERICOPE 100	Jesus Appears on the Road to Emmaus	249
PERICOPE 101	Jesus Appears to His Disciples in Jerusalem	253
PERICOPE 102	Jesus Ascends into Heaven	256
Epilogue		258
A Final Word		260
The Sermons of Alistair Begg on the <u>Gospel of Luke</u>		261

Author's Preface



The Gospel of Luke to my mind was the last Gospel written of the four Gospels. It is attributed to Luke who was by tradition a favorite of the church at Antioch, perhaps its first Bishop. I view this Gospel as being written about 60 AD, some 30 years after Jesus died and rose again to life in Jerusalem.

Luke was not an eyewitness – he never met Jesus – but he did interview those who were eyewitnesses. He was a doctor who traveled with Paul on his second and third missionary journeys and accompanied him for his two years in prison in Caesarea Maritime and later in Rome. His writing should be considered as a two-volume book (Luke and Acts) as there are many references between the two volumes.

The book is written in a very high literary Greek to Theophilus who is perhaps the lawyer being employed in Rome to represent Paul in his trial before the Roman Emperor Nero. This makes it difficult for the ***GOD'S WORD*** © translation to render this elegant Greek into common everyday American English. For example, the first four sentences of the introduction to the Gospel of Luke are actually one long Greek sentence.

As the last of the four Gospels written, Luke had the advantage of reviewing the other three. Like the Gospel According to Matthew, Luke used the spine of the Gospel of Mark as a general structure but then deviated as he presented his theological themes primarily to show that Jesus, although he was the long awaited Davidic Messiah foretold by the Hebrew prophets, he was the unique Son of God who ministered to the entire world – to both Jews and Gentiles and did so with a human nature.

This can be seen in Jesus' opening ministry sermon in his hometown of Nazareth where Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah **Luke 4:17**, a prophet who had earlier proclaimed that the Servant of **YHWH** was given a mission by God:

Now the Lord says: You are not just my servant who restores the tribes of Jacob and who brings back those in Israel whom I have preserved. I have also made you a light to the nations *gowy*-Gentiles so that you would save *sozo* people all over the world. **Isaiah 49:6**

Luke is the only Gentile to write a book in the Bible. In the Book of Acts, he says that it was when some Jewish disciples in Jerusalem fled to Antioch and preached the Gospel to the Greek Gentiles that the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians. **Acts 11:26**. Jesus came with Jewish tradition but he came to minister to all of God's people of whatever nationality and background.

Your husband is your Maker. His name is the Lord of Armies. Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. He is called the God of The Whole Earth. **Isaiah 54:5**

Roman society in the first century was Hellenistic, using the Greek language as the universal language throughout the Roman Empire. Following the intention of Alexander the Great, the Romans adopted Greek language, gods, and culture. It was a stratified society with the elites holding land at the top, lower elites next, the mob, freed slaves, and then slaves in bondage next.

Like the Jews, a conquered people whom the Romans thought bizarre, prudish, and disgusting, the poor Gentiles were not only those without economic resources, they were also all the disabled or those working in occupations considered undesirable. Remember that a great number of people in Roman society were slaves.

Because of their continued resistance to Roman occupation, many Jews were sent to Rome as slaves. So many Jews in Rome and in the Roman Province of Judea and Galilee looked forward to the coming of a Messiah, an Anointed One, who would throw the Romans out of God's Holy Land and reign as King of the world in Jerusalem with Gentiles bringing the wealth of the nations to them. **Isaiah 60:1-22**

Jesus in his initial sermon in Nazareth quoted from Isaiah saying:

The Spirit of the Lord is with me. He has anointed me to tell the Good News [Gospel] to the poor. He has sent me to announce forgiveness *aphesis*-deliverance to the prisoners of sin and the restoring of sight to the blind, to

forgive *aphesis*—set at liberty those who have been shattered by sin, and to announce the year of the Lord’s favor *dektos*—acceptance 5x. **Leviticus 25:11-35; Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19**

In short, God sent Jesus to earth to free all those held captive by sin, society, or their own sense of unworthiness and bring them to a knowledge of the one true God who created them in his own likeness and loved them. In Jesus’ words:

Indeed, the Son of Man has come to seek and to save people who are lost.
Luke 19:10

Shalom in Jesus,

Rusty

Notes on this Bible Translation and My Editorial Insertions

The translation used in this study is the ***GOD’S WORD*** translation. © 1995 by God’s Word to the Nations Mission Society (GWT). The GWT translation is an attempt to make the English text of the Bible developed in the 1500’s more readable to modern Americans. It is not a paraphrase, but it has retranslated the oldest manuscripts into modern American English at about newspaper level using “closest natural equivalence”. The Bible is meant by God to be understood. Therefore, using modern language is essential.

I have used this translation in my teaching since 1996 and have found it very accurate. I love the King James Version and so when there are variances in the GWT, I may insert within the Bible text the original transliterated Hebrew or Greek word in **10-point bold-face type** followed by an English word to help better understand the meaning of the passage. English words added to aid in understanding are also in 10-point type but are not in bold. Lastly, if the original Hebrew or Greek word appears in the Bible 10 times or less, I may also indicate how often it appears (e.g., 10x or 2x, etc.). Here’s an example from John 11:33 and the raising of Lazarus involving three Greek words:

³³When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who were crying with her were deeply moved *embrimaomai*—groaned 5x *pneuma*—spirit and troubled *tarasso*—agitated.

This has shown me that the GWT translation is remarkable for finding the right meanings to phrases that are often difficult to translate.

Notes on Font Usage

All text is in the Big Caslon font. Scripture text is in regular **14-point**. If I have inserted parallel Scripture quotations, they are also in regular **14-point**, but are slightly further indented (.08) than the main Scripture text and are enclosed by brackets []. All Scripture citations are in **12-point bold face**. All my comments and questions to think about are all in regular 12-point.

Introduction

Tucked away in a far eastern corner of the vast Roman Empire was the Roman Province of Syro-Judea. Conquered in 63 BC by the Romans to serve as an outpost to protect the Empire from the Parthians in the east, four Roman legions were situated at Antioch in Syria with the region being ruled by a Roman Legate there.

Judea and Galilee were at Jesus' birth in 5 BC being ruled by Rome's client-King, Herod the Great. He died shortly thereafter in 4 BC. His son Herod Antipas then ruled Galilee and Perea while a Roman Governor ruled the Province of Judea beginning in 6 AD. He was assisted by a Sanhedrin, a group of 71 chief priests, scribes, and lay elders headed by a High Priest accountable to the Roman Governor.

The northern part of Israel called Galilee was a rural countryside with mostly farmers living there. There were no large cities. The Roman Governor had his palace at Caesarea Maritime on the Mediterranean Sea. King Herod Antipas, the Roman client-King, had a palace at Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee built on a Jewish graveyard. This didn't bother the Gentiles that comprised most of his court.

There was a trading center at Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee on a main trade route where Jesus made his headquarters when he was in Galilee. Archeologists have found the ruins of a large city called Sepphoris that is not mentioned in the Bible. It is near Jesus' hometown of Jerusalem.

South of Galilee was the Province of Judea ruled by the Roman Governor. The main town was Jerusalem where the Temple was located. Most in Jerusalem looked down on Galileans who spoke with a distinct accent as country bumpkins. Jerusalem was not on a trade route so its population existed on servicing pilgrims who came to the Temple for the three annual Jewish festivals. The city's population greatly increased during these festivals so the Roman Governor normally came to the city from his palace with soldiers to maintain peace.

In between Galilee and Judea was Samaria, where Gentiles lived. While they accepted the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, slightly modified, they refused to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem and instead worshiped on Mount Gerizim, where the first central Jewish worship center was formerly located. Jews avoided these people traveling on the east side of the Jordan River in a region called Perea.

Israel was an occupied country where most Jewish people hated the Romans and most Roman soldiers hated the Jews who they saw as a very uncivilized, peculiar people with quaint customs. Most Jews longed for a Savior, a Messiah who would restore independence to God's people living in God's Holy Land. A political party called Zealots hid in the caves and killed as many

Roman soldiers as they could. When the Romans caught them, they killed them immediately by crucifixion or sent them as slaves to the Roman mines.

Most Jews were quite poor, living a subsistence living as farmers or day laborers. They were taxed heavily so most lost their land and were forced to be tenant farmers. Those in Jerusalem were artisans, priests, or tradesmen catering to those visiting the Temple. Still, most were quite poor except for the elites who compromised with the Romans by adopting Hellenistic ways.

Education in Galilee was limited to local synagogues where boys attended Torah school from age 5-12. At 13 years old, a boy was considered an adult. He could marry at age 20 and at age 30 he could have a responsible position as a priest, a government official, or scribe. In Jerusalem, there was an option to attend the gymnasium where Greek learning called Hellenism was taught. But for even most Jews in Jerusalem, the local synagogue in Jerusalem was their education.

Jesus' conception was miraculous as Mary of Nazareth became pregnant by an overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, descended from the line of King David, adopted Jesus by naming him Jesus. Although Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the city of David five miles southwest of Jerusalem, the family returned to Nazareth where Jesus was raised.

At 30 years old, Jesus was baptized by his cousin, John the Baptist and began an earthly ministry of 3 ½ years from 29 to 33 BC. He spent the majority of his time preaching and healing in the small towns and villages in Galilee, according to Luke, who followed the outline of the first Gospel written earlier in Rome by Mark, based on the teachings of Peter. The last six months he spent in ministry in Perea mainly teaching his Twelve chosen apostles and the crowds who followed him.

The last week of his life Jesus spent in Jerusalem, teaching the religious leaders, the residents of Jerusalem, and the pilgrims who had come to the Passover Festival. At the end of the week, he was arrested, tried by the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Roman Governor, who convicted him of sedition.

Then he was crucified, died, and was placed in a tomb. On the third day, God raised him to life. He appeared to his disciples and then ascended to Heaven where he sits today at the right hand of God interceding for sinners.

Luke was apparently from Philippi in Macedonia in Greece. He apparently came to Antioch in Syria, the third largest city in the Roman Empire where he met Paul, a disciple of Jesus. He apparently accompanied Paul on two of his missionary journeys to Macedonia where Paul preached to both Jews and Gentiles. Paul mentions Luke, the beloved physician, in **Colossians 4:14**. He is later mentioned by Paul as his companion in **2 Timothy 4:11**.

Luke writes a Gospel like Mark about Jesus' ministry, what he began to do and teach during his early ministry. **Acts 1:1**. Then Luke writes a second volume about Peter and Paul's ministry as apostles from 33 -64 BC.

When did Luke write his Gospel? It seems probable he wrote it from 60-62 AD, while Paul was in prison in Caesarea Maritime on the Mediterranean Sea. Paul was being held by the Roman Governor for disturbing the peace in Jerusalem. While Paul was in prison, Luke spent his time interviewing early Christians who had seen Jesus both in Galilee, Perea, Judea and in Jerusalem.

He may have interviewed Mary, Jesus' mother and other eyewitnesses who had personally seen Jesus and perhaps some of the Twelve Apostles. He uses the word *autoptes* ^{IX}, a rare word appearing only here in the Bible translated *eyewitnesses* in **Luke 1:2**.

Luke was very well educated and his Greek is of the highest literary quality. He uses many rare words as he wants to be precise in what he says. Translators have broken up the first sentence of his Gospel into four verses. He is specific and gives us many details that the other Gospels do not.

Part One – The Pre-Ministry Events

Pericopes I-II

The Second Temple in Jerusalem was huge. It was first built under Governor Zerubbabel after the Jews returned to Israel following the Babylonian captivity and finished in 515 BC. King Herod the Great later built a large plaza about the size of six football fields to accommodate the many pilgrims that gathered for the three annual pilgrim festivals at the Temple beginning in 20 BC. Herod's reconstruction walls are about the height of a 20-story building. 10,000 men completed the re-construction of the Temple, including 1,500 specially trained priests who were the only ones to work on the innermost and most sacred parts of the structure.

Pilgrims first changed their money for coins without the image of the Roman Emperor at the central bank. Then they washed themselves in the ritual baths. Finally, they entered the Temple itself, its walls made of shining white marble and gold with bronze entrance doors. It was said you could not look at the Temple in the daylight or it would blind you. In the inmost center was the Holy of Holies, a dark cube-shaped room which only the High Priest could enter and where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. However, the Ark disappeared in 586 BC when the Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians.

As they arrived, pilgrims could hear the sounds of the Levites singing and playing musical instruments. Then they would participate in the various rituals occurring there. It was a magnificent experience like no where else in the world.

Luke makes the Temple the center and close of his story of Jesus of Nazareth. At the opening, Zechariah, a priest is offering incense in the Temple. **Luke 1:8-10**. At the end, after seeing Jesus ascend into Heaven, the disciples return to Jerusalem where they were always in the Temple praising God. **Luke 24:53**

PERICOPE I

Luke Writes a Gospel to Theophilus

¹Many have attempted to write *epicheireo* 3x about what had taken place *plerophoreo*—surely believed 5x among us. ²They received their information *pragma*—those things from those who had been eyewitnesses *autoptes* 1x and servants *hyperetes*—ministers of God's *theos* Word *logos* from the beginning *arche* and they passed it on *paradidomi* to us.

³I, too, have followed everything *pas*—all closely *akribos*—perfect 9x *parakoloutheo*—understanding 4x from the beginning *anathen*. So I thought it would be a good idea to write *graphe* an orderly account *kathexes* 5x for Your Excellency, Theophilus. ⁴In this way you will know *epiginosko* that what *logos*—words you've been told *katecheo* 8x is true *asphaleia*—certainty.

This opening paragraph is written in one long sentence using many rare Greek words. The number following the Greek word is the number of times the word appears in the Bible. This first sentence of the writing is the way the author of formal Greek writings tells his reader what the writing is all about. Luke writes this Gospel in a very high literary Greek using exact words. He will convey only certain facts that are true.

COMMENTS

Luke writes his Gospel to his patron Theophilus whose name means: *Lover of God*. His patron is probably a Gentile who has been converted to faith in Jesus Christ. He may be the lawyer in Rome that will represent Paul before the Roman Emperor Nero. Luke will tell him the story of Jesus and what he did during his 3 ½ year ministry in Galilee and in Judea from 29 AD to 33 AD. Luke is not only a doctor but also an historian who carefully researches his facts to get them accurately. He has interviewed eyewitnesses and secondary sources and compared their testimony to get the most accurate story. Now he will relate to his patron the story of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the long awaited Jewish Messiah whom God sent to earth in human form.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Luke is most probably the last of the Gospels written. He has the advantage of having seen the Gospels of Mark, John, and Matthew. Why does this make his Gospel the most accurate?

2. Luke is writing to a Gentile living in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire. How does this influence his writing?
3. In the other Gospels, Jesus is mentioned almost immediately. Luke does not. Why is this?
4. What is Luke's purpose in using many rare Greek Biblical words in his opening sentence?
5. What does the phrase *God's Word* mean to Theophilus?
6. What does Luke mean by *an orderly account*? Is it simply chronological order or are events presented in a way to develop certain themes? Luke will use the word *kairos* 13x meaning significant time.
7. Luke's main theme is the salvation *soteria* of all people. He will use this word 5x in his Gospel, 4 of the 5 times in the first three chapters. He will also talk of people being saved *sozo* 19x. What does Luke mean that belief in Jesus saves people from spiritual death?

PERICOPE 2

The Angel Gabriel Appears to Zechariah

⁵When Herod the Great was King of Judea 37-4 BC, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the division of priests in the Jerusalem Temple named after Abijah. Zechariah's wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron, the first Jewish High Priest.

⁶Zechariah and Elizabeth had God's approval *dikaios*-righteous. They followed all the Lord's *kyrios* commands and regulations perfectly. ⁷Yet they never had any children because Elizabeth couldn't become pregnant. Both of them were too old to have children.

⁸Zechariah was on duty with his division of priests. As he served in God's presence, ⁹he was chosen by priestly custom to go into the Lord's Temple to burn incense. ¹⁰All the people were praying outside while he was burning incense.

The Jewish historian Josephus says there were 20,000 priests of the Jerusalem Temple in Israel. They each served only two times each year in one week segments and then also at all three annual festivals. They had other occupations the rest of the time. To offer incense at the Golden Altar of Incense was a once in a lifetime privilege. Priests were chosen by lot for this privilege.

Burning the incense was done once in the morning and once in the evening each day of the week. People would gather in the Temple at this time to pray and worship.

¹¹Then to the right of the incense altar, an angel *angelos* of the Lord appeared to him. ¹²Zechariah was troubled *tarasso* and overcome with fear *phobos*.

¹³The angel said to him: Don't be afraid *phobeo*-fear, Zechariah. God has heard your prayer *deesis*. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son and you will name him John. ¹⁴He will be your pride *agalliasis*-gladness ^{5x} and joy *chara* and many people will be glad *chairo*-rejoice that he was born.

¹⁵As far as the Lord *enopion*-sight is concerned, he will be a great *me gas* man. He will never drink wine or any other liquor.

Men could voluntarily take a Nazarite vow to live a holy life. They would never drink strong drink, not cut their hair, or go near dead bodies. **Numbers 6:1-21**

He will be filled with the Holy *hagios* Spirit *pneuma* even before he is born.

The first person to be filled with the Spirit of God in the Bible was Bezalal, a master artist who built much of the Wilderness Tabernacle. **Exodus 31:3**. Both Moses and Joshua were filled with the Spirit as was King David and others. Luke mentions the Holy Spirit 13x in his Gospel.

¹⁶ He will bring many people in Israel back to the Lord their God.

John will call the people of Israel to return to living a holy life that pleases God by repenting of their sin, their offenses against God.

¹⁷ He will go ahead of the Lord with the spirit and power that Elijah had. He will change parents' attitudes toward their children. He will change disobedient people so that they will accept the wisdom of those who have God's approval. In this way he will prepare the people for their Lord.

[I'm going to send you the prophet Elijah before that very terrifying Day of the Lord comes. He will change parents' attitudes toward their children and children's attitudes toward their parents. If not, I will come and reclaim my land by destroying you. **Malachi 4:5-6**]

Elijah was a prophet who ministered to Israel during the reign of King Ahab from 874-853 BC, who did many miracles and then was taken up to Heaven in a whirlwind. **2 Kings 2:11**. John the Baptist will introduce Jesus, the Son of God, the Lord, to the people of Israel. The *Day of the Lord* was a time the Hebrew prophets prophesied that God would do something extraordinary.

Zechariah Doesn't Believe the Angel and Is Struck Dumb

¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel: What proof is there for this? I'm an old man and my wife is beyond her childbearing years.

¹⁹ The angel answered him: I'm Gabriel. **Daniel 8:16; 9:21**. I stand in God's presence. God sent me to tell you this Good News. ²⁰ But because you didn't believe what I said, you will be unable to talk until the day this happens. Everything will come true at the right time.

²¹Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah. They were amazed that he was staying in the Temple so long. ²²When he did come out, he was unable to speak to them. So they realized that he had seen a vision in the Temple. He motioned to them but remained unable to talk.

²³When the days of his service were over, he went home. ²⁴Later, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and didn't go out in public for five months. She said: ²⁵The Lord has done this for me now. He has removed my public disgrace.

COMMENTS

Zechariah has been given the once-in-a-lifetime privilege of offering incense to God at the Golden Altar in the Temple. While his doing so, Gabriel, the second highest angel of God appears to him promising him his prayer has been answered by God. His barren old wife Elizabeth will bear a son and he will be remarkable. People will be very impressed by him.

This son will keep a Nazarite vow and be filled with the Holy Spirit like Moses, Joshua, and King David. He will minister to the people of God and bring many Jews who have left the faith back to God. He will also go ahead of the Lord with the power of the prophet Elijah who lived 900 years before and did many miracles. He will bring conflict between parents and children as some adopt faith in the Lord and some don't.

After the angel says this, Zechariah expresses unbelief that this is possible. Gabriel says: *I do not lie. I stand in the present of God.* Since you do not believe me, you will be struck dumb until the day all this happens. Believe me when I say all this will happen at the right time as God has planned.

Zechariah comes out of the Temple dazed. People think he has seen a vision. He motioned attempting to speak but he couldn't. The couple returns to their home in Judah. Elizabeth became pregnant and didn't leave the house for five months.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why doesn't Luke immediately begin by talking about Jesus in his Gospel?
2. Luke will use the word *kyrios* meaning *Lord* 95x in his Gospel compared to Matthew 70x, Mark 17x, and John 44x. He will use it in his second volume, the Acts of the Apostles 102x. When does Luke first mention Jesus as the Lord?

3. Did Zechariah really doubt Gabriel or merely express surprise at what God was doing? How can you tell?

4. John would be the son of a priest. Gabriel was telling Zechariah John would be a prophet not a priest. Most sons of priests became priests. And John would go ahead of the Lord. Would Zechariah be thinking of this passage from Malachi?

[I'm going to send my messenger and he will clear the way ahead of me. Then the Lord you are looking for will suddenly come to his Temple. The Messenger of the Covenant will come. He is the one you want, says the Lord of Armies. **Malachi 3:1**]

Is this a prophecy John would go ahead of the long awaited promised Messiah?

5. Gabriel said that John would be a prophet like Elijah who brought many Israelites back to faith and trust in **YHWH**. This must have been incredible news to Zechariah. There had been no prophets for 400 years since Malachi. Is it any wonder that Zechariah was flabbergasted at this news?

6. Gabriel also said John would be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born? How amazing is this? Zechariah must have thought of King David:

[Samuel took the flask of olive oil and anointed David in the presence of his brothers. The Lord's Spirit came over David and stayed with him from that day on. Then Samuel left for Ramah. **1 Samuel 16:13**]

How many allusions to the prophecies of the long awaited Messiah can you find in Gabriel's message? Was Jesus a Nazarite?

7. Why didn't Elizabeth go out in public for five months?

EXTRA CREDIT

Read these verses where *the Day of the Lord* appears: **Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:5.** What does Zechariah imagine will happen after his son John announces the Lord is coming?

PERICOPE 3

The Angel Gabriel Comes to Mary of Nazareth

^{1:26} Six months after Elizabeth had become pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee. ²⁷ The angel went to a virgin promised in marriage to a descendant of King David named Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary.

²⁸ When the angel entered her home, he greeted her and said: You are favored *charis* by the Lord. The Lord is with *meta* you. ²⁹ She was startled by what the angel said and tried to figure out what this greeting meant.

³⁰ The angel told her: Don't be afraid *phobeo* Mary. You have found favor *charis* with God. ³¹ You will become pregnant, give birth to a son, and name him Jesus.

This is the first time the name Jesus *ieosus* appears in Luke. It will appear 98 times in this Gospel. Christ *christos* will only appear 13x. *Jesus* appears 170x in Matthew, 96x in Mark and 243x in John.

³² He will be a great *megas* man and will be called the Son of the Most High *hypsistos*-highest. The Lord *kyrios* God *theos* will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ Your son will be King *basileuo*-reign of Jacob's people forever and his kingdom *basileia* will never end.

[Your royal house will remain in my presence forever. Your throne will be established forever. 2 Samuel 7:16]

Gabriel is referring to this Covenant God made with King David over 1,000 years before. Gabriel is saying that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah Israel waited for. *El Elyon* or Most High God is what Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob called God. **Exodus 6:2**

Mary Questions the Angel

^{1:34} Mary asked the angel: How can this be? I'm a virgin. ³⁵ The angel answered her: The Holy Spirit will come *eiserchomai* to *epi*-upon you and the

power *dynamis* of the Most High *hypsistos* will overshadow *episliazo* 5x you. Therefore, the holy child developing inside you will be called the Son of God.

This is the second time Luke mentions the Holy Spirit. He will mention him 11x in his Gospel while Matthew and John mention him 6x and Mark mentions him 4x. Luke mentions the Holy Spirit 42x in the Acts of the Apostles. *Son of God*, first mentioned here, is the most exalted title Jesus is given. The title appears 16x in John, 11x in Luke, 9x in Matthew and 4x in Mark.

³⁶ Elizabeth your relative is six months pregnant with a son in her old age. People said she couldn't have a child. ³⁷ But nothing is impossible for God.

Gabriel gives Mary a sign. He also says anything, even a virgin birth, is possible for God. God had to tell Abraham this in **Genesis 18:13** and Moses this in **Numbers 11:23**.

³⁸ Mary answered: I am the Lord's servant *doule*-handmaid 3x. Let everything you've said *rhema*-word happen to me. Then the angel left her.

This is the reason Mary of Nazareth should be honored. She is God's servant and obedient to him.

Mary Visits Her Cousin Elizabeth

^{1:39} Soon afterward, Mary hurried to a city in the mountain region of Judah. ⁴⁰ She entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard the greeting, she felt the baby kick. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² She said in a loud voice:

You are the most blessed *eulogeo* of all women and blessed *eulogeo* is the child *karpos*-fruit *sou*-your *kolia*-womb that you will have.

⁴³ I feel blessed that the mother *meter* of my Lord *kyrios* is visiting me. ⁴⁴ As soon as I heard your greeting, I felt the baby jump for joy. ⁴⁵ You are blessed *makarios* for believing *pisteuo* that the Lord would keep *teliosis*-perform 2x his promise to you.

Elizabeth demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is working in her. She recognizes Mary as the mother of God's son – Elizabeth's Lord. And she feels the fetus John the Baptist jump for joy in her womb. So Gabriel's prophecy John would be given the Holy Spirit even before he was born comes true. This is the second time Jesus is called Lord.

Mary Sings a Song of Praise to God – the Magnificat

⁴⁶ Mary said:

My soul *psyche* praises *megalyno*^{8x} the Lord's greatness.

[My heart finds joy in the Lord. My head is lifted to the Lord. My mouth mocks my enemies. I rejoice because you have saved me. 1 Samuel 2:1]

This quotation is from Hannah's song, the Magnificat 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Hannah was a barren woman to whom God gave her the ability to birth the prophet Samuel around 1100 BC. There are many more allusions to her song in this Magnificat.

⁴⁷ My spirit *pneuma* finds its joy *agalliao* in God *theos* my Savior *soter*,⁴⁸ because he has looked favorably on me *epiblepo*^{3x}, his *autos* humble *tapeinosis*^{4x} servant *doule*.

Luke will only use the word *soter* or Savior twice. It only appears once in John and in no other Gospel. Yet the Hebrew words translated *Savior* appears 8x in Isaiah.

From now on, all *pas* people *genea*-generations will call me blessed *makarizo* *makarizo* ^{2x} ⁹because the Almighty *dynatos*-mighty has done *poieo* great things *megaleios* ^{2x} to me *moi*.

His name *onoma* is holy *hagios*.

[There is no one holy like the Lord. There is no one like you O Lord. There is no Rock like our God. 1 Samuel 2:3]

The phrase *my holy name* appears 15x in the Hebrew Bible.

⁵⁰ For those who fear *phobeo* him, his mercy *eleos* lasts throughout every generation *genea genea*.

Fear and mercy appear in many Psalms: Psalm 5:7; 33:18; 103:11, 17; 118:4; 147:11.

⁵¹ He displayed his mighty power *kratos*-strength *brachion*-arm.

[Your arm is mighty. Your hand is strong. Your right hand is lifted high. Psalm 89:13]

He scattered *diaskorpizo* 9x those who think too highly of themselves *hyperephanos*—proud 5x *dianoia*—imagination *kardia*—hearts.

[Look on everyone who is proud and bring him low. Tread down the wicked from their place. **Job 40:12 KJV**]

⁵²He pulled *kathaireo*—put down 9x strong rulers *dynastes*—mighty 3x from their thrones. He honored *hypsoo* humble people *tapeinos* 8x.

[The Lord causes poverty and grants wealth. He humbles people. He also promotes them. He raises the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from the trash heap in order to make them sit with nobles and even to make them inherit a glorious throne. **1 Samuel 2:7-8**]

⁵³He fed *empimplemi* 5x hungry people with good food *agathos*. He sent rich people *plouto* away with nothing *kenos*—empty.

⁵⁴He remembered *mnaomai eleos*—mercy to help *antilambano* 3x his servant *pais* Israel forever. ⁵⁵This is the promise he made *laleo*—spoke to our ancestors, to Abraham and his descendants.

[Those who oppose the Lord are broken into pieces. He thunders at them from the Heavens. The Lord judges the ends of the earth. He gives strength to his King and lifts the head of his Messiah *mashiyach*—anointed one. **1 Samuel 2:10**]

The promise refers to the Eternal Covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. *I will be your God and you will be my people.*

⁵⁶Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home.

COMMENTS

The angel Gabriel six months later comes to Mary, a young teenage girl living in a small village of Nazareth that is 70 miles north of Jerusalem in the region of Galilee ruled by King Herod Antipas. Gabriel greets Mary saying she is most favored of God for she will soon become pregnant and birth the long awaited Messiah, the Son of God.

Mary asks: How? I am a virgin engaged but the marriage has never been physically consummated. Gabriel says that the Holy Spirit will overshadow her. And Gabriel gives Mary

a sign. Her cousin Elizabeth who is aged and barren will soon birth a son. Mary answers: *I am the Lord's servant. Let it be done.*

Mary is aware of the Holy Spirit. It was talked about in the synagogue where Mary attends. The *Spirit of God* appears in the Books of Moses: In **Genesis 1:2; 41:38; Exodus 31:3; 35:31; Numbers 24:2** and many other places in the Hebrew Bible.

Mary now visits Elizabeth traveling the 70 miles to Jerusalem, a 4-6 day walk. She greets Elizabeth who feels her baby John the Baptist kick with joy in meeting the fetus Jesus. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and calls Mary the mother of my Lord. So Jesus is called Lord for a second time in this Gospel.

Now Mary sings out with joy just like Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel did 1100 years before. Mary knows the psalms and the song of Hannah. God is good to his Chosen People called Israel. Mary stays with Elizabeth for three months presumably to see John the Baptist born and then returns to Nazareth.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. In what other book of the Bible does Gabriel appear? What does he do?
2. Why does Luke use El Elyon or Most High as the name of God?
3. Why does Luke refer to Jesus as being given the throne of King David?
4. Luke uses the title *Son of God* for Jesus. What is the importance of this title?
5. For a second time Jesus is called *Lord* in this Gospel. Why is this title important?
6. Mary doesn't have to tell Elizabeth she is pregnant with Jesus. Elizabeth tells Mary. How is this possible?
7. Mary's song is a praise to God for helping his Chosen People. Why is this important in a Gospel written to Gentiles – many of whom may be anti-Semitic?
8. Why was Zechariah terrified of the angel while Mary was only startled?

PERICOPE 4

John the Baptist Is Born to Elizabeth

^{1:57}When the time came for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had been very kind *eleos* to her and they shared her joy *sygchairo*.

This is the third time in the Gospel Luke will use the word *eleos* equivalent to the Hebrew word *cheved*—loving kindness which is God's greatest characteristic. **Exodus 34:5-7**

⁵⁹When the child was eight days old, they went to the Temple to circumcise him. They were going to name him Zechariah after his father. ⁶⁰But his mother spoke up: Absolutely not. His name will be John. ⁶¹Their friends said to her: But you don't have any relatives with that name. ⁶²So they motioned to the baby's father to see what he wanted to name the child. ⁶³Zechariah asked for a writing tablet and wrote: His name is John. Everyone was amazed.

Male babies were circumcised on the 8th day according to the Torah of Moses:

[God also said to Abraham: You and your descendants in generations to come are to be faithful to my Covenant This is how you are to be faithful to my Covenant. Every male among you is to be circumcised. **Genesis 17:9-10**]

Zechariah Speaks and Obediently Names His Son John

^{1:64}Suddenly, Zechariah was able to speak and he began to praise *eulogeo* God.

⁶⁵All their neighbors were filled with awe *phobos*—fear. Throughout the mountain region of Judea, people talked about everything that had happened. ⁶⁶Everyone who heard about it seriously thought it over and asked: What does the future hold for this child? It was clear that the *cheir*—hand of the Lord was with *meta* him.

This is the 5th time Luke has used words for *fear*. Remember that these are very pious people. When they are sensing God is working their lives, they have great reverence and respect.

Zechariah Praises God for His Son

^{1:67} His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸ Praise *eulogetos*-blessed 8x the Lord God of Israel. He has come to take care of *episkeptomai*-visited his people *laos* and to set them free *lytrosis*-redeem 3x. ⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty Savior *keras*-horn *soteria*-salvation for us in the family *oikos*-house of his servant David.

Zechariah sings a song of praise to God for birthing the long awaited Davidic Messiah. These are very nationalistic statements.

God Is Fulfilling His Covenant to His Chosen People

⁷⁰ He made this promise through his holy prophets long ago. ⁷¹ He promised to save *soteria* us from our enemies *echthros* and from the power *cheir*-hand of all who hate *miseo* us. ⁷² He has shown his mercy *eleos* to our ancestors and remembered *mnaomai* his holy *hagios* promise *diatheke*-Covenant, ⁷³ the oath *horkos* 10x that he swore *omnyo* to our ancestor Abraham. ⁷⁴ He promised to rescue *rhyomai* us from our enemies' power so that we could serve him without fear *aphobos* 4x ⁷⁵ by being holy *hosiotes* 2x and honorable *dikaiosyne* as long as we live.

God made a Covenant with Abraham that through his descendants every family on earth would be blessed. **Genesis 12:3**. He also told Abraham:

[Later the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision. He said: Abram, don't be afraid. I am your shield. [I will protect you. KJV] Your reward will be very great. **Genesis 15:1**]

Zechariah Addresses His Son John

⁷⁶ You child will be called a prophet *prophetes* of the Most High *hypsistos*. You will go ahead *pro*-before of the Lord *kyrios* to prepare his way *hodos*. ⁷⁷ You will make his people *laos* know *gnosis* that they can be saved *soteria* through the forgiveness *aphesis* of their sins *hamartia*.

⁷⁸ A new day *anatole*_{2x} will dawn *episkeptomai*-visited on us from above *hypsos*-high because our God is loving *splagchnon* and merciful *eleos*. ⁷⁹ He will give light *epiphaino*_{4x} to those who live in the dark *skotos* and in death's *thanatos* shadow *skia*_{7x}. He will guide *kateuthyno*_{3x} us into the way *hodos* of peace *eirene*.

[But there will be no more gloom for the land that is in distress. God humbled the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali in earlier times. But in the future he will bring glory to the road by the sea, in the land across the Jordan River, to Galilee where foreigners live. The people who walk in darkness will see a bright light. The light will shine on those who live in the land of death's shadow. **Isaiah 9:1-2**]

[A child will be born for us. A son will be given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and peace will have unlimited growth. He will uphold it with justice and righteousness forever. The Lord of Armies is determined to do this. **Isaiah 9:6-7**]

It appears that Zechariah was thinking of Isaiah's prophecies of the Messiah uttered 700 years before. Many of the thoughts and words are the same.

⁸⁰ The child John grew and became spiritually strong *krataioo*_{4x} *pneuma*-spirit. He lived in the desert until the day he appeared to the people of Israel.

COMMENTS

With Mary present, on the eighth day, Zechariah and Elizabeth took the child to the Temple to be circumcised. **Genesis 17:12-13**. When asked, Zechariah wrote on a tablet: His name shall be John. With that act of obedience, Zechariah was then able to talk. His first words were praises to God.

In his song, Zechariah like Mary sang a nationalistic song praising God for sending the Messiah, the Savior Israel had been looking for from at least the time of the prophet Isaiah [740-698 BC]. In God's Covenant with King David, **YHWH** had promised in this solemn Covenant he would send a descendant of King David to rule over Israel permanently. This concept was later extended to include this anointed one *christos*, the Messiah, who would make Israel

independent and eventually rule over the entire world from Jerusalem through his Chosen People.

Ever since God had allowed the Babylonians to take the Judeans into captivity in Babylon in 605, 597, and 586 BC, the Holy Land of Israel had been ruled by Gentiles. First the Persians, then the Greeks, then the Syrians, then for a brief time Hellenistic Jews, and finally in 63 BC the Romans. Jews believed the Messiah would drive out the Romans from the Holy Land.

Zechariah's song, the Benedictus, reflects this promise from God. Although God's people lived in darkness under the Romans, the Messiah would bring them into the light.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Would Zechariah have talked openly about his son providing the way for the Messiah? Wouldn't this have been very dangerous considering the times? King Herod the Great was a vicious ruler who quickly crushed any dissent.
2. Zechariah talks about a Savior, the Davidic Messiah in his song. Like his wife, he calls Jesus Lord. **Luke 1:76**. Why is this important to Luke's presentation of Jesus?
3. What does Zechariah mean that John will make people aware they can be saved through the forgiveness of their sins? Don't they know this already? If they inadvertently sin, they can bring an animal to the Temple. On Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, all of their sins are forgiven for the past year.
4. Zechariah says John will prepare the way ahead of the Messiah. How will he do this?
5. Luke says nothing about how John grew up. Since his parents were old, he might have been adopted by the Essenes, a monastic sect opposed to the Jerusalem Temple who were celibate and therefore adopted children to keep their community going. How probable is this?
6. The concept of a coming Messiah who would free God's Holy Land from the Romans was in everyone's minds. When would he come? The prophets had mentioned a Messiah beginning with Isaiah 700 years before. See **Isaiah Chapter 9**. Now God was telling Mary, Zechariah, and Elizabeth the Messiah was finally coming and they would play a role. Were they happy or afraid?
7. Luke and Mark wrote their Gospels primarily for Gentiles. Why would Luke go into so much detail about Jewish customs and aspirations that only Jews would appreciate and understand? NOTE: This is why I included so many prophecies in the previous pericopes.

PERICOPE 5

Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem of Judea

²¹At that time the Emperor Caesar Augustus ^{63 BC-14 AD} ordered a census of the Roman Empire. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All the people went to register in the cities where their ancestors had lived.

⁴So Joseph went from Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a Judean city called Bethlehem. Joseph, a descendant of King David, went to Bethlehem because David had been born there. ^{1 Samuel 17:12}. ⁵Joseph went there to register with Mary. She had been promised to him in marriage and was pregnant.

⁶While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have her child. ⁷She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger because there wasn't any room for them in the inn.

Since Herod the Great died in 4 BC, most believe the year was 6 BC.

Angels Announce the Birth of Jesus

²⁸Shepherds were in the fields near Bethlehem. They were taking turns watching their flock during the night. ⁹An angel from the Lord suddenly appeared to them. The glory *doxa* of the Lord filled the area with light and they were terrified.

¹⁰The angel said to them:

Don't be afraid. I have Good News *euangelizo*-Gospel for you, a message that will fill everyone with joy. ¹¹Today your Savior *soter* Christ *christos* the Lord *kyrios* was born in David's city.

The word *soter* only appears twice in this Gospel. It had appeared earlier in Mary's song. **Luke 1:47**

¹²This is how you will recognize him: You will find an infant wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

¹³Suddenly a large army of angels appeared with the angel. They were praising God by saying: ¹⁴Glory *doxa* to God *theos* in the highest *hypsistos* Heaven, and on earth peace *eirene* to those who have his good will *eudokia*^{9x}.

¹⁵The angels left them and went back to Heaven. The shepherds said to each other: Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about.

¹⁶They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph with the baby who was lying in a manger. ¹⁷When they saw the child, they repeated what they had been told about him. ¹⁸Everyone who heard the shepherds' story was amazed *thaumazo*-wondered.

¹⁹Mary treasured *syntereo*-preserved ^{6x} all these things in her heart *kardia* and always thought about *syballo*-pondered ^{6x} them.

²⁰As the shepherds returned to their flock, they glorified *doxazo* and praised *aineo*^{9x} God for everything they had seen and heard. Everything happened the way the angel had told them.

COMMENTS

This very familiar story supports Luke's theme that God sent Jesus to earth to the humble simple people of Israel, not to their rulers. And of the most humble people were shepherds, who were practically social outcasts, so much so that their testimony was not valid in a Jewish court. They were independent people living apart from most of society. Yet they were favored by God to be the first witnesses of the birth of the Messiah.

Jesus' birth was accompanied by God's angels praising God for what he was doing. He was bringing reconciliation of sinful humans to himself. By believing in his Messiah, people would have peace with God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The story of the birth of the Messiah is told very simply: She gave birth to her firstborn son. How does God glorify the human birth of the Son of God?
2. Why is it important that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea?
3. What would the shepherds have thought of the title: *Your Savior, Christ the Lord*?
4. Why did a large group of angels join the angel giving the message?

5. What would the shepherds have said had been told to them by the angel?
6. Why would the shepherds have praised God? What had he done for them?
7. Only once before in the Bible had humans heard angelic praise. When was this?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why does Luke say Mary treasured these things in her heart? Would this have been a remark Mary made when Luke was interviewing her? What specifically did Mary treasure?

PERICOPE 6

Jesus' Parents Take Jesus to the Jerusalem Temple

²²¹ Eight days after his birth, the child was circumcised and named Jesus. This was the name the angel had given him before his mother became pregnant.

Jesus was probably circumcised at home by a rabbi or at the local synagogue in Bethlehem as required by **Leviticus 12:3**.

²² After the days required by Moses' Teachings to make a mother clean had passed, Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem.

The mother was unclean for 33 days. **Leviticus 12:4**. After this time passed, Joseph and Mary walked the five miles to Jerusalem to the Temple.

They took Jesus to present him to the Lord. ²³ They did exactly what was written in the Lord's Teachings: Every firstborn boy is to be set apart as holy to the Lord. **Exodus 13:1-2**. ²⁴ They also offered a sacrifice as required by the Lord's Teachings: a pair of mourning doves or two young pigeons. **Leviticus 12:6-8**

This was the sacrifice for those who could not afford a lamb.

Simeon's Prophecy

²⁵ A man named Simeon was in Jerusalem. He lived an honorable *dikaïos* and devout *eulabes* ^{3x} life. He was waiting *prosdechomai* for the one who would comfort *paraktesis*-consolation Israel.

Simeon was waiting for the Messiah to come and give peace and freedom to the Chosen People.

The Holy Spirit was with Simeon ²⁶ and had told him that he wouldn't die until he had seen the Messiah whom the Lord would send.

²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, Simeon went into the Temple courtyard. Mary and Joseph were bringing the child Jesus into the courtyard at the same time. They brought him so that they could do for him what Moses' Teachings

required. ²⁸Then Simeon took the child in his arms and praised God by saying:

²⁹Now Lord you are allowing your servant *doulos* to leave *apolyo* in peace *eirene* as you promised *rhema*-word. ³⁰My eyes have seen *eido* your salvation *soterios* ³¹which you have prepared for all *pas* people *laos* to see. ³²He is a light *phos* that will reveal \perp salvation \perp *apokalypsis*-lighten to the nations *ethnos*-Gentiles and bring glory *doxa* to your people *laos* Israel.

[Now the Lord says: You are not just my servant who restores the tribes of Jacob and brings back those in Israel I have preserved. I have also made you a light for the nations so that you would save people all over the world. **Isaiah 49:6-7**]

Simeon is saying that God is bringing his Messiah to all people, even to the Gentiles.

³³Jesus' father and mother were amazed *thaumazo* at what was said about him.

Simeon Prophecies about Jesus' Future

^{2:34}Then Simeon blessed *eulogeo* them and said to Mary his mother: This child is the reason that many *polys* people in Israel will be condemned *ptosis*-fall and many others will be saved *anastasis*-rising. He will be a sign *semeion* that will expose ³⁵the thoughts *dialogismas* of those who reject him *antilego*-opposed \perp ox. And a sword *rhomphaia* will pierce *dierchomai* your heart.

Simeon says to Mary that many will accept your son but many others will oppose the Messiah. See **Luke 12:51-53**. And what they will do to him will break your heart.

Anna's Prophecies about Jesus' Future

^{2:36}Anna a prophet was also there. She was a descendant of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher. She was now very old. Her husband had died seven years after they were married ³⁷and she had been a widow for 84 years. Anna never left the Temple courtyard but worshiped day and night by fasting and praying.

³⁸ At that moment she came up to Mary and Joseph and began to thank *anthomologeomai* IX God. She spoke about Jesus to all who were waiting for Jerusalem to be set free *lytroisis*—redeemed 3X.

Jesus' Parents Return to Their Hometown of Nazareth in Galilee

³⁹ After doing everything the Lord's Teachings required, Joseph and Mary returned to their hometown of Nazareth in Galilee. ⁴⁰ The child grew *auxano* and became strong *krataioo pneuma*—spirit. He was filled with wisdom *sophia* and God's favor *charis* was with him.

COMMENTS

Jesus' parents now take him five miles north to Jerusalem to the Temple to present him to God as required of all firstborn males. They offered the sacrifice of the poor. Then Simeon, an old man, greets them. He takes Jesus in his arms and praises God for having sent his salvation. The Messiah will be for all people – both Jews and Gentiles. Both Joseph and Mary are amazed at his words. Then Simeon warns Mary that many will accept him, but many will reject him. And this will break her heart.

Another old person was there, a widow named Anna. She, too, was waiting for the Messiah. She also praised God. Then Joseph and Mary took Jesus and left Bethlehem for their hometown of Nazareth in Galilee.

Luke says that Jesus grew strong and learned wisdom with God guiding him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did God require that firstborn sons be redeemed?
2. Why would Simeon praise God for sending the Messiah to Gentiles?
3. What point is Luke trying to make in introducing Simeon and his prophecy?
4. Why would Simeon in this moment of great joy give a severe warning to Mary?
5. What is the point in having old people praise God for the coming of the Messiah?
6. How is Luke affirming the human nature that Jesus has although he had said that Jesus is Lord several times?
7. How many times has Luke mentioned the Holy Spirit so far in this Gospel?

PERICOPE 7

At 12 Years Old Jesus Amazes the Teachers in the Temple

⁴¹Every year Jesus' parents would go to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. ⁴²When he was 12 years old, they went as usual.

⁴³When the festival was over, they left for home. The boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents didn't know it. ⁴⁴They thought that he was with the others who were traveling with them. After traveling for a day, they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they didn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

⁴⁶Three days later they found him in the Temple courtyard. He was sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷His understanding *synesis* 7x and his answers *apokrisis* 4x stunned *existemi*—astonished everyone who heard him.

⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were shocked *ekplesso*. His mother asked him: Son why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been worried sick looking for you. ⁴⁹Jesus said to them: Why were you looking for *zeteo* me? Didn't you realize *eido*—see that I had to *dei*—must be *einai* in my Father's house?

Luke will use the word *dei* 19x in the Gospel and 25x in Acts, the most of any Biblical author. This word means divine necessity.

⁵⁰ But they didn't understand *syniemi* what he meant. ⁵¹ Then he returned with them to Nazareth and was obedient *hypotasso* to them.

His mother treasured *diatereo* 2x all these things in her heart. ⁵² Jesus grew *prokopto* 6x in wisdom *sophia* and maturity *helikia* 8x. He gained favor *charis* from God and people.

COMMENTS

This incident appears only in Luke. Jesus has now reached an important stage in his growth in Jewish society. At 13 years old, Jesus will go before his local synagogue and read from Moses'

Teachings or the *Towrah*. He will then comment on this passage of Scripture. This is known as his *bar mitzvah* – the time when he becomes a Son of the Covenant and is considered an adult and to know right from wrong. At 20 years old, he will be able to be married, and at 30 to become an official or a priest in the community.

But before this happens this incident occurs. Three times a year, Jewish males were required to attend the three pilgrim festivals, The first and most important was Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Spring. The family went to Jerusalem and probably stayed for the full seven days.

They then returned home with the men in one group and the women in another. In the evening, the parents couldn't find Jesus so they returned to Jerusalem. On the third day, they found him in the Temple asking questions of the priests and rabbis and answering their questions. His knowledge astonished all of them.

Mary then asked Jesus why he had stayed behind. The King James Version says: *Didn't you see that I had to be about my Father?* Even at this early age, even though he was in human form and nature, Jesus was aware of his true identity. And yet he was obedient to his parents and grew in wisdom and in the strength of the Lord.

Luke has introduced this incident to show that Jesus was fully God and fully human. God had given him a human nature in addition to him remaining God or deity as he had been from eternity. Although Jesus remained God he restrained himself in a most mysterious way experiencing everything humans experience and more for he never sinned. **Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 4:15.** We experience the temptation of sin but we give in usually quite early. Jesus never did give in to sin and therefore suffered a more horrific experience.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. In the early church, there were two major heresies. The first was that Jesus was never human. He is God and remained God simply appearing to be a human. This is called Docetism and quite frankly, many today believe in a phantom Jesus that was never fully God and fully human. What problem does this create in understanding the genuine Jesus?
2. There was also a heresy early on that Jesus wasn't God. This is what the Pharisees believed. What problem does this create in understanding the genuine Jesus?
3. What later aspects in Jesus life does Luke present to demonstrate that he was really human?
4. The incarnation – God becoming flesh – is a mystery and hard to explain. Why did God make Jesus human?

5. Alistair Begg sees this incident as so important he devotes two 45-minute sermons to it. Why is it necessary for Jesus to be both fully God and fully human to understand his work in the Covenant of Redemption as a sacrificial atonement?
6. Luke has devoted the first portion of his Gospel up to now stating that Jesus is Lord. Why is this an appropriate moment to show that Jesus was fully human and learned as he lived his 33 years on earth beginning his ministry at age 30?
7. Why don't the other Gospels discuss Jesus' early years?

PERICOPE 8

John the Baptist Calls God's People to Repent of Their Sin

³¹ It was the fifteenth year in the reign of the Emperor Tiberius ²⁹AD. Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea. Herod ruled Galilee, and his brother Philip ruled Iturea and Trachonitis. Lysanias was the ruler of Abilene.

² It was at the time when Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests in the Jerusalem Temple that God spoke to John, son of Zechariah, in the desert.

Luke gives us the historical context of the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The known world at that time was the Roman Empire. The Holy Land was divided into the Roman Province of Judea that included Judea, Samaria, and Idumea and the tetrarchy or part of a Kingdom ruled by the client King Herod Antipas that consisted of Galilee and Perea.

The Temple was ruled by the High Priest Joseph Caiaphas but his father-in-law Annas who had been High Priest was still ruling behind the scenes. In Jewish tradition, a High Priest ruled for life. **Numbers 35:25**

We had left John the Baptist at the home of his old parents. It may be that when they died, John was adopted by the Essenes, a monastic community living on the shores of the Dead Sea in the Judean wilderness awaiting the Messiah they thought was the archangel Michael who would lead them in a battle against the children of darkness.

³ John traveled throughout the region around the Jordan River. He told *kerysso*—preaching people about a baptism *baptisma* of repentance *metanoia* for the forgiveness *aphesis* of sins *hamartia*.

John Says that The Messiah Is Coming. Get Yourselves Ready to Receive Him.

⁴ As the prophet Isaiah wrote in his book:

A voice cries out in the desert:

Prepare the way for the Lord. Make his paths straight. ⁵ Every valley will be filled. Every mountain and hill will be leveled. The crooked ways will be made straight. The rough roads will be made smooth. ⁶ All people will see the salvation that God gives. **Isaiah 40:3-5**

⁷Crowds of people were coming to be baptized by John. He would say to them:

You poisonous snakes. Who showed you how to flee from God's coming anger? ⁸Do those things that prove that you have turned to God and have changed the way you think and act.

Don't say: Abraham is our ancestor. I guarantee that God can raise up descendants for Abraham from these stones. ⁹The ax is now ready to cut the roots of the trees. Any tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into a fire.

John is preaching that God is coming to his Holy Land and he will chastise all of his enemies. If people haven't turned to God and aren't living holy lives producing fruit, God will severely punish them. John is giving the same message as the Hebrew prophets have done since the time of Elijah and Elisha 900 years before.

¹⁰The crowds asked him: What should we do? ¹¹He answered them: Whoever has two shirts should share with the person who doesn't have any. Whoever has food should share it too.

¹²Some tax collectors came to be baptized. They asked him: Teacher what should we do? ¹³He told them: Don't collect more money than you are ordered to collect. ¹⁴Some soldiers asked him: What should we do? He told them: Be satisfied with your pay, and never use threats or blackmail to get money from anyone.

People Asked John: Are You the Promised Messiah?

^{3:15}People's hopes were rising as they all wondered whether John was the Messiah. ¹⁶John replied to all of them:

I baptize *baptizo* you with water. But the one who is more powerful than I *ischyros*-mighty is coming. I am not worthy to untie his sandal straps. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Fire is a picture of the judgment God will bring in the Day of the Lord.

¹⁷His winnowing shovel is in his hand to clean up his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn the husks in a fire that can never be put out.

When grain was harvested, it was thrown up in the air with a shovel. The light husks were blown away and the heavier grain fell to the ground. The useless husks were then burned. Unrepentant sinners were subject to this burning.

¹⁸With many other encouraging words he told the Good News to the people.

John Was Not Afraid to Speak Against King Herod Antipas

¹⁹John spoke out against the ruler Herod because Herod had married his own sister-in-law, Herodias. He also spoke out against Herod for all the evil things he had done. ²⁰So Herod added one more evil to all the others. He locked John in prison.

John the Baptist Baptizes Jesus

^{3:21}When all the people were baptized, Jesus too was baptized. While he was praying Heaven opened ²²and the Holy Spirit came down to him in the form of a dove. A voice from Heaven said: You are my Son whom I love. I am pleased with you.

This is the first of two times God speaks in this Gospel.

²³Jesus was about 30 years old when he began his ministry.

COMMENTS

Remember that Zechariah had prophesied that John would go ahead of the Lord and prepare his way. **Luke 1:74.** John is doing exactly that. After having probably lived his teenage years with the Essenes, at 30 years old – sixth months older than Jesus – John is now on his own preaching in the desolate basin of the Jordan River. He is an Old Testament prophet easily recognized as one by the Jews from the Scriptures they grew up with. There is nothing nice about John for he is angry like Amos, Micah, and Jeremiah. He calls people to return to their God and live holy lives. Why? The Messiah is coming and he will judge you with fire for your sin.

Alistair Begg lists four qualities of John: (1) His divine authority from God; (2) His integrity; (3) His humility; and (4) His simplicity in preaching.

Then Jesus came to his cousin John. John immersed Jesus in the water of the Jordan River and as Jesus came up out of the water, Heaven opened and the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove. A voice from Heaven spoke to Jesus saying: *You are my Beloved Son. I am pleased with you.*

We see here the three persons of the Holy Trinity, the three-person God: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:1-8; John 1:19-28

1. Luke wants to place events in historical context. Why is this important to him?
2. In all four Gospels, the Isaiah passage is quoted. Why is this so important for an understanding of the Gospel narrative?
3. Describe John's simple message in your own words.
4. When did John expect God's judgment to come on the Chosen People? When had God's judgment come with great effect in the past?
5. Why does John describe the coming Messiah as the Mighty One rather than describing him as his cousin Jesus?
6. Why did Jesus need to be baptized by John?
7. John is in Herod's prison all the time Jesus is ministering. Why doesn't Jesus free him?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why does John expect Jesus to begin the Day of the Lord?

PERICOPE 9

The Ancestors of Jesus

From Jesus to the Babylonian Exile

^{3:23} **Jesus**, so people thought, was the son of **Joseph**, son of **Eli**, ²⁴son of **Matthat**, son of **Levi**, son of **Melchi**, son of **Jannai**, son of **Joseph**, ²⁵son of **Mattathias**, son of **Amos**, son of **Nahum**, son of **Esli**, son of **Naggai**, ²⁶son of **Maath**, son of **Mattathias**, son of **Semein**, son of **Josech**, son of **Joda**, ²⁷son of **Joanan**, son of **Rhesa**, son of **Zerubbabel**,

From the Babylonian Exile to King David

son of **Shealtiel**, son of **Neri**, ²⁸son of **Melchi**, son of **Addi**, son of **Cosam**, son of **Elmadam**, son of **Er**, ²⁹son of **Joshua**, son of **Eliezer**, son of **Jorim**, son of **Matthat**, son of **Levi**, ³⁰son of **Simeon**, son of **Judah**, son of **Joseph**, son of **Jonam**, son of **Eliakim**, ³¹son of **Melea**, son of **Menna**, son of **Mattatha**, son of **Nathan**, son of **David**,

From King David to Abraham

³²son of **Jesse**, son of **Obed**, son of **Boaz**, son of **Salmon**, son of **Nahshon**, ³³son of **Amminadab**, son of **Admin**, son of **Arni**, son of **Hezron**, son of **Perez**, son of **Judah**, ³⁴son of **Jacob**, son of **Isaac**, son of **Abraham**

From Abraham to God

son of **Terah**, son of **Nahor**, ³⁵son of **Serug**, son of **Reu**, son of **Peleg**, son of **Eber** son of **Shelah**, ³⁶son of **Cainan**, son of **Arphaxad**, son of **Shem**, son of **Noah**, son of **Lamech**, ³⁷son of **Methuselah**, son of **Enoch**, son of **Jared**, son of **Mahalaleel**, son of **Cainan**, ³⁸son of **Enos**, son of **Seth**, son of **Adam**, son of **God**.

COMMENTS

This is a difficult pericope. Most scholars say this is the genealogy of Mary's father **Eli** or **Heli**. Notice that Luke does not begin with Abraham, the first patriarch of the Jewish people as does Matthew. He ends instead with Adam, the ancestor of all humankind in God's Creation. Remember that Luke is writing to Gentiles while Matthew is writing to Jews.

Luke is perhaps thinking of the Proto-evangel in Genesis where God cursed Satan:

[Because you have done this, you are more cursed than all the wild or domestic animals. You will crawl on your belly. You will be the lowest of animals as long as you live. I will make you and the woman hostile toward each other. I will make your descendants and her descendant hostile toward each other. He will crush your head and you will bruise his heel. **Genesis 3:14-15**]

Mary contributes her body to Jesus' human nature which God has given him as she births him in a normal human manner. The incarnation is a *mystery* and there are many questions we can't answer. But Luke uses this genealogy to show that Jesus is representative of all humanity, although he is sinless and never commits a sin during his human life on earth.

Luke emphasizes throughout his Gospel that Jesus is God by calling him Lord with an additional human nature by which Jesus identifies himself as the Son of Man. We are familiar with many of these people but there are others who are a total mystery.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 1:1-18

1. Notice that Solomon does not follow his father David in this genealogy but Nathan, another son of King David is listed by Luke. Why is it important that Mary is descended from King David as is Joseph, the man who adopted Jesus by giving him his name, Jesus. **Matthew 1:21**.
2. Heli is apparently Mary's father who adopted Joseph giving him land inheritance rights. Mary had no brothers or sisters. Heli's ancestry went back to King David. Why is this important?
3. What point is Luke making in presenting this genealogy going back to Adam?
4. Zerubbabel is the Governor who brought the captives back to Jerusalem from Babylon in 535 BC. Why is this important? Read **Haggai 2:23** and **Zechariah 6:12-13**.

5. What does Luke mean by making Jesus the 77th in the line? What does the number 7 mean in Hebrew gematria?
6. Although Jesus calls himself on earth the Son of Man, he is not referring to himself as human. Instead, he is referring to the prophecy of **Daniel 7:13-14**. Describe who the Son of Man is in this prophecy.

PERICOPE 10

Satan Tempts Jesus

⁴¹ Jesus was filled with the **Holy Spirit** as he left the Jordan River after his baptism. The Spirit led him while he was in the desert ² where he was tempted by the Devil for 40 days.

During those days Jesus ate nothing so when they were over he was hungry. ³ The Devil said to him: If you are the Son of God tell this stone to become a loaf of bread. ⁴ Jesus answered him: *Scripture says: A person cannot live on bread alone. Deuteronomy 8:3*

⁵ The Devil took him to a high place and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant. ⁶ The Devil said to him: I will give you all the power and glory of these kingdoms. All of it has been given to me and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ So if you will worship me, all this will be yours. ⁸ Jesus answered him: *Scripture says: Worship the Lord your God and serve only him. Deuteronomy 6:13*

⁹ Then the Devil took him into Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest part of the Temple. He said to Jesus: If you are the Son of God, jump from here. ¹⁰ Scripture says: *He will put his angels in charge of you to watch over you carefully. ¹¹ They will carry you in their hands so that you never hit your foot against a rock. Psalm 91:11-12* ¹² Jesus answered him: It has been said: *Never tempt the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 6:16*

¹³ After the Devil had finished tempting *peirasmos* Jesus in every possible way, the Devil left him until another time *Kairos*.

COMMENTS

For 40 days Jesus was tempted in the Judean wilderness by Satan, the Accuser, also known as the Devil. Satan was the mightiest angel of God until he wanted to become God himself in charge of all Creation. He rebelled against God taking 1/3 of the angels with him as God's archangel Michael drove him out of Heaven to earth. Now Satan exists on earth to tempt humans to also rebel against God. Jesus, like all of us humans will be similarly tempted directly

here but Satan will war against Jesus during his entire 3 ½ year ministry using his demon angels. Jesus will exorcise many of these evil spirits but they will continue to oppress many people.

Here is the symbolic confrontation that the apostle John calls *the temptations of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*. **1 John 2:16**. Jesus overcomes these temptations by quoting his favorite book in the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy. God has given us his revelation in the Bible to keep us on track against the Devil's lies and insinuations.

While Jesus overcame the Devil at this time, the Devil will return periodically during Jesus' ministry particularly using the Pharisees to harass him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13

1. Luke says that Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit as he left his baptism. Is Luke implying that Jesus received the Holy Spirit at his baptism? Wouldn't God have given Jesus the Holy Spirit from his birth?
2. Physical deprivation causes intense pain. It is said we can live 3 minutes without air, 3 days without water, and 3 weeks without food. Jesus was deprived of water and food for 40 days, almost 6 weeks. How could he survive?
3. The Devil says God has given him all the power and glory of earthly kingdoms and he can give it to anyone he chooses. Is this true or a lie?
4. Is the Devil correct in claiming that God will protect Jesus from physical injury?
5. How did the Holy Spirit assist Jesus during this time of temptation?
6. How many times has Luke referred to the Holy Spirit so far in this Gospel?
7. Pastor Randy Smith says that the angels appeared at Jesus' birth not only to praise God and identify him to the shepherds but also to guard him against Satan. But at Jesus' baptism, God identifies Jesus as his *beloved Son*. So now the cosmic battle begins first with Satan and then with his demons or evil spirits who have been thrown down to earth with Satan. Why did the Holy Spirit drive Jesus into the desert to confront Satan?

Pericope II

Jesus' Hometown Rejects Him as the Messiah

^{4:14} Jesus returned to Galilee. The power of the Holy Spirit was with him and the news about him spread throughout the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He taught in the synagogues and everyone praised him.

¹⁶ Then Jesus came to Nazareth where he had been brought up. As usual he went into the synagogue on the Day of Rest — a holy day. He stood up to read the lesson. ¹⁷ The attendant gave him the book *biblion*—scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He opened it and found the place where it read:

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord is with me. He has anointed me to tell the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to announce forgiveness to the prisoners of sin and the restoring of sight to the blind, to forgive those who have been shattered by sin, ¹⁹ to announce the year of the Lord's favor. **Isaiah 61:1-2**

Jesus stopped in the middle of the last sentence in Isaiah not reading: *and the Day of our God's vengeance*, that is, the Day of the Lord. This is what John the Baptist failed to understand. Jesus came to earth the first time to seek and to save the lost. He will come a second time and then he will judge.

²⁰ Jesus closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. Everyone in the synagogue watched him closely. ²¹ Then he said to them: This passage came true today when you heard me read it.

Jesus is here claiming to be the Messiah.

²² All the people spoke well of him. They were amazed to hear the gracious words flowing from his lips. They said: Isn't this Joseph's son?

Apparently, the people didn't realize what Jesus was saying.

²³ So he said to them: You'll probably quote this proverb to me: Doctor cure yourself, and then say to me: Do all the things in your hometown that we've

heard you've done in Capernaum. ²⁴ Then Jesus added: I can guarantee this truth: A prophet isn't accepted in his hometown.

²⁵ I can guarantee this truth: There were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time. It had not rained for three-and-a-half years and the famine was severe everywhere in the country. ²⁶ But God didn't send Elijah to anyone except a widow at Zarephath in the territory of Sidon. **1 Kings 17:8-24.** ²⁷ There were also many people with skin diseases in Israel in the prophet Elisha's time. But God cured no one except Naaman from Syria. **2 Kings 5:1-14**

Jesus deliberately confronts his hometown neighbors by saying the Messiah will come not only to Jews but also to Gentiles, but then citing instances of where God had ministered to Gentiles living outside Israel.

²⁸ Everyone in the synagogue became furious *thymos*-wrath when they heard this. ²⁹ Their city was built on a hill with a cliff. So they got up, forced Jesus out of the city, and led him to the cliff. They intended to throw him off of it. ³⁰ But Jesus walked right by them and went away.

COMMENTS

This is a key incident in the Gospel. We have already been told that the Messiah will minister to both Jews and Gentiles. This is God's plan. Here Jesus spells this out to people in his hometown. And they don't want to hear this. We see here the first opposition to Jesus as Simeon had predicted. **Luke 1:35.** Mary apparently is in the audience and she would be heart-broken at this antagonism.

Why does Jesus confront God's Chosen People early in his ministry, people who should be the first to support him? He is following in the role of his cousin John the Baptist speaking plainly and clearly being obedient to God's mission for him. He will always do what *the One Who Sent Him* wants him to do no matter the consequences.

Jesus' ministry should be a Year of Jubilee, the year of the Lord's favor, a Sabbath Year when debts are forgiven and slaves are set free. **Leviticus 25:1-55.** Although this is mandated in the Bible, most scholars believe that it was largely ignored.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-6

1. Luke presents this as Jesus' opening sermon in his ministry. However, he has not only been preaching in Capernaum and doing miracles there but also in other synagogues. Why didn't Jesus begin his ministry in his hometown of Nazareth?
2. This was probably the shortest sermon Jesus ever gave. Why is it so important?
3. Why does Jesus deliberately confront the members of his hometown with the news that the Messiah will also go to Gentiles?
4. Why are the people of Nazareth so upset that the Messiah will go to Gentiles? They have heard Isaiah's words read in their synagogue before:

[And I will remember the foreigners who have joined the Lord to worship him, to love the Lord's name and to be his servants. I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them happy in my House of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar because my House will be called a House of Prayer for All Nations. The Almighty Lord, who gathers the scattered people of Israel declares: I will gather still others besides those I have already gathered. **Isaiah 56:6-8**]

5. Where does Isaiah say *the Messiah will be a light to the Gentiles*?
6. Two of Luke's main themes in his Gospel is that Jesus is fully God and fully man and the Messiah will minister to both Jews and Gentiles. What is Luke's next most important theme?

Part Two – The Galilean Ministry

Pericopes 12-33

Luke now describes the events in Jesus' earthly ministry in Galilee. This is not a big place but the elevations are varied. It is about 60 miles from the Mediterranean Sea to the Sea of Galilee, also called Lake Tiberias in honor of the Roman Emperor, 600 feet below sea level. The western mountains in the Golan Heights range from 600 feet below sea level to 9,232 feet above sea level at Mount Hermon. Israel is about 120 miles long from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south.

The Sea of Galilee is also called Lake Gennesaret as it looks like a harp. It is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide, the largest freshwater lake in Israel. The lake is fed by underground springs, but also by the Jordan River coming into it from the snows of Mount Hermon in the north.

Jews lived on the western side of the lake while Gentiles lived on the eastern side. Jesus traveled with his disciples in a boat from west to east and back and ministered to towns and villages around the lake. There were no big towns in Galilee. The principle location was the palace of King Herod Antipas in Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. It was staffed with Gentiles because it was built on a former Jewish graveyard.

The region of Samaria was filled with Gentiles, as Samaritans were considered only half-Jews, since their ancestors were brought into the Holy Land by the Assyrians from 735 -722 BC. Many intermarried with the remaining Jews living there. The Assyrians deported many Israelites throughout the land of Israel to other parts of the Assyrian Empire and brought in Gentiles to replace them. There were also many Gentiles scattered through Galilee itself. Jews refused to do business or even associate with them unless it was absolutely necessary. Isaiah called the territory *Galilee of the Gentiles*. **Isaiah 9:1**

In the three synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus will spend the majority of his ministry in Galilee and Samaria although he visits in Judea. Beginning with **PERICOPE 34**, in Luke's account, Jesus and his disciples will travel south toward Jerusalem, a 70 mile journey. Finally, in **PERICOPE 79**, they arrive in Jerusalem where Jesus will be arrested and die on a cross only to be raised by God. In the Gospel According to John, Jesus spends most of his time in Jerusalem although he makes several trips to Galilee.

PERICOPE 12

Jesus Forces an Evil Spirit Out of a Man in Capernaum

^{4:31} Jesus went to Capernaum, a city in Galilee and taught *didasko* them on a Day of Rest — a holy day *sabbaton*.

The word *sabbaton* appears 19x in Luke, 9x in Matthew, 11x in Mark, and 10x in Acts. God decrees the Sabbath in the Fourth Commandment. **Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15**. Jesus teaches and heals on the Sabbath because most of the Jews in Israel had to work hard on the other six days to earn enough for their families to eat. Honoring the Sabbath and circumcision **Genesis 17:9-14** were the main characteristics of Jewish identity in this Hellenistic environment. The Romans ridiculed the Jews for following these practices and attempted to dissuade them from following these practices.

³² The people were amazed *ekplesso* at his teachings *didache* because he spoke *logos*-word with authority *exousia*-power.

Rabbis spoke in the various synagogues reading Scripture and then commenting on it by quoting the comments of well-known teachers and scribes. Jesus commented on the Scriptures using only his own authority. This was a new thing.

Jesus' First Healing

^{4:33} In the synagogue was a man possessed by a spirit, an evil demon. He shouted very loudly: ³⁴ Oh no. What do you want with us Jesus from Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God. ³⁵ Jesus ordered *epitamo* the spirit: Keep quiet and come out of him. The demon threw the man down in the middle of the synagogue and came out *exerchomai* without hurting him.

The word *epitamo* meaning *commanded* will appear 12x in Luke, 6x in Matthew and 9x in Mark.

³⁶ Everyone was stunned *thambos* 3x. They said to one another: What kind of command *logos* is this? With authority *exousia* and power *dynamis* he gives orders *epitasso*-commands 10x to evil *akathartos*-unclean spirits *pneuma* and they come out *exerchomai*.

³⁷So news about him spread to every place throughout the surrounding region.

COMMENTS

Like his cousin John the Baptist, Jesus spoke with conviction and authority. He was not quoting human knowledge but speaking the words given him by God's Holy Spirit. I am fortunate to have a minister in the church I attend and three Bible teachers whose sermons are on the internet who I feel preach in the same way. There is a passion in their words and an authority in the words they communicate.

People recognized this in Jesus. In the synagogues in Galilee, there were often visiting Rabbis and priests of the Jerusalem Temple who visited as they only worked in the Temple at the three festivals and for two weeks every year during the course of appointments. These men taught by reading the Scriptures and then quoting authorities from the past who explained the Scriptures. Jesus however spoke on his own authority.

Jesus bravely faced evil or unclean spirits who challenged him. They recognized his identity and were afraid of him. But Jesus merely commanded them and they immediately obeyed his authority. There were no magic words or incantations or signs. Jesus simply ordered them to leave and they did. How this surprised the people. Jesus' reputation spread throughout Galilee.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Mark 1:21-28

1. Notice the evil spirit addresses Jesus first. Why does he do this?
2. How does the evil spirit know who Jesus is?
3. The evil spirit immediately obeys Jesus and does not put up a fight. There is no contest, yet Satan attacks Jesus with temptations. Why don't the evil spirits challenge Jesus?
4. How does Jesus' show of authority over evil spirits convince the people of Jesus' identity? Who do they think Jesus is?
5. Jesus teaches the Scriptures with authority. How does he demonstrate this?

PERICOPE 13

Jesus Cures Simon's Mother-in-Law and Many Others

^{4:38} Jesus left the synagogue and went to Simon's house. Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever. They asked Jesus to help her. ³⁹ He bent over her, ordered *epitimaō* the fever to leave, and it went away. She got up immediately and prepared a meal for them.

Luke is a doctor. Yet he describes Jesus' healing a fever with only a word. How would Luke have healed the fever?

⁴⁰ When the sun was setting, everyone who had friends suffering from various diseases brought them to him. He placed his hands on each of them and cured them. ⁴¹ Demons came out of many people, shouting: You are the Son of God. But Jesus ordered them not to speak. After all, they knew he was the Messiah.

The people waited until the Sabbath was over and then brought their sick friends and those with evil spirits to Jesus. Notice some evil spirits call Jesus *the Son of God*. Luke is reminding us that Jesus is both fully God and fully human, but he is restraining himself allowing God to work through him with the power of the Holy Spirit as he works through us. God is authenticating Jesus' power through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Leaves Capernaum to Preach the Good News in Judea

^{4:42} In the morning he went to a place where he could be alone. The crowds searched for him. When they came to him, they tried to keep him from leaving. ⁴³ But he said to them: I have to tell the Good News about God's Kingdom in other cities also. That's what I was sent to do.

⁴⁴ So he spread his message in the synagogues of Judea.

Luke presents Jesus as often going off to be alone in prayer to God. This is how Jesus in his human nature gets his strength from God to perform miracles. And Jesus has a sense that his ministry is very short so he travels to as many locations as he can *to seek and save the lost*.

COMMENTS

This pericope is remarkable in that Doctor Luke presents Jesus as healing a fever with only a word. He commands the fever as if it were an unclean spirit. And the woman immediately recovers. Luke will not call Simon by the name Peter until **Luke 5:8**.

This is the first time Luke mentions Jesus going off alone to pray.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:14-18; Mark 1:29-34

1. Jesus exorcised a demon on the Sabbath in a synagogue and no one complains. Why not?
2. Why does Jesus heal Peter's mother-in-law on a Sabbath?
3. News about Jesus spread quickly that he exorcised a demon. But there is no public knowledge of a healing. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law in private. Why did people wait until the Sabbath was over to bring their friends to Jesus for healing and exorcisms?
4. Why does Luke only mention that Jesus went off to be alone? Why doesn't he mention Jesus praying?
5. Notice in verse 41 the demons equate the title Son of God with the Messiah. How do the demons know about the Jewish concept of the Messiah?
6. Define Luke's concept of the Kingdom of God. Luke mentions the Kingdom of God 31x; Mark 15x, Matthew 5x, John 2x. Matthew also mentions the Kingdom of Heaven 31x.

PERICOPE 14

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

⁵¹ One day Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee. The people crowded around him as they listened to God's Word. ² Jesus saw two boats on the shore. The fishermen had stepped out of them and were washing their nets. ³ So Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and asked him to push off a little from the shore.

Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowd from the boat. ⁴ When he finished speaking, he told Simon: Take the boat into deep water, and lower your nets to catch some fish. ⁵ Simon answered: Teacher *epistates*-Master ^{6x} we worked hard all night and caught nothing. But if you say so, I'll lower the nets.

This title of Master for Jesus *epistates* appears only in Luke.

⁶ After the men had done this, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear. ⁷ So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. Their partners came and filled both boats until the boats nearly sank. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he knelt in front of Jesus and said: Leave me Lord *kyrios*. I'm a sinful person *hamartolos*.

Of the ^{32x} this word *hamartolos* appears in the Gospels, ^{18x} it appears in Luke.

⁹ Simon and everyone who was with him were amazed *periecho* ^{3x} *thambos* ^{3x} to see the large number of fish they had caught. ¹⁰ James and John, who were Zebedee's sons and Simon's partners were also amazed. Jesus told Simon: Don't be afraid *phobeo*-fear. From now on you will catch people instead of fish.

¹¹ Simon and his partners brought the boats to shore, left everything, and followed Jesus.

COMMENTS

Luke records the first disciple Jesus called was Simon Peter. Jesus is now teaching on weekdays. Going out on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus commands Peter to go out again and fish after they had caught nothing that night. Miraculously, they catch a large number of fish. Peter is shocked, but seeing that Jesus had performed a miracle for him says he is unworthy of such attention. Then Jesus calls Peter to follow him and catch people instead of fish. Simon and his partners brought the boats to shore, left everything and followed Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:14-20

1. How did Peter and Jesus first get acquainted? Was it when Peter asked Jesus to heal his mother-in-law?
2. Why did Peter feel unworthy before Jesus?
3. How could these fishermen simply leave everything and follow Jesus?
4. Why isn't Simon Peter's brother Andrew mentioned?
5. What title do Jesus' disciples give him in Luke? What does it mean? Is it the same title the other disciples give him?
6. What does Peter mean when he calls Jesus *Lord* and says he is *a sinful man*?
7. What does Jesus mean when he says that Peter will catch people?

EXTRA CREDIT

Luke has Jesus calling Simon by the name Peter for the first time in **Luke 5:8**. Yet, Jesus alternates calling him Simon sometime, Peter sometimes, and Simon Peter sometimes. We see a parallel with Moses calling Abraham's grandson Jacob "Jacob" sometimes and Israel other times. Why do Jesus and Moses alternate names for Peter and Jacob.

PERICOPE 15

Jesus Cures a Man with a Skin Disease

^{5:12} One day Jesus was in a city where there was a man covered with a serious skin disease *lepra* 4x. When the man saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground. He begged Jesus: Sir if you want to, you can make me clean *katharizo*.
¹³ Jesus reached out, touched *haptomai* him and said: I want to. So be clean. Immediately, his skin disease went away.

¹⁴ Jesus ordered him: Don't tell anyone. Instead show yourself to the priest. **Leviticus 13:9**. Then offer the sacrifice as Moses commanded as proof to people that you are clean. **Leviticus 14:10**

Jews looked at lepers as dead people **Numbers 12:12** and the disease as incurable.

¹⁵ The news about Jesus spread even more. Large crowds gathered to hear him and have their diseases cured. ¹⁶ But he would go away to places where he could be alone for prayer *proeuchomai*.

COMMENTS

Leprosy was a dreaded disease. People who had it were unable to live in society and had to remain isolated. Most said it could never be cured. But there was a provision in the Towrah for an examination by a priest who could declare a person cured or clean. **Leviticus 13**. Jesus commanded the man to go to a priest to be certified clean so he could rejoin society.

This healing brought a great response from the public as Jesus' reputation as a healer increased. Jesus became subject to large crowds following him. So Jesus would often go off alone to pray. Words for *pray* and *prayer* appear 15x in Luke. This is the only way Jesus could gain strength.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:1-4; Mark 1:40-44

1. How did Jesus heal difficult dreaded diseases such as leprosy since he was not using his divine powers as the Son of God?

Paul tells us that:

[He emptied himself by taking on the form of a servant, by becoming like other humans, by having a human appearance. He humbled himself by being obedient to the point of death, death on a cross. **Philippians 2:7-8**]

Most of us reading this story of the healing of the leper take it as matter of fact that Jesus could do miracles because he was the Son of God. But he was also perfectly human. God gave Jesus an additional human nature. Jesus never stopped being the Son of God. But he restrained himself, not using his divine powers of being all-knowledgeable or omniscient, all-powerful or omnipotent, or everywhere present or omnipresent.

Jesus was able to do miracles because he prayed and God worked through him in the Holy Spirit. Jesus told his disciples in the Gospel According to John:

[I can guarantee this truth: Those who believe in me will do the things that I am doing. They will do even greater things because I am going to the Father. I will do anything you ask the Father in my name so that the Father will be given glory because of the Son. If you ask me to do something I will do it. **John 14:12-14**]

The writer To the Hebrews tells us:

[During his life on earth, Jesus prayed to God, who could save him from death. He prayed and pleaded with loud crying and tears, and he was heard because of his devotion to God. Although Jesus was the Son of God, he learned to be obedient through his sufferings. **Hebrews 5:7-8**]

We must not create a phony Christ. Jesus was fully human and fully God. While Jesus was on earth he was fully human. Otherwise, he could not have fulfilled his mission for God by being our sacrificial atonement. God cannot suffer and die.

PERICOPE 16

Jesus Claims He Has Authority to Forgive Sins

^{5:17} One day when Jesus was teaching some Pharisees and experts in Moses' Teachings were present. They had come from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. Jesus had the power *dynamis* of the Lord *kyrios* to heal *iaomai*.

The focus on this pericope is not on Jesus' healing, but on his claim to forgive sins. Pharisees, who regarded themselves as experts in keeping the Towrah, and their scribes were there. So were scribes or Doctors of the Law from Jerusalem who probably worked at the Temple and who had traveled up the 70 miles from Jerusalem. Jesus' reputation even reached there. This word *iaomai* meaning *heal* appears 12x in Luke and 5x in Acts, the most of any book in the Bible.

¹⁸ Some men brought a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They tried to take him into the house and put him in front of Jesus. ¹⁹ But they could not find a way to get him into the house because of the crowd. So they went up on the roof. They made an opening in the tiles and let the man down on his stretcher among the people. They lowered him in front of Jesus.

²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith *pistis*, he said: Sir your sins *hamartia* are forgiven *aphiemi*. ²¹ The experts in Moses' Teachings and the Pharisees thought: Who is this man? He's dishonoring God. Who besides God can forgive sins?

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to them: What are you thinking? ²³ Is it easier to say: Your sins are forgiven or to say: Get up and walk?

²⁴ I want you to know *eido* that the Son of Man has authority *exousia* on earth *ge* to forgive *aphiemi* sins *hamartia*.

Then he said to the paralyzed man: Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go home. ²⁵ The man immediately stood up in front of them and picked up the stretcher he had been lying on. Praising God, he went home.

²⁶ Everyone *hapas*—all was amazed *ekstasis* 7x and praised *doxazo*—glorified God. They were filled with awe *phobos*—fear and said: We've seen *paradoxos*—strange IX things today we can hardly believe.

COMMENTS

Jesus will use the title Son of Man 28x in this Gospel, the first time in this pericope. Only Matthew uses it more than Luke does – 33x. Remember, it is Pharisees and scribes that are questioning Jesus' ability to forgive sins in this pericope. They know their Scriptures, so they should know why Jesus uses this title for himself.

[In my visions during the night, I saw among the clouds in Heaven someone like the Son of Man. He came to the Ancient One who has lived for endless years, and was presented to him. He was given power, honor, and a Kingdom. People from every province, nation, and language were to serve him. His power is an eternal power that will never be taken away. His Kingdom will never be destroyed. **Daniel 7:13-14**]

Jesus proves he is able to heal the paralyzed man. So why should the scribes question his authority?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12

1. Is Jesus deliberately provoking these religious rulers for a reason? He could have simply healed the paralyzed man without making this claim.
2. Compare the reactions of the crowd with scribes and the Pharisees. Who is praising God more?
3. Jesus uses these words to teach people his genuine identity. But how many believe in him?
4. How was Jesus able to heal if he was in his human nature? He had given up all of his divine powers. **Philippians 5:1-9**
5. The man did not exhibit faith, but his friends did. How was this enough for Jesus?

PERICOPE 17

The Pharisees and Scribes Question Jesus

^{5:27} After that, Jesus left. He saw a tax collector named Levi sitting in a tax office. Jesus said to him: Follow *akouloutheo* me *moi*. ²⁸ So Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.

²⁹ Levi held a large reception at his home for Jesus. A huge crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. ³⁰ The Pharisees and their experts in Moses' Teachings complained to Jesus' disciples. They asked: Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

³¹ Jesus answered them: Healthy people *hygiaino* don't need a doctor *iatros* ^{7x}. Those who are sick *kakos* do. ³² I've come to call *kaleo* sinners *hamartolos* to change the way they think and act *metanoia*—repentance, not to call people who think they have God's approval *dikaios*—righteous.

Jesus Is Questioned about Fasting

^{5:33} They said to him: John's the Baptist disciples frequently fast and say prayers and so do the disciples of the Pharisees. But your disciples eat and drink.

³⁴ Jesus asked them: Can you force wedding guests to fast while the groom is still with them? **Isaiah 54:5; Hosea 2:19-20.** ³⁵ The time will come when the groom will be taken away from them. At that time they will fast.

Jesus says that the time when God has sent the Messiah to earth is a time for joyful celebration like those who celebrate at a wedding, the time of a start of new life. But, soon the Messiah will be taken away. At that time, people will fast.

³⁶ He also used these illustrations: No one tears a piece of cloth from a new coat to patch an old coat. Otherwise, the new cloth will tear the old. Besides, the patch from the new will not match the old. ³⁷ People don't pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the new wine will make the skins burst. The wine will run out, and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸ Rather, new wine is to be poured into fresh skins.

³⁹ No one who has been drinking old wine wants new wine. He says: The old wine is better.

Jesus also says that the time of the Messiah is a time for new things. God's revelation is progressive. Once we have learned the fundamentals, we build on these to new revelations. Yet for some, they don't want to change and accept the new revelations from God. This applied to most Pharisees and Sadducees.

Jesus Has Authority over the Day of Rest—the Sabbath

^{6:1} Once, on a Day of Rest — a holy day, Jesus was walking through some grainfields. His disciples were picking the heads of grain, removing the husk, and eating the grain. ² Some of the Pharisees asked: Why are your disciples doing something that is not right to do on the Day of Rest — a holy day?

³ Jesus answered them: Haven't you read what David did when he and his men were hungry? ⁴ Haven't you read how he went into the House of God, ate the Bread of the Presence **Exodus 25: 23-30** and gave some of it to the men who were with him? He had no right to eat those loaves. Only the priests have that right. **1 Samuel 21:3-6**

⁵ Then he added: The Son of Man has authority over *kyrios*—Lord over the Day of Rest—a holy day *sabbaton*.

Jesus Heals on Another Sabbath

⁶ On another Day of Rest — a holy day, Jesus went into a synagogue to teach. A man whose right hand was paralyzed was there. ⁷ The experts in Moses' Teachings and the Pharisees were watching Jesus closely. They wanted to see whether he would heal the man on the Day of Rest — a holy day so that they could find a way to accuse him of doing something wrong.

⁸ But Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he told the man with the paralyzed hand: Get up and stand in the center of the synagogue. The man got up and stood there. ⁹ Then Jesus said to them: I ask you — what is the

right thing *exesti*-lawful to do on a Day of Rest — a holy day: to do good or evil, to give a person his health or to destroy it?

¹⁰ He looked around *periblepo*_{7x} at all of them as they were silent and then said to the man: Hold out your hand. The man did so and his hand became normal again.

¹¹ The experts in Moses' Teachings and Pharisees were furious *pimplemi*-filled *anoia*-madness, rage _{2x} and began to discuss with each other what they could do to Jesus.

This is the point where the scribes and the Pharisees now seek to find ways to kill Jesus. He has embarrassed them badly, and their pride has been severely wounded.

COMMENTS

Jesus now selects a tax collector to be his disciple. Jesus has selected one of the most despised members of Jewish society to be one of his leaders. Tax collectors were employed by the Romans to collect poll taxes and customs duties. They received their income by overcharging or collecting in fraudulent ways. Jesus even ate at dinner having table fellowship where Levi also known as Matthew celebrated his discipleship. At this dinner, Levi brought many of his friends who were also tax collectors and others whom the Pharisees called sinners as they did not follow the Jewish law or Towrah.

When the Pharisees and scribes asked Jesus' disciples why Jesus associated with these people, Jesus simply said: *I've come to call sinners to repentance rather than those who already think God approves of them. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10.* These two verses are the principal themes of Luke's Gospel.

These same scribes and Pharisees now ask Jesus' disciples: *Why do you not fast like the disciples of John the Baptist?* Jesus answers for them: *While the bridegroom is at the wedding, people do not fast. But soon he will be taken away. Then they will fast.* Jesus went on to use metaphors to describe that the Messiah will bring new revelations from God. Some revelation will overturn old conceptions which were meant to train and teach. But all revelation comes from God and is progressive. Once the fundamental concept is learned, more difficult concepts are taught. Yet some don't want to change. There is Law and there is Gospel. Both are needed.

Again the Pharisees, who have developed 39 rules about what can and cannot be done on Sabbath, attack Jesus for breaking their rules. Jesus cavalierly says that he is *Lord of the*

Sabbath. He will state what can and cannot be done. Man's laws must not restrain God's people and put God in a box. They must recognize Jesus' authority.

This is followed by Jesus' actions in a synagogue on the Sabbath. The scribes and Pharisees made it obvious that they were carefully watching Jesus to see if they could criticize him. A man with a withered hand was there. Jesus brought him to the center of the synagogue and asked an obvious question: *Is it right to give a person his health on the Sabbath or ignore him and let him be destroyed.* The scribes and Pharisees refused to answer this question and therefore were humiliated. Jesus healed the man. So the scribes and Pharisees gathered to see how they could destroy Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT: Matthew 9:9-17; 12:1-158; Mark 2:13-28; 3:1-6

1. When Jesus associates with the tax collectors and sinners, doesn't that point to his disciples making friends with non-Christians? How can Christians do this without losing their own faith?
2. Progressive revelation can be a difficult process. Most people don't like to change. They develop habits and stick with them. But Jesus has come with new revelation – new teaching from God that overturns old revelation. Give some examples. Remember Jesus said: *It was said of old but I tell you*
3. Jesus could have quoted Isaiah when he said that God's rules are superior to man's rules:

[The Lord says: These people honor me with their mouths and honor me with their lips. But their hearts are far from me and their worship is based on rules made by humans. That is why I am going to do something completely amazing for these people once again. The wisdom of their wise people will disappear. The intelligence of their intelligent people will be hidden. **Isaiah 29:13-14.**]

Jesus is saying we should be very reluctant to make God's rules more stringent than God does. And we should be alert for new revelation from God that Jesus brings.

4. Jesus also teaches that human need comes before ceremonial need. Give some examples.
5. Why did Jesus concentrate on breaking the Pharisees' rules, particularly those relating to the Sabbath? Of all the Ten Commandments, Jesus ignored teaching or quoting on keeping the Sabbath, although he attended synagogue every Sabbath Day. Why didn't Jesus quote the fourth commandment to the rich ruler? **Luke 18:19-20**

6. Luke doesn't describe Matthew's faith. Why did Matthew follow Jesus and become his disciple?

7. Describe the joy of Matthew and his fellow tax collectors in their shared meal and the grumbling of the Pharisees. What was the Pharisees' goal in life? What kept the Pharisees from believing in Jesus?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus says he is the bridegroom. Just as God considered Israel as his wife **Hosea 2:16, 19-20; Isaiah 54:6**, Jesus considers his followers as his wife. **John 3:29; Revelation 19:7-8**. Are there two wives in these concepts or only one wife?

PERCOPE 18

Jesus Appoints Twelve Apostles

^{6:12} At that time Jesus went to a mountain to pray *proseuchomai*. He spent the whole night *dianyktereuo* ^{ix} in prayer *proseuche* to God. ¹³ When it was day, he called his disciples. He chose twelve of them and called them apostles.

¹⁴ They were Simon (whom Jesus named **Peter**) and Simon's brother **Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,** ¹⁵ **Matthew, Thomas, James** (son of Alphaeus), **Simon** (who was called the Zealot), ¹⁶ **Judas** (son of James), and **Judas Iscariot** (who became a traitor).

COMMENTS

Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before he chose twelve men as his disciples who would carry on his message after he returned to Heaven. What was the significance of Jesus choosing Twelve men? Some like Paul would say that Jesus was creating a new Israel, a new Chosen People, like the 12 tribes of Israel.

[Certainly it doesn't matter whether a person is circumcised or not. Rather what matters is a new creation. Peace and mercy will come to rest of all those who conform to this principle. They are the Israel of God. **Galatians 6:15-16**]

What were these selected twelve to do? They were to be with Jesus.

[And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him and that he might send them out to preach. **Mark 3:14 KJV**]

There were historical reasons for doing this. The Chosen People became the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the twelve sons of Abraham's grandson Jacob, whom God re-named Israel. After Pentecost, the Twelve were members of the first church at Jerusalem led first by Simon Peter and then by James, the Lord's brother, although Paul tells us:

[I passed on to you the most important points of doctrine that I had received. Christ died to take away our sins as the Scriptures predicted. He was placed in a tomb. He was brought back to life on the third day as the Scriptures predicted. He appeared to Cephas Peter. Next, he appeared

to the Twelve Apostles. Then he appeared to more than 500 believers at one time. Most of these people are still living but some have died. Then he appeared to James. Then he appeared to all the apostles. Last of all, he also appeared to me. I'm like an aborted child who was given life.
1 Corinthians 15:3-8]

So there were many more than the Twelve who had seen the risen Jesus Christ. Paul questioned the authority of the Twelve, especially those who were called *the three pillars* of the Jerusalem church: James, Peter, and John, **Galatians 2:9** since Jesus had appeared directly to him on the road to Damascus. **Acts 9:3-6**. Paul was determined to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles as Jesus had ordered him:

[I am Jesus, the one you're persecuting. Stand up. I've appeared to you for a reason. I'm appointing you to be a servant and a witness of what you have seen and of what I will show you. I will rescue you from the Jewish people and from the non-Jewish people to whom I am sending you. You will open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from Satan's control to God's. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and a share among God's people who are made holy by believing in me.
Acts 26:15-18]

Paul went on with Peter to become two of the greatest evangelists for Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19

1. One of the Twelve chosen by Jesus was Judas Iscariot, who handed Jesus over to his enemies, the chief priests of the Sanhedrin. Why did Jesus chose him as one of his Twelve?
2. Did Jesus know at this time that Judas would betray him? How can you tell?
3. Jesus only re-named one of the Twelve. He re-named Simon as Peter. Why did he do this?
4. What authority did Jesus give to these Twelve?

PERICOPE 19

Jesus Delivers a Sermon in a Level Place

^{6:17} Jesus came down from the mountain with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples and many other people were there. They had come from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon cities to the north of Israel. ¹⁸ They wanted to hear him and be cured of their diseases. Those who were tormented by evil spirits were cured. ¹⁹ The entire crowd was trying to touch *haptomai* him because power *dynamis* was coming out from him and curing *iaomai* all of them.

The word *iaomai* appears 12x in Luke, but only 4x in Matthew, 1x in Mark, and 3x in John.

Jesus Pronounces God's Blessings and Curses

^{6:20} Jesus looked at his disciples and said:

Blessed *makarios* are those who are poor. God's Kingdom is theirs.

²¹ Blessed are those who are hungry. They will be satisfied.

Blessed are those who are crying. They will laugh.

²² Blessed are you when people hate you, avoid you, insult you, and slander you because you are committed to the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice then, and be very happy. You have a great reward in Heaven. That's the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴ But how horrible it will be *ouai*-woe for those who are rich. They have had their comfort. ²⁵ How horrible it will be for those who are well-fed. They will be hungry. How horrible it will be for those who are laughing. They will mourn and cry. ²⁶ How horrible it will be for you when everyone says nice things about you. That's the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.

Jesus seems to be using the Deuteronomic concept of the blessings *barak* and the curses *qelala* in his blessings and woes. See **Deuteronomy 27:11-28:68**.

Jesus Most Difficult Teaching: Love Your Enemies

^{6:27} But I tell everyone who is listening: Love *agapao* your enemies. Be kind *kalos*-good to those who hate you. ²⁸ Bless *eulogeo* those who curse you. Pray for those who insult you. ²⁹ If someone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other cheek as well. If someone takes your coat, don't stop him from taking your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you for something. If someone takes what is yours, don't insist on getting it back.

³¹ Do for other people everything you want them to do for you.

This is known as the **Golden Rule** and was well known in antiquity. It was not original with Jesus.

³² If you love *agapao* those who love *agapao* you, do you deserve any thanks for that? Even sinners love *agapao* those who love *agapao* them. ³³ If you help those who help you, do you deserve any thanks for that? Sinners do that too. ³⁴ If you lend anything to those from whom you expect to get something back, do you deserve any thanks for that? Sinners also lend to sinners to get back what they lend.

³⁵ Rather love *agapao* your enemies, help them and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then you will have a great reward. You will be the children of the Most High God. After all, he is kind *chrestoes* ^{7x} to unthankful and evil people. ³⁶ Be merciful *oiktirmon* as your Father is merciful *oiktirmon* ^{3x}.

In Greek, there are four kinds of love: *eros*- erotic love, a word that does not appear in the Bible; *storge*, love of family, again a word that does not appear in the Bible; *philos* or *philadelphia* - brotherly love, and *agapao*, self-sacrificing love, which Luke uses ^{9x}, but John uses ^{27x}. The word *oiktirmon* only appears elsewhere in James' letter:

[Brothers and sisters, follow the example of the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. They were patient *makrothymia* when they suffered unjustly *kakopatheia* ^{ix}. We consider those who endure *hypomone* to be blessed *makarizo*. You have heard about Job's endurance *hypomone*. You saw that the

Lord ended Job's suffering because the Lord is compassionate *polysplagchnos*
ix and merciful *oiktirmon*. James 5:10-11]

Jesus Teaches to Stop Judging Other People

^{6:37} Stop judging *krino* and you will never be judged. Stop condemning *katadikazo* ^{5x} and you will never be condemned. Forgive *apolyo* and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give *didomi* and you will receive.

Forgiving is emphasized in the Gospels. Luke uses the word ^{14x}, Matthew ^{18x}, Mark ^{12x}, and John ^{3x}.

A large quantity, pressed together, shaken down, and running over will be put into your pocket. The standards you use for others will be applied to you.

The Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind

^{6:39} Jesus also gave them this illustration: Can one blind person lead another? Won't both fall into the same pit? ⁴⁰ A student is no better than his teacher. But everyone who is well-trained will be like his teacher.

What a great promise Jesus gives us here. We will be like Jesus.

Jesus Teaches We Must Always See Our Own Faults First Before Correcting Others

^{6:41} Why do you see the piece of sawdust in another believer's eye and not notice the wooden beam in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to another believer: Friend let me take the piece of sawdust out of your eye when you don't see the beam in your own eye? You hypocrite. First remove the beam from your own eye. Then you will see clearly to remove the piece of sawdust from another believer's eye.

Jesus Teaches to Practice What You Preach

^{6:43} A good tree doesn't produce rotten fruit, and a rotten tree doesn't produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ Each tree is known by its fruit. You don't pick figs from thorny plants or grapes from a thornbush. ⁴⁵ Good people do the good that is in

them. But evil people do the evil that is in them. The things people say come from inside them.

Jesus Summarizes His Teachings: Build on the Rock

^{6:46}Why do you call me Lord but don't do what I tell you? ⁴⁷I will show you what everyone who comes to me, hears what I say and obeys it is like.

⁴⁸He is like a person who dug down to bedrock to lay the foundation of his home. When a flood came, the floodwaters pushed against that house. But the house couldn't be washed away because it had a good foundation. ⁴⁹The person who hears \perp what I say \perp but doesn't obey it is like someone who built a house on the ground without any foundation. The floodwaters pushed against it and that house quickly collapsed and was destroyed.

COMMENTS

This sermon is similar to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount although it is much abbreviated. **Matthew 5:1-7:28**. Here Jesus gives some of his most important teachings and sets out some of the most difficult things God wants us to do. These are things we should strive to do and pray that God will allow his Holy Spirit working in us to enable us to do them.

If we would simply love our enemies instead of cursing them, forgiving them by blessing them, and stop judging other people but rather paying more attention to correcting our own faults, we would be much better disciples of Jesus. Luke has really gotten here to the core of Jesus' teaching.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 5:1-12; 38-48; 7:1-5; 15-29; Mark 3:7-12**

1. Jesus says: Give to everyone who asks for something. If we begin giving our things away to those who need them, will those people ever stop asking us for more? What do we do then? We run the risk of people taking advantage of our generosity. Remember the parable of the bear who was given food. When the person didn't give him any more food, the bear ate him.
2. We should never condemn a person, Jesus says, because God loves everyone he has created. Everyone. How difficult this is when we see the great evil some people do. Is everyone capable of repenting, even the most hardened criminal? What can't God do?
3. We can fall into a trap of being very critical of ourselves all the time. How do we avoid this trap?

4. Is there such a thing as an evil person or only a person who does evil deeds?
5. Do Jesus' teachings here replace Moses' Teachings?
6. Jesus promises that everyone who is well-trained will be like his teacher. What incentive is Jesus offering to us?
7. How does Jesus teach one must not only know his teachings, but must apply them?

PERICOPE 20

A Roman Centurion Shows Great Faith

¹ When Jesus had finished everything he wanted to say to the people he went to Capernaum. ² There a Roman army officer's valuable slave was sick and near death. ³ The officer had heard about Jesus and sent some Jewish leaders to him. They were to ask Jesus to come and save the servant's life.

⁴ They came to Jesus and begged: He deserves your help. ⁵ He loves our people and built our synagogue at his own expense. ⁶ Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the officer sent friends to tell Jesus:

Sir, don't bother. I don't deserve to have you come into my house. ⁷ That's why I didn't come to you. But just give a command and let my servant be cured. ⁸ As you know I'm in a chain of command *exousia*-authority and have soldiers at my command. I tell one of them: Go, and he goes. And to another: Come, and he comes. I tell my servant: Do this, and he does it.

⁹ Jesus was amazed *thamazo* at the officer when he heard these words. He turned to the crowd following him and said: I can guarantee that I haven't found *heyrisko* faith *pistis* as great *tosoutos* as this in Israel. ¹⁰ When the men who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant healthy *hygaiaino*-whole again.

COMMENTS

Jesus has just taught his disciples and the crowds to love their enemies. Most Jews hated the Roman conquerors. Not all the Roman soldiers were from Rome. Many were mercenaries hired by the Romans from Syria and the Syrians historically hated the Jews. A little over 100 years before this, the Syrian King Antiochus IV Epiphanes slaughtered hundreds of Jews for practicing Judaism: circumcising their children, refusing to eat pork, and studying Towrah. A revolt against him was the Maccabean Revolt in 167-160 BC.

Yet here, Jesus heals the slave of a Roman Centurion – leader of a 100 soldiers – at a distance. This Gentile shows great faith in Jesus, something lacking in many of the Jews in Galilee where many Gentiles live. Luke is showing how Gentiles and Jews can live together in peace and harmony.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:5-13

1. One of the major problems in Jesus' day in Israel is that they were a conquered people living under a government that saw their country and their people only as a resource to feed the people of the Roman Empire. What was God teaching his Chosen People at this time?
2. Many of the Roman soldiers abused the Jewish people because they considered them troublesome and queer because of their customs. Particularly offensive to Romans was circumcision as it defiled the human body, something Hellenism deplored. Because of the Hellenistic ways of the Roman way of living, most Jews refused to deal with Romans and other Gentiles that they saw as ritually unclean in their living. Why is Jesus so merciful in helping this Roman Centurion?
3. Why did this Roman Centurion build a local synagogue at his own expense?
4. What was it about this Roman Centurion that made Jesus want to heal his slave?
5. What would have been Jesus' disciples' reaction to Jesus saying: *I haven't found faith as great as this in Israel?* Wasn't this an overstatement?
6. Read Matthew's version of this pericope. **Matthew 8:5-13**. Here, Jesus tells the Jews if they don't believe in him, they won't be judged worthy of God in the Last Day. Why doesn't Luke include this saying of Jesus?

PERICOPE 21

Jesus Raises a Man from Death to Life

⁷ Soon afterward Jesus went to a city called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd went with him. ¹² As he came near the entrance to the city, he met a funeral procession. The dead man was a widow's only child. A large crowd from the city was with her.

¹³ When the Lord saw her, he felt sorry *splagchnizomai* for her. He said to her: Don't cry.

This is the first of three times Luke will use this word that appears only in the Gospels. Matthew uses the word 5x and Mark 4x.

¹⁴ He went up to the open coffin, took hold of it and the men who were carrying it stopped. He said: Young man I'm telling you to come back to life. ¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to talk and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

¹⁶ Everyone *hapas*-all was struck with fear *phobos* and praised *doxazo* God. They said: A great *meegas* prophet *prophetes* has appeared *egeiro*-raised up among us, and God has taken care of *episkeptomai*-visited his people. ¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding region.

COMMENTS

This is the first of two dead people Jesus will raise back to life. Remember that Luke is a doctor, so when he interviewed the persons who told him the story, he probably questioned thoroughly that the people Jesus raised had actually died. In Israel, as in much of Middle East, people were buried often the same day they died as the bodies decomposed rapidly and smelled. So there were often premature burials.

Many of the people recalled that Elijah in the 900's BC raised the son of a widow at Zarephath **1 Kings 17:8-24** and Elisha raised the son of a rich woman in Shunem on the Hill of Moreh. **2 Kings 4:8-37**. Jesus raised the widow's son on this same hill. So they called Jesus a great prophet like Elijah and Elisha.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why do only the three Gospels use this rare word *splagchnizomai* meaning compassionate? Look at the other places where this word appears. **Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:27; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; 9:22; Luke 7:13; 10:33; 15:20.** What does this tell us about Jesus?
2. The other two Gospels use this word *splagchnizomai* more than Luke does. Since Luke is focused on Jesus' humanity more than Matthew, who sees Jesus as a King, or Mark, who sees Jesus as a servant, why doesn't Luke use this word more?
3. Can you locate other places in Luke's Gospel where he might have used this word *splagchnizomai* but didn't?
4. What does it mean that *God has visited his people*?
5. Where else in Luke's Gospel do people call Jesus a prophet?
6. Why is the situation for a widow so precarious when her son dies?
7. Why does Jesus raising people from death to life make his own resurrection more believable? Read **John 5:19-30** where Jesus says the Father has given him power to raise the dead. Then read what Jesus says about his own resurrection. **John 10:17**

EXTRA CREDIT

This is the first time the narrator Luke calls Jesus Lord. **Luke 7:13.** What does this say about Luke's intention to reveal the identity of Jesus throughout the rest of this Gospel. Where does the narrator call Jesus Lord again? He will do this 13x more in this Gospel.

Jesus' action in raising the dead to life raised the question in people's minds as to who he really was. Was he a great prophet like Elijah and Elisha? Was he the prophet Moses had predicted in **Deuteronomy 18:18**? Was he Immanuel, meaning *God is With Us*? **Matthew 1:23; 28:20.** Was he the long awaited promised Messiah? Who is Jesus?

PERICOPE 22

John the Baptist Questions Jesus and Jesus Praises John

^{7:18} John's disciples told him about all these things. Then John called two of his disciples ¹⁹ and sent them to ask the Lord: Are you the one who is coming or should we look for someone else?

Herod Antipas has put John in prison. So John sends his disciples to ask Jesus.

²⁰ The men came to Jesus and said: John the Baptizer sent us to ask you: Are you the one who is coming or should we look for someone else?

²¹ At that time Jesus was curing many people who had diseases, sicknesses, and evil spirits. Also, he was giving back sight to many who were blind.

²² Jesus answered John's disciples: Go back and tell John what you have seen and hear.

Blind people see again, lame people are walking, those with skin diseases are made clean, deaf people hear again, dead people are brought back to life, and poor people hear the Good News.

[Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged. Then those who are lame will leap like deer and those who cannot speak will shout for joy. **Isaiah 35:5-6**]

²³ Whoever doesn't lose his faith in me is indeed blessed.

Jesus indeed is the Messiah. What John thought was that the Messiah would bring in the Day of the Lord prophesied by many Old Testament prophets where God would bless his people but punish the wicked. The Day of the Lord is mentioned 17x in the Hebrew Bible and 5x in the New Testament.

Jesus Praises John

^{7:24} When John's messengers had left, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John. What did you go into the desert to see? Tall grass swaying in the wind?

²⁵ Really what did you go to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? Those who wear splendid clothes and live in luxury are in royal palaces. ²⁶ Really, what did you go to see? A prophet? Let me tell you that he is far more than a prophet. ²⁷ John is the one about whom Scripture says:

I am sending my messenger ahead of you to prepare the way in front of you. **Malachi 3:1**

²⁸ I can guarantee that of all the people ever born, no one is greater than John. Yet the least important person in God's Kingdom is greater than John.

Bible commentators do not agree on the meaning of this last sentence. My conclusion is that John did not know the complete mission of Jesus as believers do. John felt Jesus would bring God's judgment the first time he came to earth. *He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.* Fire signifies judgment where God will punish all of his enemies as the Old Testament prophets continually preached. Because Jesus did not bring this judgment, John sent messengers to Jesus to ask him if he was the one who was to come.

When Jesus came, this was a new dispensation that was superior to the old. Jesus would inaugurate a New Covenant that would succeed the Mosaic Covenant. Jesus may also have meant that all people in the Kingdom of God are equal before God. The First shall be Last and the Last shall be First.

²⁹ All the people, including tax collectors, heard John. They admitted that God was right by letting John baptize them. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and the experts in Moses' Teachings rejected God's plan for them. They refused to be baptized.

³¹ How can I describe the people who are living now? What are they like? ³² They are like children who sit in the marketplace and shout to each other: We played music for you, but you didn't dance. We sang a funeral song, but you didn't cry.

³³ John the Baptizer has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say: There's a demon in him. ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking and you say: Look at him. He's a glutton and a drunk, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Like cross and capricious children, the scribes and Pharisees fail to participate in the celebration that God has sent his Messiah to earth in fulfillment of the all the prophets' prophecies. All they can do is criticize.

³⁵ Yet wisdom is proved right by all its results.

History will show that Jesus was the long awaited Jewish Messiah.

COMMENTS

John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets. He was the first prophet to come to Israel in 400 years. The rabbis decreed that prophecy stopped with that of Malachi. Since then God had not spoken. That is why none of the intertestamental writings in those 400 years were included in the Jewish canon of the Hebrew Bible.

John preached a baptism of repentance just like Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel. But he did not preach a Gospel. John thought like most of the Jews that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah who would rule the world from Jerusalem like King David, using the Jewish people as his agents. **Isaiah 60**. He did not preach the reconciliation of men to God by Jesus' sacrificial atonement. But he did preach that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. And, John announced Jesus as the Messiah and he did induce many Jews to live the holy lives that God wanted. In this, he was one of the great prophets of Israel.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 11:2-19

1. One of the reasons many Jews rejected Jesus is that they were stuck in their old ways. While Jesus kept the requirements of the Mosaic Covenant perfectly and never sinned, he did talk about new things God would do. Isaiah had prophesied God said:

[Behold, I will do a new thing. Now it shall spring forth. Shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. **Isaiah 43:19**]

God was not only talking about bringing the Judeans back from the Babylonian captivity, he was talking about bringing the Holy Spirit to his people:

Then a Savior will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from rebellion, declares the Lord. This is my Covenant to them, says the Lord. My Holy Spirit, who is on you and the words that I put in your mouth will

not leave you. They will be with your children and your grandchildren permanently, says the Lord. **Isaiah 59:20-21**

Why wouldn't many of the Jews believe that Jesus was this Savior, especially when they saw God's Holy Spirit working in his believers after Pentecost?

2. The Gospels say that the Sanhedrin was afraid of arresting Jesus in Jerusalem because they were afraid of the people who thought John was a great prophet. **Luke 19:47-48**. If the Jews believed that John was an authentic prophet of God and John announced Jesus as the promised Messiah, why wouldn't they believe in Jesus as the Messiah?

3. Did the Pharisees believe that John the Baptist was a great prophet?

4. The Sadducees did not like John the Baptist because he preached that God forgave sins when people repented thus bypassing the sacrificial system in the Temple. Jesus was doing the same thing. Why didn't the Temple authorities attempt to arrest John for baptizing people?

5. Some think that John may have sent messengers to Jesus because Jesus had not released John from Herod's prison. Do you think this was probable?

6. What is the difference between doubt and unbelief? Explain why one is more serious than the other.

PERICOPE 23

Jesus Teaches a Pharisee God Forgives Those Who Repent

⁷³⁶ One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. Jesus went to the Pharisee's house and was eating at the table.

³⁷ A woman who lived a sinful life in that city found out that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house. So she took a bottle of perfume ³⁸ and knelt at his feet. She was crying and washed his feet with her tears. Then she dried his feet with her hair, kissed them over and over again and poured the perfume on them.

³⁹ The Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this and thought: If this man really were a prophet, he would know what sort of woman is touching him. She's a sinner.

⁴⁰ Jesus spoke up: Simon, I have something to say to you. Simon replied: Teacher, you're free to speak. ⁴¹ So Jesus said: Two men owed a moneylender some money. One owed him five hundred silver coins and the other owed him fifty. ⁴² When they couldn't pay it back, he was kind enough to cancel their debts. Now who do you think will love *agapao* him the most? ⁴³ Simon answered: I suppose the one who had the largest debt canceled. Jesus said to him: You're right.

⁴⁴ Then turning to the woman he said to Simon: You see this woman don't you? I came into your house. You didn't wash my feet. But she has washed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You didn't give me a kiss. But ever since I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You didn't put any olive oil on my head. But she has poured perfume on my feet.

⁴⁷ That's why I'm telling you that her many *polys* sins *hamartia* have been forgiven *aphiemi*. Her great love *agapao* proves that. But whoever receives little forgiveness loves very little. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her: Your sins have been forgiven. ⁴⁹ The other guests thought: Who is this man who even forgives

sins? ⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman: Your faith *pistis* has saved *sozo* you. Go in peace *eirene*.

COMMENTS

Even though many Pharisees attacked Jesus, many admired him. The Pharisees were a lay-led party and most were admired by people as they tried to keep the Mosaic Law perfectly. But Jesus attacked them because they wrote additional laws to keep people from violating the Towrah and thus made it more difficult for people to keep the law and focused on keeping non-essentials while forgetting love and mercy.

Jesus saw them as attempting to keep the outward commandments of the law for the wrong reasons. They neglected the necessary inward motivations of love, compassion, and mercy. They separated themselves from sinners – anyone who didn't keep the law – instead of helping people live holy lives for God. You could recognize a Pharisee immediately by their dress.

Jesus here stresses the inward change of heart of this woman who sinned. Because she loved Jesus and worshiped him by her devotion, God forgave her sins which Jesus pronounced. Remember that in the Gospel of John Jesus said:

[The Father doesn't judge anyone. He has entrusted judgment entirely to the Son so that everyone will honor the Son as they honor the Father. Whoever doesn't honor the Son doesn't honor the Father who sent him. **John 5:22-23**]

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did the Pharisees invite Jesus to eat with them when he criticized them so often?
2. What was the reason Jesus forgave the woman's sins?
3. How does this pericope demonstrate why it is so difficult to bring generally good people to saving faith in Jesus?

PERICOPE 24

Jesus is Counter-Cultural Allowing Women to Travel With Him

^{8:1} After this, Jesus traveled from one city and village to another. He spread the Good News about God's Kingdom. The Twelve Apostles were with him. ² Also, some women were with him. They had been cured from evil spirits and various illnesses.

These women were Mary, also called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out; ³ Joanna, whose husband Chusa was Herod's administrator; Susanna, and many other women. They provided financial support for Jesus and his disciples.

COMMENTS

Jesus is definitely being counter-cultural when he allows married women to travel with him, a single man. This just wasn't done in Jewish society. But it seems their husbands approved since the women provided financial support for Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why wasn't Jesus afraid to be counter-cultural? Wouldn't he be criticized by pious people who would be good potential disciples?
2. Why don't the Gospels record people criticizing Jesus for this practice? Certainly, this should be something the Pharisees could legitimately criticize him for doing.
3. Mary Magdalene is mentioned here in the Gospel for the first time. What role will she play in Jesus' ministry. Why doesn't Luke mention Mary in the Book of Acts?
4. List the names of all the women Luke mentioned in this Gospel. Does Luke mention women more than the other three Gospels? Why?

PERICOPE 25

Jesus Warns: Be Careful How You Listen – The Parable of Receptive Dirt

^{8:4}When a large crowd had gathered and people had come to Jesus from every city, he used this story as an illustration:

⁵A farmer went to plant his seeds. Some seeds were planted along the road, were trampled, and were devoured by birds. ⁶Others were planted on rocky soil. When the plants came up, they withered because they had no moisture. ⁷Others were planted among thornbushes. The thornbushes grew up with them and choked them.

⁸Others were planted on good ground. When they came up, they produced a hundred times as much as was planted.

A tenfold yield was normal in Israel.

After he had said this, he called out: Let the person who has ears listen.

This parable of Jesus, which he considered his most important parable, describes the responsibility of the hearer of God's Word. The hearer must participate with God to gain a knowledge of God's revelation. They must be receptive dirt.

Jesus' Disciples Ask Him to Explain the Parable

⁹His disciples asked him what this story meant. ¹⁰Jesus answered: Knowledge *ginosko* about the mysteries *mysterion* of God's Kingdom *basileia* has been given directly to you. But it is given to others in stories *parabole*. When they look, they don't see, and when they hear, they don't understand.

The Kingdom of God is mentioned by Luke 3ix, by Matthew 5x, by Mark 15x, and John 2x. The Kingdom of Heaven is mentioned by Matthew 3ix. Entering the Kingdom of God is the same thing as receiving Eternal Life. It is having a personal loving relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

People cannot understand Jesus' parables unless they have faith in God and *believe that he exists and he rewards those who seek him*. **Hebrews 11:6**. God told this to Isaiah when he first called him to be his prophet. **Isaiah 6:9-10**

Why does Jesus speak in parables? He does this so the hearer will work to understand the story and thus participate with God in understanding the spiritual principle or principles. Even if they don't understand the meaning, they still remember the parable and it can work on their heart.

¹¹This is what the story *parabole* illustrates: The seed is God's Word. ¹²Some people are like seeds that were planted along the road. They hear the Word but then the Devil comes. He takes the Word away from them so that they don't believe *pisteuo* and become saved *sozo*.

¹³Some people are like seeds on rocky soil. They welcome the Word with joy whenever they hear it but they don't develop any roots *rhiza*. They believe *pisteuo* for a while but when *kairos*—significant time their faith *pistis* is tested, *peirasmos*—temptation they abandon it *aphistemi*—fall away.

¹⁴The seeds that were planted among thornbushes are people who hear the Word but as life goes on, the worries, riches, and pleasures of life choke them. So they don't produce anything good *telesphoreo*—to maturity or perfection IX.

¹⁵The seeds that were planted on good *kalos* ground *ge* are people who also hear *akouo* the Word *logos*. But they keep it *katecho* in their good *agathos* and honest *kalos* hearts and produce what is good *karpophoreo*—bear fruit 8x despite what life may bring *hypomone*—patient endurance.

The Parable of the Lamp

^{8:16}No one lights a lamp and hides it under a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, everyone who lights a lamp puts it on a lamp stand so that those who come in will see the light. ¹⁷There is nothing *ou* hidden *kryptos* that will not be revealed *phaneros*. There is nothing kept secret *apokryphos* 3x that will not come to light *phaneros*.

¹⁸So pay attention *blepo* to how you listen *akouo*. Those who understand these mysteries will be given more knowledge. However, some people don't understand these mysteries. Even what they think they understand will be taken away from them.

The person who does not use the revelation from God he has been given loses everything he may have already obtained. It is analogous to the lesson of the Parable of the Talents.

COMMENTS

This is the first parable in this Gospel. Luke has more parables than any other Gospel.

The Gospel of Luke contains both the largest total number of parables (24) and 18 unique parables; the Gospel of Matthew contains 23 parables of which 11 are unique; and the Gospel of Mark contains eight parables of which two are unique. **Wikipedia**

Parables seem to be Jesus' most common way of teaching crowds. He was a master at it. Yet, most people don't like parables because they often have to work to understand it. Many parables can't be understood immediately on their first hearing. And, without a belief that God is good and loving, most parables can't be understood.

The reason the Parable of the Sower, also called the Parable of the Soils, is Jesus' most important parable is that it is basic to understanding God's Word. The writer To the Hebrews says:

[God's Word is living and active. It is sharper than any two-edged sword and cuts as deep as the place where soul and spirit meet, the place where joints and marrow meet. God's Word judges a person's thoughts and intentions. No creature can hide from God. Everything is uncovered and exposed for him to see. We must answer to him. **Hebrews 4:12-13**]

With all revelation from God in the Bible, there is an unusual quality. We can read a Bible passage and then do some other things. But later the words of that passage echo in our minds and bring new thoughts we hadn't had before. No other word does exactly this. So how we listen to the Bible is very important.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20

1. What is the job of Jesus' disciples when they preach?
2. How can we ensure we listen to God's Word effectively?
3. If Jesus gave the disciples the mysteries of God's Kingdom directly, why do they ask Jesus to explain the parable?

4. The concept that nothing is hidden is a Jewish concept. The teaching in the Towrah is available to everyone, even children who can understand. Parents are urged to teach their children the Towrah from a very early age.

Listen Israel: The Lord is our God. The Lord is the only God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words that I give you today. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or get up. Write them down, and tie them around your wrist, and wear them as headbands as a reminder. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

Some say children started Towrah school at age five. By age 12, as a child was preparing for their Bar Mitzvah, they were expected to be able to read Hebrew, the language the Towrah scrolls were written in. Everyday language in Jesus' day was Aramaic, a language they learned in Babylon during the 70 years of exile from 605-535 BC. Commercial language was Greek and the legal language of the Roman Empire was Latin.

Why is it important that there are no secret teachings of Jesus?

5. Disciples of Jesus should share the teachings of Jesus with everyone. Why is it wrong that some early Christians said that people could not say the Lord's Prayer until they were baptized?

6. Why is it wrong that some churches will not allow people to participate in Holy Communion until they are baptized?

7. Who did Jesus exclude from his company?

PERICOPE 26

Jesus' Genuine Family

^{8:19} His mother and his brothers came to see him. But they couldn't meet with him because of the crowd. ²⁰ Someone told Jesus: Your mother and your brothers are standing outside. They want to see you.

²¹ He answered them: My mother and my brothers are those who hear and do what God's Word says.

COMMENTS

Jesus was very firm on this. His genuine family was not his biological family, unless they did what God said. Obedience to the *One Who Sent Him* was primary with Jesus. No one and nothing took precedence.

Later, Jesus would say:

[While Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd shouted: How blessed is the mother who gave birth to you and the breasts that nursed you. Jesus replied: Rather how blessed are those who hear and obey God's Word. **Luke 11:27-28**]

[If people come to me and are not ready to abandon their fathers, mothers, wives, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as their own lives, they cannot be my disciples. **Luke 14:26**]

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 12:34-50; Mark 3:31-35

1. How did Jesus in his human nature know what God wanted him to do?
2. Why was Jesus' struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane so difficult? **Luke 22:39-44**
3. In the Gospel of John, the writer says that even Jesus' brothers didn't believe in him. **John 7:5**. This is difficult to understand because later, James, Jesus' half-brother, administered the Jerusalem church. **Acts 15:13-19**. How can a family sometimes be a greater obstacle than outsiders?

PERICOPE 27

Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea of Galilee

^{8:22} One day Jesus and his disciples got into a boat. He said to them: Let's cross to the other side ^{east} of the lake. So they started out. ²³ As they were sailing along, Jesus fell asleep.

A violent storm came across the lake. The boat was taking on water and they were in danger. ²⁴ They went to him, woke him up and said: Master. Master. We're going to die.

Then he got up and ordered the wind and the waves to stop. The wind stopped, and the sea became calm. ²⁵ He asked them: Where is your faith?

Frightened *phobeo* and amazed *thaumazo*-wonder, they asked each other: Who is this man? He gives orders *epitasso*-commands ^{10x} to the wind and the water and they obey *hypakouo* him.

COMMENTS

While Jesus and his disciples are sailing, Jesus goes to sleep. A storm suddenly arises and the disciples are terrified even though some are experienced fishermen on this lake. They wake Jesus in fright and he orders or commands the wind to stop. The disciples are amazed at this power. Who is this man who can do this?

Jesus and the disciples were sailing from the Jewish western side of the Sea of Galilee to the eastern Gentile side. During their sail, a storm suddenly arose as it often did on this lake. The lake is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide. Although it is a small lake, it is the lowest fresh-water lake on earth and the second lowest lake in the world behind the Dead Sea. Early Jews in the Bible called the lake the Sea of Kinnerot because it is shaped like a harp *kinnor*. In Jesus' day it was called the Sea of Tiberias after the Roman Emperor. Luke calls it the Lake of Gennesaret in **Luke 5:1**.

Storms result from differences in temperatures between the seacoast and the mountains beyond. The Sea of Galilee lies 680 feet below sea level. It is bounded by hills especially on the east side where they reach 2000 feet high. These heights are a source of cool, dry air. In contrast, directly around the sea, the climate is semi-tropical with warm, moist air. The large

difference in height between surrounding land and the sea causes large temperature and pressure changes. This results in strong winds dropping to the sea, funneling through the hills.

The Sea of Galilee is small and these winds may descend directly to the center of the lake with violent results. When the contrasting air masses meet, a storm can arise quickly and without warning. Small boats caught out on the sea are in immediate danger. The Sea of Galilee is relatively shallow, just 200 feet at its greatest depth. A shallow lake is whipped up by wind more rapidly than deep water where energy is more readily absorbed.

What is important here is that this is the first time in the Gospels the disciples' lives are in danger. They have seen Jesus exorcise demons, heal diseases, and raise the dead back to life. But now, they see Jesus command the wind just like he commanded a fever and a demon. He seems to be able to command anyone and anything with just a word.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41

1. The disciples do show some faith by waking Jesus. They are confident he can do something to save them. Why does Jesus then criticize them?
2. Do the disciples actually think that God would allow his Son to die in a storm?
3. What do the disciples conclude the genuine identity of Jesus is after this incident?
4. Why in the Gospel of John is Jesus called *the Word of God*. **John 1:1**

PERICOPE 28

Jesus Appoints the First Gentile Missionary

^{8:26}They landed in the region of the Gerasenes west across from Galilee in Gentile Territory. ²⁷When Jesus stepped out on the shore, a certain man from the city met him. The man was possessed by demons and had not worn clothes for a long time. He would not stay in a house but lived in the tombs.

²⁸When he saw Jesus, he shouted, fell in front of him and said in a loud voice: Why are you bothering me Jesus *iesous* Son of the Most High God? I beg you not to torture me. ²⁹Jesus ordered the evil spirit to come out of the man.

The evil spirit had controlled the man for a long time. People had kept him under guard. He was chained hand and foot. But he would break the chains. Then the demon would force him to go into the desert.

³⁰Jesus asked him: What is your name? He answered: Legion [Six Thousand].

A Roman legion contained 6,000 soldiers.

Many demons had entered him. ³¹The demons begged Jesus not to order them to go into the bottomless pit *abyssos*^{9x}.

[Then the King will say to those on his left: Get away from me. God has cursed you. Go into everlasting fire that was prepared for the Devil and his angels. **Matthew 25:41**]

The Book of Revelation mentions the bottomless pit ^{7x} as the fiery lake of burning sulfur, the final location for the Devil and his angels.

³²A large herd of pigs was feeding on a mountainside. The demons begged Jesus to let them enter those pigs. So he let them do this. ³³The demons came out of the man and went into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and drowned.

³⁴When those who had taken care of the pigs saw what had happened, they ran away. They reported everything in the city and countryside. ³⁵The people went to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out.

Dressed and in his right mind, he was sitting at Jesus' feet. The people were frightened. ³⁶Those who had seen this told the people how Jesus had restored the demon-possessed man to health. ³⁷Then all the people from the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave because they were terrified.

Jesus got into a boat and started back. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone out begged him: Let me go with you. But Jesus sent the man away and told him: ³⁹Go home to your family and tell them how much God has done for you. So the man left. He went through the whole city and told people how much Jesus had done for him.

COMMENTS

Mark tells this story in 39 verses. Luke uses 13 verses. Matthew uses only 6 verses. This is important to Mark and Luke because it is really the story of the first Gentile missionary. It is Jesus' first journey outside the land of Israel into the territory of the Gentiles, known as the Decapolis, where ten cities were ruled directly from Rome.

Here Jesus meets a man possessed by 6,000 demons who are destroying his life by living among the tombs, threatening people. He meets Jesus as he arrives shouting: *I know who you are. You are Jesus, the Son of the Most High God. I beg you not to torture me.*

[You believe there is one God. That's fine. The demons also believe that and they tremble with fear. **James 2:19**]

The demons completely possess the man so they speak for him. And they know that at the Last Day, God will separate himself completely from them by throwing them into the bottomless pit. To avoid this disaster, they beg Jesus to put them into the pigs feeding nearby. Jesus gives his permission so they inhabit the pigs who run off the cliff into the Sea of Galilee and are drowned.

The men herding the pigs are terrified and run into the city to bring the owners of the pigs out. The men come out and find the former possessed man fully clothed and in his right mind. But they are terrified and perhaps very angry at the loss of their pigs and demand Jesus leave.

Jesus gets into the boat and the man begs Jesus to go with him. But Jesus tells the man to go home and tell them how much God has done for him. The man does just that.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20

1. What did Jesus' disciples learn from this incident?
2. Many people feel sorry for the pigs. But God values humans more than animals even though these Gentiles do not. Why is that?
3. How does this story emphasize the great power of Jesus over evil?
4. What emotions did Jesus' disciples have after this event?
5. How can you relate this story to the Parable of the Sower? **Luke 8:4-8**
6. What does this incident tell us about God's earthly mission for Jesus?
7. Why do the demons want to go into the pigs rather than into the bottomless pit? When the pigs drown, where do the demons go?

PERICOPE 29

Jesus Heals a Woman with Chronic Bleeding

^{8:40} When Jesus came back from across the Sea of Galilee, a crowd welcomed him. Everyone was expecting him.

⁴¹ A man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, arrived and quickly bowed down in front of Jesus. He begged Jesus to come to his home. ⁴² His only daughter who was about twelve years old was dying. As Jesus went the people were crowding around him.

⁴³ A woman who had been suffering from chronic bleeding for twelve years was in the crowd. No one could cure her. ⁴⁴ She came up behind Jesus, touched the edge of his clothes and her bleeding stopped at once.

⁴⁵ Jesus asked: Who touched me? After everyone denied touching him, Peter said: Teacher the people are crowding you and pressing against you. ⁴⁶ Jesus said: Someone touched me. I know power *dynamis* has gone out of me.

⁴⁷ The woman saw that she couldn't hide. Trembling, she quickly bowed in front of him. There in front of all the people she told why she touched him and how she was cured at once. ⁴⁸ Jesus told her: Daughter your faith has made you well. Go in peace.

COMMENTS

A woman who had a bleeding condition for the past 12 years pushed her way through the crowd and touched Jesus. Instantly, she was healed. But Jesus instantly felt power had gone from him so he said: Who touched me? The woman then came forward and confessed that she was healed when she touched Jesus. Jesus told her that her faith had made her whole and allowed her to leave in peace.

Because the woman had a bleeding condition, she was ritually unclean for the past 12 years. Anyone who she touched would also be ritually unclean and had to go through a purification ceremony to live in Jewish society. So in many ways, this woman was completely isolated from other people. She was desperate, so she went to Jesus and was healed immediately.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34

1. This is the third time touching is involved in a miracle. Jesus touched a leper. **Luke 5:13**. Jesus touched the dead man's coffin. **Luke 7:14**. Now a woman touches Jesus. Later in the Gospel, Jesus will touch the ear of the High Priest's servant and he is healed. **Luke 22:51**. Jesus has already healed with a word. **Luke 7:1-10**. Why is physical touching involved in these miracles? This seems unnecessary.
2. What lesson does Luke want his readers to learn from this story?
3. Luke has sandwiched this story into another pericope about Jairus' daughter. What is Jairus thinking while this interruption by the woman with bleeding is occurring?
4. What is the power that went out of Jesus? We would like to know the dynamics of this. All we know is that Jesus was able to heal because of the power of the Holy Spirit working in him. Later, Jesus will tell his disciples:

I can guarantee this truth: Those who believe in me will do the things that I am doing. They will do even greater things because I am going to the Father. **John 14:12**

PERICOPE 30

Jesus Brings a Little Girl Back to Life

[^{8:41} A man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, arrived and quickly bowed down in front of Jesus. He begged Jesus to come to his home ⁴² His only daughter who was about twelve years old was dying.]

⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking to her the woman with a bleeding condition someone came from the synagogue leader's home. He said: Your daughter is dead. Don't bother the teacher anymore. ⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, he told the synagogue leader: Don't be afraid. Just believe and she will get well.

⁵¹ Jesus went into the house. He allowed no one to go with him except Peter, John, James, and the child's parents. ⁵² Everyone was crying and showing how sad they were. Jesus said: Don't cry. She's not dead. She's just sleeping. ⁵³ They laughed at him because they knew she was dead.

⁵⁴ But Jesus took her hand and called out: Child, get up. ⁵⁵ She came back to life and got up at once. He ordered her parents to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ They were amazed. Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

COMMENTS

Jairus is a synagogue leader in Capernaum. He is not necessarily a priest or a Levi. Each synagogue elected their own leader whom they called President. His daughter was dying so he came to Jesus for help. Jesus agreed to go with him. On the way, a woman with a bleeding condition interrupted Jesus' journey. Jesus dealt with the woman while Jairus waited anxiously.

Right then someone came from Jairus house and crudely said: *Don't bother the Teacher anymore. Your daughter has died.* But Jesus said quickly: *Don't be afraid Jairus. Just believe and she will live again.* When Jesus entered the house many people were there crying and mourning the loss of the little girl. Jesus said: *Don't cry. She's only sleeping.* But they laughed at him.

Jesus allowed only his three disciples and the little girl's mother and father to enter the little girl's room. He said: *Little girl, arise.* She came back to life immediately. So Jesus ordered her

parents to give her something to eat. Her parents were amazed. Then Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone Jesus had done this.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 9:18-19; 23-26 Mark 5:21-24; 35-43

1. What is Luke's purpose in sandwiching these two pericopes?
2. Luke desires for his readers to realize Jairus is a synagogue leader. Why is this?
3. This is the second time Jesus has raised someone from death to life. Later, God will raise Jesus from death to life. What is it we are to learn from these three stories?
4. Why does Jesus only allow his three disciples, Jairus and his wife to view him raise the little girl to life?
5. Why does Jesus command the little girl be given something to eat immediately after he has brought her back to life?
6. Why does Jesus command the disciples and the parents not to tell anyone what had happened? Is this even possible?

PERICOPE 31

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Apostles to Minister in Galilee

⁹¹ Jesus called the Twelve Apostles together and gave them power *dynamis* and authority *exousia* over every demon *daimonion* and power and authority to cure *therapeuo* diseases *nosos*. ² He sent them to spread *kerysso*—preach the message about God’s Kingdom and to cure the sick.

³ He told them: Don’t take anything along on the trip. Don’t take a walking stick, traveling bag, any food, money, or a change of clothes. ⁴ When you go into a home, stay there until you’re ready to leave. ⁵ If people don’t welcome you, leave that city and shake its dust off your feet as a warning to them.

⁶ The apostles went from village to village, told the Good News, and cured the sick everywhere.

COMMENTS

Jesus now determines it is time for his Twelve Apostles to minister on their own. They are to preach, heal, and exorcise evil spirits. They are also to depend exclusively on hospitality for their support. They are not to take food, money or extra clothes. They are to be completely dependent for their support on the people they meet. And they are not to advance themselves. Once they stay in a home in the village, they are to stay there and not to move to a better equipped or more hospitable home. If people are hostile, they are not to argue but simply to leave.

The apostles did this. Jesus has now given them the Holy Spirit temporarily.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 10:5-42; Mark 6:7-13

1. Why does Jesus want his Apostles to depend exclusively on hospitality rather than on their own resources?
2. Why does Jesus want his Apostles to stay in the same house in the village until they leave?
3. Why does Jesus not want his Apostles to stay in a village where they are not wanted but simply leave?

PERICOPE 32

King Herod Antipas of Galilee Wants to Meet Jesus

⁷Herod the ruler heard about everything that was happening. He didn't know what to make of it. Some people were saying that John the Baptist had come back to life. ⁸Others said that Elijah had appeared, and still others said that one of the prophets from long ago had come back to life.

⁹Herod said: I had John's head cut off. Who is this person I'm hearing so much about? So Herod wanted to see Jesus.

COMMENTS

King Herod Antipas was Rome's appointed ruler of Galilee and Perea. He was the son of Herod the Great who had attempted to kill Jesus when he was born. Herod was not a Jew. In fact, he was an Idumean, the former kingdom of Edom whose people were hated by the Jews.

Remember that Herod had killed John the Baptist because Herod's second wife hated John for saying her marriage to Herod was unlawful. With Jesus' disciples now going about ministering throughout his Kingdom, Herod wanted to see Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29

1. Herod was very superstitious. Did he want to see Jesus only to see him perform a miracle?
2. Does Herod ever see Jesus? When?

PERICOPE 33

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand Men with Five Loaves and Two Fish

^{9:10}The Apostles came back and told Jesus everything they had done. He took them with him to a city called Bethsaida so that they could be alone *kata*.

¹¹But the crowds found out about this and followed him. He welcomed them, talked to them about God's Kingdom and cured those who were sick.

¹²Toward the end of the day, the Twelve Apostles came to him. They said to him: Send the crowd to the closest villages and farms so that they can find some food and a place to stay. No one lives around here. ¹³Jesus replied: You give them something to eat.

They said to him: We have five loaves of bread and two fish. Unless we go to buy food for all these people, that's all we have. ¹⁴There were about five thousand men.

Then he told his disciples: Have them sit in groups of about fifty. ¹⁵So they did this. ¹⁶Then he took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to Heaven and blessed *eulogeo* the food. He broke *kataklaio* ^{2x} the loaves apart and kept giving *didomi* them to the disciples to give to the crowd. ¹⁷All of them ate as much as they wanted. When they picked up the leftover pieces, they filled twelve baskets.

COMMENTS

After the Twelve apostles had ministered on their own, Jesus took them to a deserted place to rest. But people found out about this and five thousand men gathered. Jesus talked to them all day and healed many sick people.

Toward the end of the day, the Apostles counseled Jesus. They said: *Send the men away to the closest villages so they can buy food to eat.* But Jesus said: *You give them something to eat.* The Apostles said: *All we have are a five loaves of bread and two fish. Unless we go away to buy food, that is all we have.*

Jesus told them to seat the 5,000 men in groups. Jesus took the bread and the two fish. Looking up to Heaven, he blessed the food and broke it and gave it to the disciples to give to the men. All ate all they wanted. Then the Apostles picked up the leftovers in twelve baskets.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; John 6:1-14**

1. Luke considerably shortens this story. He only uses seven verses. Read the other versions. What does Luke leave out?
2. Luke agrees with Mark saying there were 5,000 men. Matthew includes women and children. John also says there were only men present. What is significant about 5,000 men gathering to hear Jesus preach?
3. Why does Jesus want people to sit in groups of fifty?
4. What is the significance of the twelve baskets of leftover pieces?
5. Read the account of this incident in John. What fact does he include that all three synoptic Gospels leave out?

Part Three – Jesus’ Long Walk to Jerusalem

Pericopes 34-76

Jesus has now finished his exclusively Galilean ministry. After Peter has identified Jesus as the Messiah, Jesus will teach his disciples what his true identity is. He is a Suffering Messiah, and to be his disciples, they, too, must suffer. The walk from Capernaum to Jerusalem is only seventy miles, a four to five day walk, but Jesus takes six months because he is teaching his disciples about the mission God has given him.

On the way, Jesus will teach many parables for that is the way Jesus wants his disciples to teach the people they will minister to. They must also learn to tell parables and to understand the spiritual truth each parable teaches.

Jesus does much of his teaching on discipleship here. His disciples must be prepared to go into the world and spread his message to both Jews and Gentiles. Israel is not a very large place. Jesus would be very easy to find. But, King Herod Antipas leaves Jesus alone for Jesus does not attack Herod as John the Baptist did. Why not?

Jesus is attacked by the Pharisees and scribes. They try every way they can to discredit him. Why are they doing this? It is not only that he cavalierly breaks their oral laws, particularly those regarding the Sabbath, but he criticizes them for keeping the outward conditions of the Law, while disregarding the internal motivations God desires of mercy and justice for all persons.

PERICOPE 34

Peter Declares that Jesus is the Long Awaited Messiah

^{9:18} Once when Jesus was praying *proseuchomai* privately *katamonas*—alone ^{2x} and his disciples were with him, he asked them: Who do people say I *me* am *einai*?
¹⁹ They answered: Some say you are John the Baptizer, others Elijah, and still others say that one of the prophets *prophetes* from long ago *archaios* has come back to life *anistemi*. ²⁰ He asked them: But who do you *hymeis* say I *me* am *einai*?

Peter answered: You are the Messiah *christos* whom God *theos* has sent.

²¹ He ordered them not to tell this to anyone.

Jesus Declares for the First Time He Will Be a Suffering Messiah

^{9:22} Jesus said that the Son of Man would have to suffer *pascho* a lot. He would be rejected *apodokimazo* ^{9x} by the leaders, the chief priests, and the experts in Moses' Teachings. He would be killed *apokteino* but on the third day he would come back to life *egeiro*—raised.

COMMENTS

This is an important moment. Jesus knows this so he prays to God to lead him how to begin to teach his disciples about his genuine identity as the *Suffering Servant of YHWH* **Isaiah 52:13-53:12**, and what God's mission is for them as Jesus' followers.

First, Jesus begins by asking the disciples: *What do people say about me?* They answer that most think Jesus is a Hebrew prophet like Elijah and Elisha, since he performs miracles like they did. But then, Jesus asks the important question. *But who do you, my disciples I have chosen, say I am?*

Peter speaks up as he is used to doing: *You are the Messiah of God.* Jesus then says: *Do not tell anyone this.* Then Jesus goes on to tell them his mission for God: He would have to suffer greatly and be rejected by the Sanhedrin – the chief priests, elders and scribes. He would be killed, but God would enable him to rise on the third day.

Luke does not tell us Jesus' disciples' reaction to this.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 16:13-23; Mark 8:27-33

1. Luke places this event right after Jesus feeds the 5,000 men. What significant event does John reveal that happened in this story that Luke does not? What is the reason Luke has placed these pericopes in this order?
2. Since Jesus stilled the storm in **PERICOPE 27**, the disciples have been wondering: Who is this man? What have they concluded? Would they be honest in saying Jesus is only a prophet?
3. Peter says Jesus is *the Christ or Anointed One* Messiah of God. What does he mean? How would he describe Jesus further? Does Peter think Jesus is the Messiah in the typical Jewish sense or something more?
4. Jesus uses the title Son of Man for himself. He will use it 28x in this Gospel. What does Jesus want people to know about himself by using this title?
5. Read the other Gospels to see the reaction of the disciples to Jesus telling them he will be rejected, killed but raised on the third day, which Luke doesn't include. Summarize their reaction, especially the reaction of Peter in **Mark 8:12-13**.
6. How does the feeding of the 5,000 in **PERICOPE 33** help the disciples understand who Jesus is? If King Herod had been there, what would he have concluded?
7. Why is it important that Jesus' disciples know his true identity? When do they come to know his true identity?

EXTRA CREDIT

In **Daniel 7:13-14**, the Son of Man is to have a glorious reign and an eternal Kingdom. But Jesus talks about the Son of Man suffering. This isn't disclosed in prophetic Scripture. Is this the reason the disciples have so much trouble accepting that Jesus will suffer, be killed, and then rise again? But then there is the suffering mentioned in **Isaiah 53**. But is Isaiah's *Servant of YHWH* the same as the *Son of Man*?

PERICOPE 35

Jesus Describes His Requirements for Discipleship

^{9:23} He said to all of them: Those who want to come *erchomai* with *opiso*—after me must say no to the things they want *aparneomai*—deny *heautou*—themselves, pick up their crosses *stauros* every day, and follow *akouloutheo* me.

This is the first time Luke mentions the word *cross*.

²⁴ Those who want to save *sozo* their lives will lose *apollymi* them. But those who lose *apollymi* their lives for me will save *sozo* them.

This sentence appears in all four Gospels. It is parallel to Jesus' later saying: *But he who endures to the end will be saved. Luke 21:19*

²⁵ What good does it do for people to win the whole world but lose their lives by destroying them?

²⁶ If people are ashamed of me and what I say, the Son of Man will be ashamed of those people when he comes in the glory that he shares with the Father and the holy angels.

This is the first time Jesus mentions his Second Coming to earth.

COMMENTS

Jesus has formerly told his disciples how to minister to people, to depend on hospitality and not to argue with anyone. Now he tells them three things they must keep in mind every day: to deny what they want to do and to do what they learn the Holy Spirit tells them through prayer, to be willing to do what God wishes even if it is difficult or risky, and to follow Jesus and be like him in everything they do.

Jesus emphasizes that his disciples must be willing to give up their lives if necessary. *Those who want to save their lives will lose them. But those who lose their lives for me will save them.* This is repeated in all four Gospels. **Matthew 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; John 12:25**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 16:24-28; Mark 8:34-9:1

1. In Luke, Jesus only states his requirements for discipleship to the Apostles. Matthew agrees. But Mark includes the crowd. Why is this? In Mark then non-disciples are told of Jesus' Second Coming.
2. This is the first time Jesus' disciples are aware that they like Jesus might die for being Jesus' disciple. Why are we not told of their reaction by Luke?
3. When Jesus says his disciples must take up their cross daily, he is saying his disciples must bear daily burdens non-disciples would not have to bear. Explain what some of these burdens are.
4. What does it then mean to follow Jesus? It is not just learning from a Master, but it is having one's entire life shaped by and patterned after a Suffering Messiah. Are Jesus' Twelve willing to do this? How will this change their lives?
5. How does what Jesus says here about a Suffering Messiah conflict with traditional Jewish views of the anticipated Messiah? Do Jesus' disciples ever give up these views? See **Luke 22:24-27**.

PERICOPE 36

Jesus Is Transfigured

^{9:27} I can guarantee this truth: Some people who are standing here will not die until they see God's Kingdom.

Moses and Elijah Appear with Jesus

²⁸ About eight days after he had said this, Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up a mountain to pray *proseuchomai*.

²⁹ While Jesus was praying, the appearance of his face changed and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly, both Moses and Elijah were talking with him. ³¹ They appeared in Heavenly glory *doxa* and were discussing Jesus' approaching death *exodos*_{3x} and what he was about to fulfill *pleroo*—accomplish in Jerusalem.

³² Peter and the men with him were sleeping soundly. When they woke up *diagregoreo* IX, they saw Jesus' glory *doxa* and the two men standing with him. ³³ As Moses and Elijah were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus: Teacher *epistates*—master 6x it's good that we're here. Let's put up three tents — one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Peter didn't know what he was saying.

Jesus is called *epistates* 6x in Luke, the only Biblical writer who uses this Greek word.

³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud overshadowed them. They were frightened *phobeo* as they went into the cloud.

The Voice of God Speaks

^{9:35} A voice came out of the cloud and said: This is my Son whom I have chosen. Listen to him.

³⁶ After the voice had spoken, they saw that Jesus was alone. The disciples said nothing and for some time they told no one about what they had seen.

COMMENTS

God himself only speaks twice in this Gospel. Remember that Jesus has just told his disciples that he will go to Jerusalem, be rejected, then killed, but then be raised to life again. Now Jesus gives three of the disciples, Peter, James, and John, an opportunity to see him in his Heavenly glory.

Certainly, the disciples are frightened when they see Jesus in shining clothes like an angel and the appearance of his face changed. Two figures are with him – Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, the two parts of the Scriptures. They were talking to Jesus about his departure from Jerusalem into Heaven.

Then a cloud overshadowed them and God himself spoke to them: *This is my Son whom I have chosen. Listen to him.* Then Jesus was alone with them. No one said a word and the three disciples did not tell the others what they had seen.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-13

1. Why did Jesus pick these three disciples to see this?
2. How did the disciples know who was talking with Jesus?
3. What did God want Jesus to learn from this occurrence?
4. What did God want the disciples to learn from this event?
5. This was the first time the disciples heard God speak. Why did God speak?
6. What was Peter thinking of accomplishing by setting up three tents?
7. What was the disciples' reaction to seeing the glory of God?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why did Jesus only take these three disciples up the mountain to see this? Why didn't he take all Twelve Apostles? What would they have learned from this?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Did Peter, James, and John act any differently from the other Apostles after?

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Did this event occur because God was strengthening the heart of Jesus for his suffering to come in Jerusalem? Remember that Jesus was living on earth in his human nature. He had all the weaknesses humans have including fear, doubt, and uncertainty. Luke is emphasizing Jesus' humanity here. From now on, Jesus will *set his face like flint toward Jerusalem*. **Luke 9:51**

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Why doesn't the Gospel of John also present this significant event when God speaks from Heaven?

PERICOPE 37

The Disciples Are Unable to Exorcise a Demon

³⁷The next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met Jesus. ³⁸A man in the crowd shouted: Teacher *didaskalos*, I beg you to look at my son. He's my only child. ³⁹Whenever a spirit takes control of him, he shrieks, goes into convulsions, and foams at the mouth. After a struggle, the spirit goes away leaving the child worn out. ⁴⁰I begged your disciples to force the spirit out of him, but they couldn't do it.

⁴¹Jesus answered: You unbelieving *apistos* and corrupt *diastrepho*-perverse ^{7x} generation *genea*. How long must I be *esomai* with you and put up *anecho*-suffer with you?

Jesus' frustration appears to be very intense.

Bring your son here. ⁴²While he was coming to Jesus, the demon knocked the boy to the ground and threw him into convulsions.

Jesus ordered the evil spirit to leave. He cured the boy and gave him back to his father. ⁴³Everyone was amazed *ekplesso* to see God's wonderful power *megaliotes*-mighty power ^{3x}.

COMMENTS

Luke alone says this occurred the next day after the transfiguration. Did the four of them stay up on the mountain all night? When they came down, Jesus' other nine disciples were there with a crowd. A man shouted: *Teacher please look at my son. I asked your disciples to exorcise the evil spirit but they couldn't do it.*

Jesus seemed to explode with frustration condemning a whole generation. But he still commanded the man to bring his son to him. As the man was bringing his son to Jesus, the evil spirit struck the boy with convulsions.

Jesus ordered the evil spirit to leave. Everyone was amazed at God's power working through Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 9:14-29

1. Why couldn't Jesus' disciples exorcise the evil spirit from the boy? They had done it before when Jesus had sent them out. **PERICOPE 31**
2. Who is Jesus addressing his frustration at and why?
3. The crowd was amazed to see Jesus' power. What was the disciples' reaction?

PERICOPE 38

For a Second Time Jesus Predicts His Coming Passion

^{9:43} Everyone was amazed *ekplesso* at all the things that Jesus was doing. So he said to his disciples: ⁴⁴ Listen carefully to what I say. The Son of Man will be betrayed and handed over *paradidomi* to people.

⁴⁵ They didn't know *agnoeo* what he meant. The meaning was hidden *parakalypto* IX from them so that they didn't *me* understand *aisthanomai* IX it. Besides, they were afraid *phobeo* to ask *erotao* him about what he had said.

The Disciples Argue: Who Will Be Greatest in the Kingdom?

^{9:46} A discussion started among them about who would be the greatest. ⁴⁷ Jesus knew what they were thinking.

So he took a little child and had him stand beside him. ⁴⁸ Then he said to them: Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me. Whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. The one who is least *mikros* among all of you is the one who is greatest *meegas*.

The Disciples Try to Stop a Man Using the Name of Jesus

^{9:49} John replied: Master we saw someone forcing demons out of a person by using the power and authority of your name. We tried to stop him because he was not one of us. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him: Don't stop him. Whoever isn't against you is for you.

Jesus Sets His Face Firmly to Go to Jerusalem

^{9:51} The time was coming closer for Jesus to be taken to Heaven *analempsis*-received up IX. So he was determined *sterizo*-steadfastly set *autos*-his *prosopon*-face to go to Jerusalem.

The Disciples Want to Bring God's Fire on Some Samaritans

^{9:52} He sent messengers ahead of him. They went into a Samaritan village to arrange a place for him to stay. ⁵³ But the people didn't welcome him because he was on his way to Jerusalem.

⁵⁴ James and John, his disciples, saw this. They asked: Lord, do you want us to call down fire from Heaven to burn them up? ⁵⁵ But he turned and corrected them. ⁵⁶ So they went to another village.

COMMENTS

Jesus gives a second prediction of his passion or suffering to his disciples. But they didn't understand what he meant. And they were afraid to ask him what he had said. Instead of focusing on Jesus' anticipated suffering in Jerusalem, they were discussing who would be the greatest when Jesus became King and ruled as Messiah.

Jesus heard this and took a little child from the people who were traveling with them and had the child stand beside him. Jesus said: *Whoever welcomes this child welcomes me and whoever welcomes me welcomes the One who sent me. The one who is least among all of you is the greatest.*

Then John told Jesus: *We saw someone using your name to cast out a demon. But we tried to stop him because he was not one of the Twelve.* Jesus criticized John. *Don't stop him. Anyone who isn't against you is for you.*

As they were traveling through Samaria, the land of the half-Jews, they sent messengers to arrange rooms for the night. But the Samaritans refused hospitality because these Jews were going to Jerusalem. Samaritans worshiped in Samaria at Mount Gerizim and refused to worship at the Jerusalem Temple. James and John asked Jesus: *Should we call down fire from Heaven and burn them up?* Jesus said no. So Jesus and the disciples went another way.

How would you describe the behavior of the disciples at this point?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 17:22-18:1-5; Mark 9:30-41

1. Although Jesus has told his disciples twice what will happen to him in Jerusalem, they still don't understand what he means or don't want to accept what he says. Why can they not understand? And why are they afraid to ask him to explain further? How can Peter, James and John not understand after they have experienced the transfiguration of Jesus?

2. Although the disciples don't understand Jesus' passion predictions, they continue to travel with him toward Jerusalem. Why don't they just leave him if they are afraid of him?
3. How brazen it is after Jesus says he will die for the disciples to discuss who will be the greatest? How can they do this? Do you think Jesus' teaching on humility did any good? Now comment on **Luke 22:24-28**.
4. James and John, two of Jesus' three closest disciples want to be elites. And this is after Jesus says: *The least will be greatest and the greatest will be least*. Why don't they understand that Jesus' disciples must have humility?
5. Most Jews hate Samaritans who they regard at best as half-Jews and at worst as Gentiles. Although it is not surprising Samaritans refuse hospitality to Jews traveling through their country to Jerusalem, James and John want to use God's force to punish them. How are these two men going to carry out their discipleship mission for God to minister to the entire world of Gentiles as well as Jews?
6. At this point, Jesus' disciples seem pitiful. Does Jesus think of perhaps getting other men as his disciples?
7. Jesus is determined *sterizo*-steadfastly set *autos*-his *prosopon*-face to go to Jerusalem. **Luke 9:51**. Why is Jesus so determined? Are the Twelve disciples attempting to convince him not to go there? If so, what does Jesus say to them?

PERICOPE 39

Jesus Explains What It Means to Be His Disciple

⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to Jesus: I'll follow you wherever you go. ⁵⁸Jesus told him: Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to sleep.

⁵⁹He told another man: Follow me. But the man said: Sir, first let me go to bury my father. ⁶⁰But Jesus told him: Let the dead bury their own dead. You must go everywhere and tell about God's Kingdom.

⁶¹Another said: I'll follow you sir, but first let me tell my family goodbye. ⁶²Jesus said to him: Whoever starts to plow and looks back is not fit for God's Kingdom.

Jesus Sends 70 Other Disciples to Minister to Israel

^{10:1}After this, the Lord appointed 70 other disciples to go ahead of him to every city and place that he intended to go. They were to travel in pairs. ²He told them: The harvest is large but the workers are few. So ask the Lord who gives this harvest to send workers to harvest his crops.

³Go. I'm sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Don't carry a wallet, a traveling bag, or sandals and don't stop to greet anyone on the way.

⁵Whenever you go into a house, greet the family right away with the words: May there be peace in this house. ⁶If a peaceful person lives there, your greeting will be accepted. But if that's not the case, your greeting will be rejected.

⁷Stay with the family that accepts you. Eat and drink whatever they offer you. After all, the worker deserves his pay. Do not move around from one house to another. ⁸Whenever you go into a city and the people welcome you, eat whatever they serve you. ⁹Heal *therapeuo* the sick *asthenes* that are there and tell *lego* the people: God's Kingdom is near you.

¹⁰ But whenever you go into a city and people don't welcome you, leave. Announce in its streets: ¹¹ We are wiping your city's dust from our feet in protest against you. But realize that God's Kingdom is near you. ¹² I can guarantee that Judgment Day will be easier for Sodom than for that city.

Jesus Lashes Out Against the Unbelief in Cities on the Sea of Galilee

¹³ "How horrible it will be for you, Chorazin. How horrible it will be for you, Bethsaida. If the miracles worked in your cities had been worked in Tyre and Sidon, they would have changed the way they thought and acted. Long ago they would have worn sackcloth and sat in ashes.

¹⁴ Judgment Day will be better for Tyre and Sidon than for you. ¹⁵ And you Capernaum, will you be lifted to Heaven? No, you will go to Hell *hades*—infernal regions in the depths of the earth.

^{10:16} The person who hears you hears me, and the person who rejects you rejects me. The person who rejects me rejects the one who sent me.

COMMENTS

As Jesus and his disciples traveled to Jerusalem, crowds of people went with them. Why did these crowds accompany them? Did they anticipate Jesus was going to set up his Messianic throne in Jerusalem after he drove out the Romans from God's Holy Land? We now have people attempting to join Jesus and be his disciple. But perhaps they haven't been told the part about his anticipated suffering.

Jesus plays straight with these potential disciples. He tells them they will have no permanent place to sleep, and they will have to give up all family obligations – sacred work in Jewish society.

Then Jesus appointed 70 men to go ahead of him and prepare places for his disciples and him to sleep. They also are given power and authority to heal and to preach the Gospel. He told them he saw a great harvest coming but few disciples to bring in the flock. He warned them there would be many who would persecute them, but many who would welcome them. So they must depend on hospitality and not take extra provisions.

Accept hospitality and stay in the house that accepts you. Eat whatever they offer and do not demand more. If people don't accept you, don't argue with them, but just leave. Yet, you can inform them the Judgement Day is coming for all people.

This mention of Judgment Day causes Jesus to curse cities where he had ministered and where some people had not accepted him. We are surprised at the mention of Capernaum. This is where Peter's house was that Jesus used as his headquarters. Apparently, there was more opposition to Jesus in Capernaum than the Gospel writers mention.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 8:19-22

1. Look at the instructions Jesus gave to his first 12 disciples. **PERICOPE 31**. Are there any differences between the instructions he give sto them and the instructions he gives to the 70 disciples?
2. What is the Biblical precedent for choosing 70?
3. Why does Jesus tell his disciples not to argue with people but if they reject them, simply leave?
4. Why does Jesus curse Capernaum?
5. How does what Jesus teaches his disciples stress their need to have humility?
6. Where in the Bible is Judgment Day discussed? Is this the same as the Day of the Lord's Anger? **Zephaniah 2:2-3**
7. Why does Jesus choose 70 disciples? What does this say about how many disciples were traveling with him?

EXTRA CREDIT

How can Jesus curse cities? Does he mean that there was not one righteous person in each of these cities he cursed? Something doesn't sound right.

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

With Jesus appointment of 70 disciples, we now have a ranking of Jesus' disciples. Twelve are apostles and 70 are only disciples. Do they have different missions or do all of them do the same thing? Do all of them accompany Jesus to Jerusalem? It appears that only the Twelve do.

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Why doesn't Luke mention these 70 disciples in his Book of Acts? Are they among the 500 believers Jesus appeared to after his resurrection that Paul mentions? **1 Corinthians 15:6**

PERICOPE 40

Jesus Praises God for the Work of His Disciples

¹⁷The 70 disciples came back very happy. They said: Lord even demons obey us when we use the power and authority of your name. ¹⁸Jesus said to them: I watched Satan fall from Heaven like lightning. ¹⁹I have given you the authority to trample snakes and scorpions and to destroy the enemy's power. Nothing will hurt you. ²⁰However, don't be happy that evil spirits obey you. Be happy that your names are written in Heaven.

Jesus Praises God for Giving His Revelation to These Disciples

^{10:21} In that hour the Holy Spirit filled Jesus with joy *agalliao*-rejoiced.

Luke is repeating a word from Mary's Magnificat. **Luke 1:47**

Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, for hiding these things from wise and intelligent people and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.

²² My Father has turned everything over to me. Only the Father knows *ginosko* who the Son is. And no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son is willing to reveal *apokalypto* him.

²³ He turned to his disciples in private and said to them: How blessed *makarios* you are to see what you've seen. ²⁴I can guarantee that many prophets and Kings wanted to see and hear what you've seen and heard, but they didn't.

COMMENTS

In the midst of his frustration with the lack of understanding on the part of his appointed Twelve Apostles, Jesus finds room for joy and praise to his Father for the work of the 70 new disciples. God has enabled them to be successful, as he has temporarily given them the Holy Spirit to preach the Good News and to heal people. **Luke 10:9**

Although these men are like babes in the woods, God has made them effective missionaries. Jesus may be alluding to his Twelve who are unable to discern his true identity, unless he reveals the Father, as he alone knows who the Father in Heaven is. Then he tells the disciples how

blessed they are to see what they have seen. Many prophets and Kings wanted to see the miraculous things God is doing which you have seen.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 11:25-27

1. Jesus says: *I saw Satan fall from Heaven*. What does Jesus mean? Is he alluding proleptically in advance to what John the prophet says in **Revelation 12:9**?
2. What does Jesus mean when he says: *Your names are written in Heaven*?
3. Jesus warns his disciples not to become proud of the preaching, healing, and exorcism they have done. Instead, what should they be proud of?
4. Why does Jesus call his disciples *little children*, rather than wise and intelligent? Isn't this demeaning to them?
5. How can you tell that Jesus is happy that God is allowing him to accomplish the part of his earthly mission that involves revealing God to humans?
6. How do the Twelve disciples feel that Jesus has now chosen 70 more disciples? Their jealousy was revealed before. **Luke 9:49-50**
7. We don't hear of these 70 disciples again or know any of their names. Why not?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus has directly revealed the Father to three of his disciples at the Transfiguration. They have even heard God speak. Why don't they act differently after this from the other nine?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

What is it specifically these disciples have seen that the Hebrew prophets and Kings didn't see?

PERICOPE 4I

Parable of the Good Samaritan

^{10:25} Then an expert in Moses' Teachings *nomikos*--a scribe ^{9x} stood up to test *ekpeirazo* ^{4x} Jesus. He asked: Teacher, what must I do to inherit *kleronomeo* Eternal *aionios* Life *zoe*? ²⁶ Jesus answered him: What is written *grapho* in Moses' Teachings *nomos*--Law? What do you read there? ²⁷ He answered:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. **Deuteronomy 6:5**

And love your neighbor as you love yourself. **Leviticus 19:18.**

[Never hate another Israelite. Be sure to correct your neighbor so that you will not be guilty of sinning along with him. Never get revenge. Never hold a grudge against any of your people. Instead, love your neighbor as you love yourself. I am the Lord. **Leviticus 19:17-18**]

²⁸ Jesus told him: You're right. Do this and life *zoe* will be yours. ²⁹ But the man wanted to justify *dikaioo* his question. So he asked Jesus: Who is my neighbor?

³⁰ Jesus replied: A man went from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way robbers stripped him, beat him, and left him for dead. ³¹ By chance a priest was traveling along that road. When he saw the man, he went around him and continued on his way. ³² Then a Levite came to that place. When he saw the man, he too went around him and continued on his way.

³³ But a Samaritan as he was traveling along came across the man. When the Samaritan saw him, he felt sorry *splagchnizomai*--compassion for the man, ³⁴ went to him, and cleaned and bandaged his wounds. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

³⁵ The next day the Samaritan took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. He told the innkeeper: Take care of him. If you spend more than that, I'll pay you on my return trip.

³⁶Of these three men, who do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers? ³⁷The expert said: The one who was kind enough to help him.

Jesus told him: Go and imitate his example.

COMMENTS

Notice the motivation of the lawyer when he asked Jesus a question. He was not seeking an answer, he wanted to test him to prove him wrong. Jesus asked him what the law, the *torah*, commanded. He replied with the *shema* and an additional verse summarized as the rabbis usually did. Jesus replied: *Do this and you will please God.*

But the lawyer wanted to show that he was righteous. So he asked Jesus to interpret further: *Who is my neighbor?* Jesus then told a story of a Jew who was in trouble. Two religious persons – a priest and a Levite passed him by. But a Samaritan, a race of people hated by the Jews because they refused to worship in Jerusalem and had intermarried with Gentiles, stopped to help the man. He not only bandaged his wounds, but took him to an inn to recuperate and paid for all his lodging.

When he had ended the story, Jesus asked the lawyer: *Who was the neighbor to the man?* The lawyer couldn't even say the word Samaritan. He answered: *The one who was kind enough to help him.* Jesus said: *Go and do like him.*

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What is Jesus' definition of a neighbor?
2. How does Jesus go beyond the simple words of the *towrah* to a higher standard of human behavior as he did in the Sermon on the Plain? **PERICOPÉ 19**
3. *You shall not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of your people but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.* **Leviticus 19:18**

This has application to only Jews. Jesus expands it to Gentiles like Samaritans. Why?

PERICOPE 42

Mary of Bethany Chooses the Greater Work

^{10:38} As they were traveling along, Jesus went into a village. A woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary.

Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to him talk. ⁴⁰ But Martha was upset about all the work she had to do. So she asked: Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work all by myself? Tell her to help me.

⁴¹ The Lord answered her: Martha, Martha. You worry and fuss about a lot of things. ⁴² There's only one thing you need *chreia*. Mary has made *eklegomai*—chosen the right *agathos*—good choice *meris*—part and that one thing will not be taken away *aphaireo* ^{10x} from her.

COMMENTS

This is an unusual story. We learn about Mary and Martha in the Gospel of John. They lived in Bethany on the Mount of Olives and were good friends of Jesus. Their brother was Lazarus, who Jesus later raised from death to life. **John 11:1-44**

Mary was quiet and sat listening to Jesus talk while Martha scurried around making meals and cleaning the house. Martha criticized Mary for not helping with the work and asked Jesus to upbraid her. But Jesus replied that Mary was learning about Eternal Life. Spiritual things are more important than daily housework. Mary has made the right choice, said Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Was Jesus right to say what he said? Shouldn't we all participate in the work necessary to live?
2. What did Mary gain by listening to Jesus?
3. What did Martha lose by not listening to Jesus?
4. Why is listening to the words of Jesus a primary requirement of discipleship?

PERICOPE 43

Jesus Teaches His Disciples to Pray

¹ Once Jesus was praying *proseuchomai* in a certain place. When he stopped praying one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray *proseuchomai* as John the Baptist taught his disciples. ² Jesus told them: When you pray *proseuchomai*, say this:

Father, let your name be kept holy *hagizao*. Let your Kingdom come. ³ Give us our bread day by day. ⁴ Forgive *aphiemi*—our *hamartia*—sins us as we forgive *aphiemi* everyone else. Don't allow us to be tempted *peirasmos*.

The word *aphiemi* appears 33x in Luke, 47x in Matthew, 37x in Mark, and 15x in John. Jesus teaches that forgiveness is the hallmark of being a Christian.

Jesus Teaches to Be Persistent in Prayer

⁵ Jesus said to his disciples: Suppose one of you has a friend. Suppose you go to him at midnight and say: Friend let me borrow three loaves of bread. ⁶ A friend of mine on a trip has dropped in on me, and I don't have anything to serve him.

⁷ Your friend might answer you from inside his house: Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are in bed. I can't get up to give you anything. ⁸ I can guarantee that although he doesn't want to get up to give you anything, he will get up and give you whatever you need because he is your friend and because you were so bold.

God Wants to Answer the Prayers of His Children

⁹ So I tell you to ask, and you will receive. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰ Everyone who asks will receive. The one who searches will find, and for the person who knocks on the door, it will be opened.

¹¹ If your child asks you his father for a fish, would you give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if your child asks you for an egg, would you give him a

scorpion? ¹³ Even though you're evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. So how much more will your Father in Heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

COMMENTS

John the Baptist had disciples. In fact, we learn from the Gospel of John that John the Baptist initially sent two of his disciples to Jesus. One of these was Andrew. **John 1:40**. We aren't given the name of the other disciple. We don't learn anything about what John taught his disciples, except that he called Jesus *the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world*. **John 1:29**

Jesus taught his disciples a simple prayer we call *The Lord's Prayer*. It is a model prayer for it includes vital elements that should be included in every prayer. It tells us to pray to the Father, who is holy, and to let his will – his Kingdom – come to earth so we may follow his plan for our lives. We acknowledge everything we need to live comes from God. Above all, we must pray to God to help us forgive others as God has already forgiven us. Finally, we ask God's protection from Satan.

Jesus wants his disciples to be confident that God will always answer our prayers and that he wants to give us whatever we need. Luke adds from the disciples' experience at Pentecost that God will give the Holy Spirit to those who seek and ask him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 6:9-13; 7:7-11

1. What does Jesus want us to remember especially when we pray?
2. Can we pray directly to Jesus?
3. What is the difference between being bold in prayer and confident in prayer?
4. Why does Jesus emphasize forgiveness so much?
5. Why does Luke talk here about God being willing to give people the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit won't be poured out on all people until Pentecost –50 days after Easter. **Acts 2:1-4**
6. Hasn't Jesus already given his disciples the Holy Spirit? Is this different from the pouring out of the Spirit on Pentecost? Explain. HINT: Read **John 14:17**.
7. How many times do we see Jesus praying in this Gospel? What does this teach us?

PERICOPE 44

Jesus Is Accused of Working with the Power of Satan

¹⁴ Jesus was forcing *ekballo* a demon *daimonion* out of a man. The demon had made the man unable to talk. When the demon had gone out, the man began to talk. The people were amazed.

¹⁵ But some of them said: He can force *ekballo* demons *daimonion* out of people only with the help of Beelzebul *beelzeboul*^{7x}, the ruler of demons.

The name Beelzebul is another name for Satan and means Lord of Dung or Lord of the Flies or Lord of the House. It was the name of the God of Ekron. **2 Kings 1:2**

¹⁶ Others wanted to test Jesus and demanded that he show them some miraculous sign from Heaven.

¹⁷ Since Jesus knew what they were thinking, he said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself is ruined. A house divided against itself falls. ¹⁸ Now, if Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom last? I say this because you say Beelzebul helps me force demons out of people.

¹⁹ If I force demons out with the help of Beelzebul, who helps your followers force them out? That's why they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if I force out demons with the help of God's power, then God's Kingdom has come to you.

²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own mansion, his property is safe. ²² But a stronger man than he may attack him and defeat him. Then the stronger man will take away all the weapons in which the strong man trusted and will divide the loot.

²³ Whoever isn't with me is against me. Whoever doesn't gather with me scatters.

²⁴ When an evil spirit comes out of a person, it goes through dry places looking for a place to rest. But it doesn't find any. Then it says: I'll go back to the home I left. ²⁵ When it comes it finds the house swept clean and in order. ²⁶ Then the spirit goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil

than itself. They enter and take up permanent residence there. In the end the condition of that person is worse than it was before.

COMMENTS

When people couldn't find any other way to criticize Jesus, as they couldn't disprove the miracles he performed, they said he was casting out demons through the power of Satan, rather than through the power of God. Jesus will later say that attributing the power of the Holy Spirit to Satan is the unforgivable sin. **Luke 12:10**. He affirms that if he casts out demons with the power of God, then God's Kingdom has come to that person.

How ridiculous to say that Satan casts out Satan. Satan would then be destroying himself.

Jesus warns that if a person is cleansed of a demon but doesn't retain their faith in God, they can be possessed again. Then the person is worse off than before.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 12:22-32; 43-45; Mark 3:20-30

1. Why is attributing the power of the Holy Spirit to Satan an unforgivable sin?
2. Why would Jesus' critics adopt this method of attack?
3. Can a demon possess a person who has been given faith by God? Why not?
4. What is the difference between a spiritual attack and demon-possession?
5. How did Jesus defend himself from attacks by Satan?
6. How should we defend ourselves from attacks by Satan?
7. Just casting out a demon is not enough to reform a person. The empty space left by the demon must be replaced with faith. How do the Gospels teach this? HINT: What does Jesus say after he has healed a person or exorcised a person?

PERICOPE 45

Jesus Reminds a Woman Who Is His True Family

²⁷ While Jesus was speaking a woman in the crowd shouted: How blessed is the mother who gave birth to you and the breasts that nursed you. ²⁸ Jesus replied: Rather, how blessed are those who hear and obey God's Word.

See **Luke 8:19-20** for a similar pericope.

Jesus Says the Only Sign People Will Receive Is the Sign of Jonah

²⁹ As the people were gathering around him Jesus said: The people living today are evil *poneros genea*—generation. They look for a miraculous sign *semeion*. But the only sign they will get is the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ Just as Jonah became a miraculous sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a miraculous sign to the people living today.

³¹ The queen from the south will stand up at the time of judgment with the men who live today. She will condemn them because she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon's wisdom. But look, someone greater than Solomon is here.

³² The men of Nineveh will stand up at the time of judgment with the people living today. Since the men of Nineveh turned to God and changed the way they thought and acted when Jonah spoke his message, they will condemn the people living today. But look someone greater than Jonah is here.

Jesus Talks about Light

³³ No one lights a lamp and hides it or puts it under a basket. Instead, everyone who lights a lamp puts it on a lamp stand so that those who come in will see its light.

See **Luke 8:16**.

³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is unclouded, your whole body is full of light. But when your eye is evil, your body is full of darkness.

³⁵ So be careful that the light in you isn't darkness. ³⁶ If your whole body is full of light and not darkness, it will be as bright as a lamp shining on you.

COMMENTS

A woman says to Jesus: How blessed is your physical mother. But Jesus replies: *How blessed are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.* Jesus has said this before. **PERICOPE 26.**

People were always asking Jesus to perform a miraculous sign from Heaven. But Jesus didn't want to be known for doing signs. Jesus says the only sign people will receive is the Sign of Jonah. God sent Jonah to minister to the people of Nineveh. But Jonah disobeyed and boarded a ship to travel in the opposite direction. The sailors threw Jonah overboard to still a raging storm. A whale swallowed Jonah. Jonah was dead in the body of the whale for three days and three nights. But God raised him back to life and the whale vomited Jonah back on the land. **Jonah 1-4**

[As my life was slipping away, I remembered the Lord, My prayer came to you in your holy Temple. But I will sacrifice to you with songs of thanksgiving. Victory belongs to the Lord. Then the Lord spoke to the fish and it spit Jonah out onto the shore. **Jonah 2:7-10**]

Jesus went on to describe the Queen of Sheba coming to Solomon to seek his wisdom. **1 Kings 10:1.** But Jesus said someone greater than Solomon is here.

Then Jesus went back to his story of Jonah. Jonah had tried to run away from God by sailing to Tarshish at the far west of the Mediterranean Sea. But a storm arose and the men in the ship threw Jonah overboard to stop the storm and a great fish swallowed Jonah. After God made the fish vomit Jonah up on the land where Jonah had first boarded the ship, Jonah was obedient and went to proclaim God's judgment against Nineveh. But the men of Nineveh in Assyria repented and God did not judge them.

Jesus said the men of Nineveh would judge the evil people of today that do not honor God. But the people of today should realize that someone greater than Jonah is here right in front of them.

Then Jesus went on to talk about light. How important it is that your eyes see light. If you see only darkness, your whole body will be in darkness. Belief in the light of God will bring your life into shining brightness.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 12:38-42; Matthew 6:22,33

1. Explain the meaning of the Sign of Jonah. What did Jonah look like when he came out after being three days in the body of the great fish?
2. The people of Nineveh repented because of the shortest sermon in the Bible: *In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed.* **Jonah 3:4** . Why was this sermon so effective?
3. The Queen of Sheba traveled a long way to listen to Solomon's wisdom. Why wouldn't many of the people of Israel listen to Jesus' wisdom?
4. What parallel is there between God's plan for Jonah and God's plan for Jesus?
5. Jesus wants his disciples to bring the same light of God to the world as he does. But they can't do this if their eye is evil. What does this mean?
6. Jesus warns: Be careful the light in you isn't darkness. What does this mean?
7. The eyes bring light into the body as the heart brings Jesus' teachings into a person and transforms their thinking and doing. Read **Hebrews 4:12-13** and explain what hearing the words of Jesus do to a person. Why is it important we remember the words of Jesus?

PERICOPE 46

Jesus Criticizes the Pharisees and Scribes for Their Lack of Inward Goodness

³⁷After Jesus spoke, a Pharisee invited him to have lunch at his house. So Jesus accepted the invitation. ³⁸The Pharisee was surprised to see that Jesus didn't wash ceremonially before the meal.

³⁹The Lord said to him: You Pharisees clean the outside of cups and dishes. But inside you are full of greed and evil. ⁴⁰You fools. Didn't the one who made the outside make the inside too? ⁴¹Give what is inside as a gift to the poor and then everything will be clean for you.

⁴²How horrible it will be *ouai*-woe for you Pharisees! You give God one-tenth of your mint, spices, and every garden herb. But you have ignored justice and the love of God. You should have done these things without ignoring the others.

⁴³How horrible it will be woe for you Pharisees! You love to sit in the front seats in the synagogues and to be greeted in the marketplaces.

⁴⁴How horrible it will be woe for you *pharisaios*-Pharisees *hypokrites*-hypocrites! You are like unmarked graves. People walk on them without knowing what they are.

Luke uses the word *hypokrites* 4x while Matthew uses it 15x and Mark uses it once. Jews whitewashed graves to help people from walking on them. If Jews touched anything dead, they were unclean and had to go through a cleansing ceremony. **Numbers 19:11-20**. The Pharisees were like these unmarked graves, since they did not practice what they preached.

⁴⁵One of the experts in Moses' Teachings scribe said to him: Teacher, when you talk this way, you insult us too.

⁴⁶Jesus said: How horrible it will be woe for you experts in Moses' Teaching! You burden people with loads that are hard to carry. But you won't lift a finger to carry any of these loads.

⁴⁷How horrible it will be for you woe! You build the monuments for the prophets. But it was your ancestors who murdered them. ⁴⁸So you are witnesses and approve of what your ancestors did. They murdered the prophets for whom you build monuments.

⁴⁹That's why the Wisdom *sophia* of God said: I will send them prophets and apostles *apostello*-sent out ones. They will murder some of those prophets and apostles and persecute others. ⁵⁰So the people living now will be charged with the murder of every prophet since the world was made.

⁵¹This includes the murders from Abel to Zechariah who was killed between the altar and the Temple.

Abel was murdered by Cain. **Genesis 4:8.** Joash killed Zechariah. **2 Chronicles 24:19-22**

Yes, I can guarantee this truth: The people living today will be held responsible for this.

⁵² How horrible it will be woe for you experts in Moses' Teachings! You have taken away the key that unlocks knowledge. You haven't gained entrance into knowledge yourselves and you've kept out those who wanted to enter.

⁵³ When Jesus left, the experts in Moses' Teachings and the Pharisees held a terrible grudge against him. They questioned him about many things ⁵⁴ and watched him closely to trap him in something he might say.

COMMENTS

Jesus was not afraid to criticize the Pharisees and the scribes. Jesus was furious with religious leaders who misused their authority to lead people astray and satisfy their own greed or popularity or wealth. These leaders were following the outward aspects of living commanded by the Towrah but without the inward motivations of loving God and loving their neighbor. This hypocrisy infuriated Jesus. So he pronounced woes on them.

Jesus constantly avoided following the many rules the Pharisees had created in their oral law to keep people from crossing the fence around the Towrah. These meaningless restrictions made it impossible to keep the Law. But the Pharisees kept these minute rules and thus lorded it over the people. All their knowledge was for nothing. They were keeping people from following the Law, rather than helping them to obey it.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 23:1-39; Mark 12:37-40

1. God is concerned more about inward motivation, rather than outward obedience. The difference between the two is hypocrisy. Explain what it means to be hypocritical and why God hates this. Is this what Jesus means by being a bad tree? **Luke 6:43**
2. Jesus says Pharisees do the little things required in the Towrah but do not do the greater things God desires of people. What are these greater things the Pharisees don't do?
3. What are the burdens the Pharisees place on people? Why does Jesus get so angry at them for doing this?
4. Jesus says their ancestors killed the prophets? Who did they kill and why?
5. What is the key that unlocks knowledge the Pharisees have removed?
6. When Jesus says: *How horrible it will be for you* using the word *ouai* meaning woe, is he cursing the scribes and Pharisees or saying something else?
7. When Jesus says: *The Wisdom of God says*: what does he mean? See **1 Corinthians 1:24**.

PERICOPE 47

Jesus' Warnings

^{12:1} Meanwhile, thousands *myrias* ^{9x} of people had gathered. They were so crowded that they stepped on each other.

The rare word *myrias* can mean anywhere from ten thousand to fifty thousand people.

Jesus Warns about the Hypocrisy of the Pharisees

Jesus spoke to his disciples and said: Watch out *prosecho*—beware for the yeast *zyme* of the Pharisees. I'm talking about their hypocrisy *hypokrisis* ^{7x}.

This word *hypokrisis* appears once in Matthew, Mark, and in Luke. Leaven can be used in the good or evil sense of something spreading quickly. Usually, it characterizes corruption.

Jesus Warns What You Say Secretly Will Be Known Publicly Mark 4:22

^{12:2} Nothing has been covered that will not be exposed. Whatever is secret will be made known. ³Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight. Whatever you have whispered in private rooms will be shouted from the housetops.

A parallel saying is in Luke 8:17.

Jesus Warns that People Should Only Fear God Not Men Matthew 10:28

^{12:4} My friend I can guarantee that you don't need to be afraid of those who kill the body. After that they can't do anything more. ⁵I'll show you the one you should be afraid of. Be afraid of the one who has the power to throw you into Hell *geena*—the place of future punishment after killing you. I'm warning you to be afraid of him.

Hell is the place of the future punishment called Gehenna or Gehenna of fire. This was originally the valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned – a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.

Jesus Promises God Loves Everyone

Matthew 10:29-31

^{12:6} Aren't five sparrows sold for two cents? God doesn't forget any of them.
⁷ Even every hair on your head has been counted. Don't be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows.

Jesus Will Acknowledge Before God Those Who Believe in Him Matthew 10:32; Mark 8:38

^{12:8} I can guarantee that the Son of Man will acknowledge *homologeō*—confess in front of God's angels every person who acknowledges him in front of others.
⁹ But God's angels will be told that I don't know those people who tell others that they don't know me.

A parallel saying is in **Luke 9:26**.

Jesus Warns that Dishonoring the Holy Spirit Will Not Be Forgiven Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:29

^{12:10} Everyone who says something against *blasphemeō* the Son of Man will be forgiven. But the person who dishonors the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

The Holy Spirit Will Assist Jesus' Disciples to Testify for Jesus Mark 13:11; Matthew 10:19-20

^{12:11} When you are put on trial in synagogues or in front of rulers and authorities, don't worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say. ¹² At that time the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say.

A parallel saying is in **Luke 21:12-15**.

Jesus Warns about Greed

^{12:13} Someone in the crowd said to him: Teacher, tell my brother to give me my share of the inheritance that our father left us. ¹⁴ Jesus said to him: Who appointed me to be your judge or to divide your inheritance? ¹⁵ He told the people: Be careful to guard yourselves from every kind of greed. Life is not about having a lot of material possessions.

¹⁶Then he used this illustration. He said: A rich man had land that produced good crops. ¹⁷He thought: What should I do? I don't have enough room to store my crops. ¹⁸He said: I know what I'll do. I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones so that I can store all my grain and goods in them.

¹⁹Then I'll say to myself: You've stored up a lot of good things for years to come. Take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself. ²⁰But God said to him: You fool. I will demand your life from you tonight. Now who will get what you've accumulated? ²¹That's how it is when a person has material riches but is not rich in his relationship with God.

COMMENTS

Jesus groups these warnings that are spread throughout Matthew and Mark also. Jesus will warn his disciples about the yeast evil of the Pharisees and that of Herod Antipas. Their actions are not reflected in their words. Yet, Jesus says not to be afraid of them. Instead, fear God. He is the one who has the power to separate you from himself, giving you spiritual death.

God is the one who loves you more than you realize. He has counted every hair on your head. I love you also, says Jesus, but those who tell others they don't know me, I won't acknowledge them in front of my Father. And those who dishonor the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

Jesus now gives his disciples encouragement. When they witness for Jesus, the Holy Spirit will give them the words to say.

Finally Jesus warns about greed and having many possessions. He will talk more about this in Luke, than Mark or Matthew. Accumulating wealth, rather than sharing property you have gained beyond what you need to live on, is a selfishness that will drive a person away from spiritual life. You cannot have two gods in your life: **YHWH** and Mammon. **Matthew 6:24;** **Luke 16:13**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Notice that thousands of people had gathered. How can Jesus teach his disciples with these tremendous crowds there? How many in these crowds accompany him and the Twelve to Jerusalem?
2. Why does Jesus keep attacking the Pharisees?

3. Why does Jesus say nothing will be kept secret? Are some accusing him of secret teachings? Remember that the Torah was open to anyone to read and study.
4. Why does Jesus mention the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to the crowd? Do they even know what he is talking about? What is their conception of the work of the Holy Spirit?
5. I wonder why Jesus talks so much about not having many possessions. Most of the Jews in Israel were very poor, spending 85% of their income on food just to live.

PERICOPE 48

Jesus Teaches to Trust in God and to Stop Worrying

^{12:22} Then Jesus said to his disciples: So I tell you to stop worrying about what you will eat or wear. ²³ Life is more than food and the body is more than clothes. ²⁴ Consider the crows. They don't plant or harvest. They don't even have a storeroom or a barn. Yet, God feeds them. You are worth much more than birds.

²⁵ Can any of you add an hour to your life by worrying? ²⁶ If you can't do a small thing like that, why worry about other things? ²⁷ Consider how the flowers grow. They never work or spin yarn for clothes. But I say that not even King Solomon in all his majesty was dressed like one of these flowers. ²⁸ That's the way God clothes the grass in the field. Today it's alive, and tomorrow it's thrown into an incinerator. So how much more will he clothe you people who have so little faith *oligopistis*?

The word *oligopistis* is a rare word used only once by Luke but 4x by Matthew.

²⁹ Don't concern yourself about what you will eat or drink and quit worrying about these things. ³⁰ Everyone in the world is concerned about these things, but your Father knows you need them.

Jesus Teaches to Seek the Treasure of the Kingdom of God

^{12:31} Rather be concerned about his Kingdom. Then these things will be provided for you. ³² Don't be afraid, little flock *poimnion* ^{5x}. Your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom.

³³ Sell your material possessions, and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves wallets that don't wear out! Make a treasure *thesaurus* for yourselves in Heaven that never loses its value! In Heaven thieves and moths can't get close enough to destroy your treasure. ³⁴ Your heart *kardia* will be where your treasure *thesaurus* is.

COMMENTS

Luke is addressing the concerns of most Jews living in Galilee and Judea. They worry about they will eat and what they will wear. Many Jews don't eat every day. Rarely do they ever eat meat or drink wine. So they worry constantly about feeding their immediate family and their relatives. This was one of the reasons the family unit was a cornerstone of Jewish society. When things were bad, people could only look to their family for help. It was a time of subsistence living with only meager possessions. The Jews were a conquered people living under Roman Gentile law.

But Jesus tells these poor people not to worry. Trust in God, your Heavenly Father. Actually, most Jews had no one else to turn to. Remember, in the Towrah, every third year, the tithe that usually went to the Jerusalem Temple was supposed to go to the poor in your home town or city. **Deuteronomy 14:28-29**. But that practice had long since ceased as most people could not even tithe. Most did not have enough money to go to Jerusalem once a year, let along three times a year. Times were hard.

When Jesus said to sell your material possessions and give the money to the poor, many may have laughed. We are the poor, they said. Who are you talking to?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 6:19-21; 25-34

1. How practical are the things that Jesus says? Will we stop worrying if we don't have the physical necessities to live? Yet many of us can relate at least one time when prayer to God resulted in a miraculous benefit that didn't seem probable or possible.
2. What does Jesus mean when he says to seek treasure in Heaven rather than treasure on earth?
3. When Jesus addresses the crowd as a little flock, who is he directing them to?
4. Is it possible Luke is thinking of people living in Antioch, the third largest city in the Roman Empire when he talks about possessions rather than the poor in Galilee and Judea?

PERICOPE 49

Jesus Warns to Be Ready When the Son of Man Comes a Second Time

^{12:35} Be ready for action, and have your lamps burning. ³⁶ Be like servants waiting to open the door at their master's knock when he returns from a wedding. ³⁷ Blessed *makarios* are those servants *doulos* whom the master finds awake *gregoreo*—watching when he comes.

I can guarantee this truth: He will change his clothes, make them sit down at the table and *parechomas*—come forth, serve *diakoneo* them. ³⁸ They will be blessed *makarios* if he comes in the middle of the night or toward morning and finds them awake *hoytos*.

³⁹ Of course, you realize that if the homeowner *oikodespotes* had known *eido* at what hour *hora* the thief *klepes* was coming, he would not have let him break into his house.

Jesus Warns: I Will Come When I Am Least Expected

^{12:40} Be ready *hetoimos*, because the Son of Man will return *erchomai*—comes when you least expect him. ⁴¹ Peter asked: Lord did you use this illustration *parabole* just for us or for everyone?

Jesus Says: Faithful Servants Will Be Blessed

^{12:42} The Lord asked: Who then is the faithful *pistos*, skilled *phronimos*—wise manager *oikonomos* IOX that the master *kyrios* will put in charge *kathistemi*—ruler of giving the other servants their share of food at the right time? ⁴³ That servant will be blessed *makarios* if his master finds him doing this job when he comes. ⁴⁴ I can guarantee this truth: He will put that servant in charge of all his property.

Jesus Warns: Unfaithful Servants Will Be Punished

^{12:45} On the other hand, that servant may think that his master is taking a long time to come home. The servant may begin to beat the other servants and to eat, drink, and get drunk. ⁴⁶ His master will return at an unexpected time

prosdokao—looks *ou*—not. Then his master will punish him severely and assign him a place with unfaithful people *apistos*.

Jesus Warns: More Will Be Expected from Those Who Are Given A Lot

^{12:47} The servant who knew what his master wanted but didn't get ready to do it will receive a hard beating. ⁴⁸ But the servant who didn't know what his master wanted and did things for which he deserved punishment will receive a light beating. A lot *polys*—much will be expected *zeteo* from everyone who has been given a lot. More *perissos* will be demanded from everyone who has been entrusted with a lot *polys*.

COMMENTS

It is interesting that Luke places this teaching on his Second Coming when he is talking to the crowds. Wouldn't he have given this teaching only to his disciples? This is what Matthew does.

We wonder exactly what Jesus means when he teaches his disciples must be always waiting for him to return by living holy lives. How would this concept affect their lives if they constantly kept it in mind?

Jesus emphasizes that he will come when no one expects him, like a thief in the night.

Then he talks about a faithful servant and an unfaithful servant whom he will punish.

Finally, he warns that those who God trusts with abundance will be expected to have more demanded of them.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 12:42-51; 10:34-39

1. What is Jesus attempting to teach his disciples about his Second Coming? What does he want them to do in the meantime to prepare for his Second Coming?
2. The concept of a faithful servant is self-evident. Why does Jesus want to teach this?
3. Perhaps Jesus' most important teaching is that to whoever Jesus gives a lot, much will be expected. Discuss the meaning of this in very practical terms.

PERICOPE 50

Jesus Says Believing In and Following Him Will Cause Conflict

^{12:49} I have come to throw fire *pyr* on the earth. I wish that it had already started. ⁵⁰ I have a baptism *baptisma* to go through and I will suffer *synecho* until it is over *teleo*-ended.

⁵¹ Do you think I came to bring peace to earth? No. I can guarantee that I came to bring nothing but division. ⁵² From now on a family of five will be divided. Three will be divided against two and two against three. ⁵³ A father will be against his son and a son against his father. A mother will be against her daughter and a daughter against her mother. A mother-in-law will be against her daughter-in-law and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Remember that Simeon prophesied to Mary:

[This child is the reason that many in Israel will be condemned and many others will be saved. He will be a sign that will expose the thoughts of those who reject him. And a sword will pierce your heart. **Luke 2:34-35**]

Use Good Judgment to Know How to Act

^{12:54} Jesus said to the crowds: When you see a cloud coming up in the west, you immediately say: There's going to be a rainstorm, and it happens. ⁵⁵ When you see a south wind blowing you say: It's going to be hot, and that's what happens.

⁵⁶ You hypocrites! You can forecast the weather by judging the appearance of earth and sky. But for some reason you don't know how to judge the time in which you're living. ⁵⁷ So why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?

⁵⁸ For instance, when an opponent brings you to court in front of a ruler, do your best to settle with him before you get there. Otherwise, he will drag you in front of a judge. The judge will hand you over to an officer who will throw

you into prison. ⁵⁹ I can guarantee that you won't get out until you pay every penny of your fine.

COMMENTS

Jesus says that people that become his disciples must be ready to experience opposition. Even families will be divided. Jesus himself will experience opposition during his entire earthly ministry. Not only the self-appointed Pharisees and scribes will oppose him. Common people will oppose him because they are doing things God hates. And even the priests and the Jerusalem Temple administration – the Sanhedrin - will oppose him.

Yet, God always has his faithful remnant. He has had them from the beginning. It is from these that God will form the first body of Jesus' disciples.

Jesus asks why people can decipher the weather that is coming, but they can't tell when God has come to visit his people.

Decide for yourself. Can't you resolve disputes with your neighbor better than a judge who doesn't know either of you? He will be inclined to simply throw the accuser in jail and fine him. That's the easiest way for the judge to settle the case.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 10:34-39; 16:1-4; John 15:18-16:4

1. Isaiah says the Messiah will be *the Prince of Peace*. **Isaiah 9:6**. Why then does Jesus bring conflict?
2. Why does Jesus warn his disciples that his coming will bring conflict even within families?
3. Is knowing how to determine the change in weather the same as knowing how to determine the change in society? This appears to be an overstatement.
4. What is the very practical reason people should settle things among themselves, rather than taking a case to a judge?
5. Should people see Jesus as saying they should get their relationship with God settled before the Last Day comes when Jesus would have to judge between the righteous and the wicked? Or should Israel as a whole see that they must accept Jesus or God would allow judgment to fall on Jerusalem in a short time?

PERICOPE 51

Jesus Warns People to Repent and Turn to God

^{13:1} At that time some people reported to Jesus about some Galileans whom Pilate the Roman Governor had executed while they were sacrificing animals. ²Jesus replied to them: Do you think that this happened to them because they were more sinful than other people from Galilee? ³No! I can guarantee that they weren't. But if you don't turn to God and change the way you think and act *metaneo*—repent, then you too will all die.

⁴What about those 18 people who died when the tower at Siloam fell on them? Do you think that they were more sinful than other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵No! I can guarantee that they weren't. But if you don't turn to God and change the way you think and act, then you, too, will all die.

Jesus Teaches that God Is a Merciful and Patient God

^{13:6} Then Jesus used this illustration: A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. He went to look for fruit on the tree but didn't find any. ⁷He said to the gardener: For the last three years I've come to look for figs on this fig tree but haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up good soil?

⁸The gardener replied: Sir, let it stand for one more year. I'll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹Maybe next year it'll have figs. But if not, then cut it down.

COMMENTS

Jesus teaches that bad things can happen to good people. God doesn't bring immediate punishment to people who do evil as Deuteronomy apparently teaches. People will die a spiritual death for their lack of living the way that God desires.

Yet we must always keep in mind that God's greatest characteristic is that of *cheved*—loving kindness. He told this to Moses in **Exodus 34:5-7**. God loves us and seeks us all our lives.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?

2. Does God permit everything to happen that happens? Read **1 Samuel 2:6** and **Isaiah 45:6-7**.
3. How does this saying of Peter apply to the fruitless fig tree?

[Dear friends don't ignore this fact. One day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord isn't slow to do what he promised, as some people think. He doesn't want to destroy anyone but wants all *pas* people to have an opportunity to return *choreo* ^{IOX} to him and change the way they think and act *metanoia*-repent. **2 Peter 3:8-9**]

4. Apparently the nation of Israel was being given a grace period during the earthly ministry of Jesus (26-30 AD or 29-33 AD). Afterwards, God's judgment would come on Jerusalem. How many times in the Gospel does Jesus predict this?

PERICOPE 52

Jesus Heals a Woman With a Hunchback But Is Criticized

^{13:10} Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Day of Rest — a holy day. ¹¹ A woman who was possessed by a spirit was there. The spirit had disabled her for 18 years. She was hunched over and couldn't stand up straight. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her to come to him and said: Woman, you are free from your disability. ¹³ He placed his hands on her, and she immediately stood up straight and praised God.

The Synagogue Leader Criticizes Jesus for Healing on the Sabbath

^{13:14} The synagogue leader was irritated with Jesus for healing on the Day of Rest. The leader told the crowd: There are six days when work can be done. So come on one of those days to be healed. Don't come on the Day of Rest — a holy day.

Jesus Criticizes the Synagogue Leader

^{13:15} The Lord said: You hypocrites! Don't each of you free your ox or donkey on the Day of Rest — a holy day? Don't you then take it out of its stall to give it some water to drink? ¹⁶ Now, here is a descendant of Abraham. Satan has kept her in this condition for 18 years. Isn't it right to free her on the Day of Rest — a holy day?

¹⁷ As he said this, everyone who opposed him felt ashamed. But the entire crowd was happy about the miraculous things he was doing.

COMMENTS

Again Jesus heals on a Sabbath Day. Luke mentions the Sabbath 16x compared to Matthew 9x, Mark 10x, and John 9x. The Sabbath is mentioned in Acts 8x. This is the second time Jesus heals on the Sabbath in this Gospel. The first time was in **Luke 6:1-2**.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Does Jesus deliberately heal on the Sabbath to confront the Pharisees or is there some other reason?

2. How can Jesus say that Satan has kept this woman in a hunch back position? How has Satan been able to enter this woman's life and affect her in this way?
3. Notice Jesus only says: *Woman, you are free from your disability.* Normally, he would say: *Your faith has made you whole.* Why doesn't he say this here?
4. Could you say that the woman's condition pointed to Israel's spiritual condition? If so, what was Jesus teaching? How did the synagogue leader's comments also point to Israel's spiritual condition as to how they understood the Scriptures?
5. Jesus called the woman *a daughter of Abraham*, an exalted title rarely given to women. Why did he do this?

PERICOPE 53

Parables about the Rapid Growth of God's Kingdom

^{13:18} Jesus asked: What is God's Kingdom like? What can I compare it to?

¹⁹ It's like a mustard seed that someone planted in a garden. It grew and became a tree and the birds nested in its branches.

²⁰ He asked again: What can I compare God's Kingdom to? ²¹ It's like yeast that a woman mixed into a large amount of flour until the yeast worked its way through all the dough.

COMMENTS

Jesus uses parables to demonstrate how quickly God's Kingdom will grow on earth. But Luke omits the one parable Mark uses that really brings forth the concept:

[Jesus said: The Kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seeds on the ground. He sleeps at night and is awake during the day. The seeds sprout and grow, *although the man doesn't know how. The ground produces grain by itself.* First the green blade appears, then the head, and then the head full of grain. As soon as the grain is ready, he cuts it with a sickle, because harvest time has come. **Mark 4:26-29**]

Disciples can preach God's Word to one person who tells it to another who tells it to another, and so it grows exponentially. God grows his Word, but we do not know exactly how he does so. Belief can grow suddenly in a person's life that surprises all of us.

Some people think Jesus is speaking of the Messianic Millennial Kingdom described only in **Revelation 20:1-4**. I believe Jesus is speaking of Eternal Life, the Kingdom of Heaven we live on earth through a personal relationship with Jesus where the Holy Spirit works in our lives.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 13:31-33; Mark 4:30-32

1. Think about the Parable of the Sower. **Luke 8:4-8; PERICOPE 25**. What is the job of the Sower? Is it to measure results or to simply be faithful to preach the Word? What lesson does this teach us?

PERICOPE 54

Jesus Tells the Parable of the Narrow Door

^{13:22} Then Jesus traveled and taught in one city and village after another on his way to Jerusalem. ²³ Someone asked him: Sir, are only a few *ei oligos* people going to be saved *sozo*?

He answered: ²⁴ Try hard *agonizmai*—strive ^{7x} to enter *eiserchomai* through the narrow *stenos* ^{3x} door *pyle* ^{10x}. I can guarantee that many *polys* will try *zeteo* to enter *eiserchomai*, but they won't succeed *ischyō*.

²⁵ After the homeowner gets up and closes the door, it's too late. You can stand outside, knock at the door, and say: Sir, open the door for us! But he will answer you: I don't know who you are.

²⁶ Then you will say: We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets. ²⁷ But he will tell you: I don't know who you are. Get away from me, all you evil people. ²⁸ Then you will cry and be in extreme pain.

That's what you'll do when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets. They'll be in the Kingdom of God, but you'll be thrown out. ²⁹ People will come from all over the world and will eat in the Kingdom of God. ³⁰ Some who are Last will be First, and some who are First will be Last.

COMMENTS

Jesus says that many will try to enter the Kingdom of God and receive Eternal Life, but only a few will succeed. This is because they attempt to do this out of a wrong motivation. Most Jews think they can enter Heaven because of their ethnicity. But even John the Baptist told them this was not so. **Luke 3:8-9**. John told them to repent of their sin by turning away from their sinful lives and turning back to God.

Jesus warns Jews that many Jews will eat in Heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But many Jews who think they are automatically citizens of God's Kingdom will be thrown out. **Matthew 8:11-12**;

True repentance means turning over one's life to God and allowing him through his Holy Spirit to direct one's life. It means loving God and loving your neighbor. It means living a holy life. Simply listening to Jesus, eating and drinking with him, but not allowing him to transform one's life will not allow one to gain entry into Heaven. One must be a new person, living a transformed life, what Paul calls a New Creation. **2 Corinthians 5:17**

This applies to both Jews and Gentiles,. That is why Jesus says: *The Last will be First and the First will be Last.* **Matthew 19:30; Mark 10:31.** Many Jews will learn about Jesus from Gentiles.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 7:13-14

1. When we talk about people being saved, we must be careful. God's *cheed*, his loving kindness, is his greatest attribute. We don't know God's requirements for declining to give Eternal Life to some people. God can be much more merciful than we are. So, are only a few going to be saved?
2. What is the narrow door or straight gate? Is it right belief or obedience or correct motivation or all three?
3. Jesus constantly taught how urgent it is to enter God's Kingdom. But will God shut the door? When will God's mercy end?
4. Jesus says that many who followed him and listened to his teaching would not enter the Kingdom even though they ate and drank with him. What were they missing?
5. Is Jesus teaching that many Gentiles will enter God's Kingdom while many Jews will not?
6. Paul says that faith is a gift of God. **Ephesians 2:8-10.** We do good works because we have been saved, not to become saved. So what does it mean to enter the Kingdom through the narrow door?

PERICOPE 55

Jesus Warns Jerusalem That They Rejected God When He Came to Save Them

³¹At that time some Pharisees told Jesus: Get out of here in Galilee and go somewhere else! King Herod Antipas wants to kill you.

³²Jesus said to them: Tell that fox that I will force demons out of people and heal people today and tomorrow. I will finish my work on the third day.

³³But I must be on my way today, tomorrow, and the next day. It's not possible for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem.

³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill the prophets and stone to death those sent to you. How often I wanted to gather your children together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you were not willing. ³⁵Your House will be *aphiemi*—left abandoned *eremos*—desolate. I can guarantee that you will not see me again until you say: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Psalm 118:26

COMMENTS

Jerusalem is God's Holy City, what he calls in Isaiah: *My Holy Mountain*. Isaiah 11:9; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20. Here Jesus tells the Pharisees that even though King Herod Antipas may want to kill him, God will see that Jesus dies in Jerusalem. That is God's plan – his mission for Jesus' life.

In a prophetic prophecy, Jesus sees he will be rejected in Jerusalem and as a result, its House will be desolated, that is, the Jerusalem Temple will be destroyed. The people will not see Jesus after that unless they say: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord*. This may refer to the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10-14.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 23:37

1. Jesus says in addressing the city of Jerusalem: *How often I wanted to gather you together the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings*. However, in the synoptic Gospels Jesus visits Jerusalem only once. Why does he say this?

2. When Jesus rides down the road to Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives on a donkey and people shout: *Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord*, **Luke 19:38** is this enough to save Jerusalem? If not, what will it take to see Jesus again?

PERICOPE 56

Jesus Attends a Banquet Given by a Pharisee and Teaches Him

^{14:1} On a Day of Rest — a holy day, Jesus went to eat at the home of a prominent Pharisee. The guests were watching Jesus very closely.

Jesus Heals a Man with Dropsy on the Sabbath

^{14:2} A man whose body was swollen with fluid was there. ³Jesus reacted by asking the Pharisees and the experts in Moses' Teachings: Is it right to heal on the Day of Rest — a holy day, or not? ⁴But they didn't say a thing.

So Jesus took hold of the man, healed him, and sent him away. ⁵Jesus asked them: If your son or your ox falls into a well on a Day of Rest — a holy day, wouldn't you pull him out immediately? ⁶They couldn't argue with him about this.

Jesus Teaches How Pharisees Succumb to the Sin of Pride

^{14:7}Then Jesus noticed how the guests always chose the places of honor. So he used this illustration when he spoke to them:

⁸When someone invites you to a wedding, don't take the place of honor. Maybe someone more important than you was invited. ⁹Then your host would say to you: Give this person your place. Embarrassed, you would have to take the place of least honor.

¹⁰So when you're invited, take the place of least honor. Then, when your host comes, he will tell you: Friend, move to a more honorable place. Then all the other guests will see how you are honored. ¹¹Those who honor themselves will be humbled but people who humble themselves will be honored.

¹²Then he told the man who had invited him: When you invite people for lunch or dinner, don't invite only your friends, family, other relatives, or rich neighbors. Otherwise, they will return the favor. ¹³Instead, when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the handicapped, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴Then

you will be blessed because they don't have any way to pay you back. You will be paid back *antapodidomi*-recompensed 7x when those who have God's approval *dikaiois*-righteous come back to life *anastasis*-resurrection.

Jesus' Parable of the Messianic Banquet

^{14:15} One of those eating with him heard this. So he said to Jesus: The person who will be at the banquet in the Kingdom of God is blessed.

The Kingdom of God here does not signify the Kingdom of Heaven in the highest sense, but only the Kingdom of the Messiah of which the carnal Jew here speaks according to the received sense of his nation. It is a glorious temporal kingdom in which the Jews lord it over the Gentile world, enjoy their wealth and are provided with all temporal blessings and delights in which they placed their happiness. See **Isaiah 60:1-22**.

¹⁶ Jesus said to him: A man gave a large banquet and invited many people. ¹⁷ When it was time for the banquet, he sent his servant to tell those who were invited: Come. Everything is ready now.

¹⁸ Everyone asked to be excused. The first said to him: I bought a field and I need to see it. Please excuse me. ¹⁹ Another said: I bought five pairs of oxen and I'm on my way to see how well they plow. Please excuse me. ²⁰ Still another said: I recently got married, and that's why I can't come.

²¹ The servant went back to report this to his master. Then the master of the house became angry. He told his servant: Run to every street and alley in the city. Bring back the poor, the handicapped, the blind, and the lame.

²² The servant said: Sir, what you've ordered has been done. But there is still room for more people.

²³ Then the master told his servant: Go to the roads and paths. Urge the people to come to my house. I want it to be full. ²⁴ I can guarantee that none of those invited earlier will taste any food at my banquet.

COMMENTS

Jesus really is not a proper house guest, as he embarrasses his host. First, Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath in the house of a Pharisee, where such action is forbidden. Then he notices how

the guests seat themselves and remarks how many fight for the places of honor. He doesn't see any humility. Finally, he tells the host to invite only those who can't invite him back. He ends with a Biblical quote: *Those who honor themselves will be humbled but those who humble themselves will be honored.*

[The eyes of arrogant people will be humbled. High and mighty people will be brought down. On that day the Lord alone will be honored. **Isaiah 2:11**]

At this outrage of teaching, the guests are probably silent. Then, one man has the courage to say: *Blessed are those called to the Banquet of the Messiah.*

Jesus takes the opportunity to tell the Parable of the Great Banquet:

A man gave a large banquet and invited many people. But many excused themselves. The servants reported their responses. The Master of the House became angry. Go out and invite the poor, the handicapped, the blind and the lame, he said. The servants did this. But the banquet room was still not full. Go out and invite the traveling strangers and foreigners. I want my banquet to be full. I guarantee none who rejected my invitation will eat at my banquet.

Jesus is saying that since the Jews have rejected him, Gentiles will be invited and they will come to his banquet.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 23:37

1. Why does the Pharisee invite Jesus to a meal? What does he expect to gain from their encounter?
2. Jesus embarrasses his host severely not once but several times. Why does Jesus do this?
3. What did the man who mentioned the Messianic Banquet expect Jesus to comment?
4. How is Jesus saying that Israel's problems lay with the actions of its religious leaders, especially the Pharisees?

PERICOPE 57

Jesus Explains the Cost of Being His Disciple

²⁵ Large crowds were traveling with Jesus. He turned to them and said: ²⁶ If people come to me and are not ready to abandon their fathers, mothers, wives, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as their own lives, they cannot be my disciples. ²⁷ So those who do not carry their crosses and follow me cannot be my disciples.

²⁸ Suppose you want to build a tower. You would first sit down and figure out what it costs. Then you would see if you have enough money to finish it. ²⁹ Otherwise, if you lay a foundation and can't finish the building, everyone who watches will make fun of you. ³⁰ They'll say: This person started to build but couldn't finish the job.

³¹ Or suppose a king is going to war against another king. He would first sit down and think things through. Can he and his 10,000 soldiers fight against a king with 20,000 soldiers? ³² If he can't, he'll send ambassadors to ask for terms of peace while the other king is still far away.

Jesus Demands His Disciples Give Up Everything for Him

^{14:33} In the same way, none of you can be my disciples unless you give up everything.

Jesus Teaches His Disciples Must Always Be Righteous

^{14:34} Salt is good. But if salt loses its taste, how will you restore its flavor? ³⁵ It's not any good for the ground or for the manure pile. People throw it away. Let the person who has ears listen.

COMMENTS

Jesus states a severe requirement for people to become his disciples. They must abandon their families and their own lives, if necessary. Jesus has said a person must give up their life in **Luke 9:24** and he will say this again in **Luke 17:33**.

Then Jesus says a person must seriously consider the consequences of being his disciple before they make the commitment. To be his disciples, Jesus must be their number one priority and they must give up an allegiance to anyone or anything else, including all their possessions. They must give up everything.

Finally, Jesus says that his disciples must be of good savor all the time. For if they lose their faith and faith to keep their commitment, they cannot be his disciple. Listen and consider carefully all that I have said, Jesus says solemnly. Discipleship is a serious business.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 10:34-39

1. Why does Jesus make it so hard to become his disciple?
2. Jesus is asking men to leave their wives and abandon their children. This seems very irresponsible. Why did Jesus say this? What disciple left his wife?
3. Jesus is saying many times that his disciples will be persecuted and many will lose their lives just as he will. How many times does Jesus say this in the Gospel?
4. Can a person be a believer in Jesus and still not be a disciple? What does this mean? If a person is not a disciple, are they genuinely converted?
5. What is the salt in a believer? What characterizes a believer who loses their salt?

PERICOPE 58

Three Parables of the Lost and Found

^{15:1}All the tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus. ²But the Pharisees and the experts in Moses' Teachings complained: This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.

Jesus has already replied to this complaint in **Luke 5:32**, and he will also later. See **Luke 19:10**.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

^{15:3}Jesus spoke to them using this illustration: ⁴Suppose a man has 100 sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the 99 sheep grazing in the pasture and look for the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵When he finds it, he's happy. He puts that sheep on his shoulders and ⁶goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says to them: Let's celebrate! I've found my lost sheep.

⁷I can guarantee that there will be more happiness in Heaven over one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts than over 99 people who already have turned to God and have his approval.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸Suppose a woman has ten coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house, and look for the coin carefully until she finds it? ⁹When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says: Let's celebrate! I've found the coin that I lost. ¹⁰So I can guarantee that God's angels are happy about one person who turns to God and changes the way he thinks and acts.

COMMENTS

God cares about every human being he has created. He loves each one now, just as much as he did when he created them. He will never stop loving them as his *cheed*, his loving kindness, is his greatest attribute. **Exodus 34:5-7**. If they sin, God gets angry at their sin, but not at the

individual. So even if they stray and rebel against him, God will still go after them to attempt to bring them back to the fold. That is how much God loves them.

God is constantly seeking all individuals even though many are not seeking him. The apostle John says:

[We love God because he first loved us. **1 John 4:19**]

Paul says:

[Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This demonstrates God's love for us. **Romans 5:8**]

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 18:12-14

1. What does God's attitude toward human beings tell us about how our attitude should be about every human being?
2. How does God's attitude toward us demonstrate why Jesus says we are to forgive everyone for everything?
3. The Pharisees were not happy when sinners were converted. Why not? Instead, they called Jews who did not follow the Towrah *people of the land* and separated themselves from them. Why did the Pharisees think that God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, created these people? For what purpose did they live in God's Creation?
4. God actually searches for sinners as he did for Adam and Eve after they sinned against him and hid in the garden. **Genesis 3:8-9**. How do the Pharisees explain this? God appeared to Jacob even though he had deceived his father and his brother. **Genesis 28:10-22**. Jesus is only doing what God does.

PERICOPE 59

The Parable of the Lost or Prodigal Son and the Faithful, Forgiving Father

¹¹Then Jesus said:

A man had two sons. ¹²The younger son said to his father: Father, give me my share of the property. So the father divided his property between his two sons.

¹³After a few days, the younger son gathered his possessions and left for a country far away from home. There he wasted everything he had on a wild lifestyle. ¹⁴He had nothing left when a severe famine spread throughout that country. He had nothing to live on. ¹⁵So he got a job from someone in that country and was sent to feed pigs in the fields. ¹⁶No one in the country would give him any food, and he was so hungry that he would have eaten what the pigs were eating.

¹⁷Finally, he came to his senses. He said: How many of my father's hired men have more food than they can eat, while I'm starving to death here?

¹⁸I'll go at once to my father, and I'll say to him: Father, I've sinned against Heaven and you. ¹⁹I don't deserve to be called your son anymore. Make me one of your hired men.

²⁰So he went at once to his father. While he was still at a distance, *makran* great way ^{10x} *apecho*-off his father saw *eido* him and felt sorry *splagchnizomai* for him. He ran to his son, put his arms around him, and kissed him. ²¹Then his son said to him:

Father, I've sinned against Heaven and you. I don't deserve to be called your son anymore.

²²The father said to his servants:

Hurry! Bring out the best robe, and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³Bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let's

celebrate with a feast. ²⁴ My son was dead and has come back to life. He was lost but has been found.

Then they began to celebrate.

²⁵ His older son was in the field. As he was coming back to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called to one of the servants and asked what was happening. ²⁷ The servant told him: Your brother has come home. So your father has killed the fattened calf to celebrate your brother's safe return.

²⁸ Then the older son became angry and wouldn't go into the house. His father came out and begged him to come in. ²⁹ But he answered his father:

All these years I've worked like a slave for you. I've never disobeyed one of your commands. Yet, you've never given me so much as a little goat for a celebration with my friends. ³⁰ But this son of yours spent your money on prostitutes, and when he came home, you killed the fattened calf for him.

³¹ His father said to him:

My child, you're always with me. Everything I have is yours. ³² But we have something to celebrate, something to be happy about. This brother of yours was dead but has come back to life. He was lost but has been found.

COMMENTS

These three parables are perhaps Luke's best known parables. The first illustrates that God loves every human being he has created. So he seeks them to bring them to a personal relationship with himself, even if they reject him and wander off like a lost sheep. The good shepherd never gives up on his sheep.

In the second parable, the woman searches diligently until she finds the lost coin. God does not give up on the rebellious sinner, but pursues him.

In the third parable, we usually call The Prodigal Son, although it really should be called The Faithful Father, even though the son has disgraced his father by actually saying the father's

possessions are worth more than the father's love, the father allows the son his request. This younger son goes off to spend his inheritance, so he is actually wishing the father was dead. After wasting his inheritance on foolish living, the son returns, vowing to ask the father to allow him to become his servant.

While the son is a great way off, the father, who has been looking for his return every day, sees him and with great compassion, hugs him, and restores him to his household as his son. He then prepares a great banquet to celebrate.

The older son, who by the father's action with the younger son has now been given all the remaining property, is furious. Now this younger son and the father will live off his property the rest of their life. The older son is so angry that he won't come in the house and join the celebration that is going on.

The father comes out of the house and pleads with the older son to join the celebration. But the older son protests: I have worked like a slave for you and yet you have never given me a celebration, The father replies: Son, you are always with me and all I have is yours. But we must celebrate for your brother was lost and now has been found.

Jesus is saying the Pharisees and the scribes refuse to celebrate when they see that sinners – people who have not kept the law – have repented by turning away from their sinful lives and have turned to God. How wrong they are. Likewise, Jews should celebrate when Gentiles come to faith. Jesus has come to seek and to save people who are lost – whether Jew or Gentile.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why can't the Pharisees accept that God loves every human creature he has made? So he has sent Jesus to bring these sinners back to God who loves them. What else should God do? Should he destroy them?
2. What is blocking the Pharisees from celebrating when a sinner turns to God?
3. What reason do the Pharisees give themselves for not celebrating when a sinner turns to God? Is it perhaps jealousy because they themselves have not totally turned to God and live the way he wants them to live?

PERICOPE 60

Parable of the Wicked Manager

^{16:1} Then Jesus said to his disciples:

A rich man had a business manager. The manager was accused of wasting the rich man's property. ²So the rich man called for his manager and said to him: What's this I hear about you? Let me examine your books. It's obvious that you can't manage my property any longer.

³The manager thought: What should I do? My master is taking my job away from me. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg. ⁴I know what I'll do so that people will welcome me into their homes when I've lost my job.

⁵So the manager called for each one of his master's debtors. He said to the first: How much do you owe my master? ⁶The debtor replied: Eight hundred gallons of olive oil. The manager told him: Take my master's ledger. Quick. Sit down and write four hundred.

⁷Then he asked another debtor: How much do you owe? The debtor replied: A thousand bushels of wheat. The manager told him: Take the ledger and write eight hundred.

⁸The master praised the dishonest manager for being so clever. Worldly people are more clever than spiritually-minded people when it comes to dealing with others.

⁹Jesus continued:

I'm telling you that although wealth is often used in dishonest ways, you should use it to make friends for yourselves. When life is over you will be welcomed into an eternal home. ¹⁰Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with a lot. Whoever is dishonest with very little is dishonest with a lot. ¹¹Therefore if you can't be trusted with wealth that is

often used dishonestly, who will trust you with wealth that is real? ¹² If you can't be trusted with someone else's wealth, who will give you your own?

¹³ A servant cannot serve two masters. He will hate the first master and love the second, or he will be devoted to the first and despise the second. You cannot serve God and wealth.

¹⁴ The Pharisees who love money heard all this and were making sarcastic remarks about him. ¹⁵ So Jesus said to them: You try to justify your actions in front of people. But God knows what's in your hearts. What is important to humans is disgusting to God.

COMMENTS

This is one of the most difficult parables for me to understand in the entire Bible. Why should a man be praised for giving away assets that do not belong to him? This man is truly a wicked steward that cannot be trusted. Yet his master praised him for being clever by making friends for himself when he was being fired.

There have been various ways of attempting to reduce the heinousness of this crime, but to my mind, they come to no avail. This man has betrayed the trust given to him.

Jesus says that people should use wealth to make friends for yourselves. But that is if it is your wealth, not someone else's wealth that has been entrusted to you.

One possible way to make sense of this parable is to see it as having a very similar message to that in the parable of the Unrighteous Judge. **Luke 18:2**. In that parable the argument is: If an unrighteous judge will yield to the importunity of a stranger, how much more will a righteous and loving father listen to the earnest prayers of his own children? Here, perhaps, the argument is: If an unrighteous steward was commended by his earthly master for his prudence in providing for his future by a fraudulent use of what had been committed to him, how much more will a righteous servant be commended by his heavenly Master for providing for eternity by a good use of what has been committed to him?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why should the master praise this wicked steward for being clever?

2. Some say that the manager just cancelled his commission which was part of the debt and therefore was praised for the prudent use of money, giving up his right to a commission for the good will of a debtor. What is wrong with this interpretation?
3. Jesus teaches wealth should be used to make friends. Disciples should be generous and help others with their surplus wealth. But is this what the parable teaches?

PERICOPE 6I

Jesus Teaches about the Validity of the Scriptures

^{16: 16} Moses' Teachings and the Prophets were in force until the time of John the Baptist. Since that time people have been telling *euangelizo*-preaching the Good News about God's Kingdom *basileia* , and everyone is trying to force *biazo*-press ^{2x} their way into it. ¹⁷It is easier for the earth and the Heavens to disappear than to drop a comma from the Scriptures.

COMMENTS

Luke mentions the Kingdom of God ^{3ix}, Mark ^{15x}, Matthew ^{5x} [Kingdom of Heaven ^{3ix}] and John ^{2x}. John the Baptist was the last of the Hebrew prophets and he taught that people should turn away from their wicked way of living and turn back to God just as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel preached. But John preached that the Messiah had come and now everyone with the exception of the scribes and Pharisees was eager to hear the Gospel. Thousands of people came to hear Jesus, Yet the Gospel is still carrying forward the principles of the Law and the Prophets.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 11:12-13

1. What was consistent with Moses' Teachings in John's preaching?
2. How did the preaching of John the Baptist begin something new?
3. Must Christians today keep the Law?
4. Read the following and discuss the parallel thoughts:

[I can guarantee this truth: Of all the people ever born, no one is greater than John the Baptizer. Yet the least important person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than John. From the time of John the Baptizer until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing *biazo*-suffered violence ^{2x} and forceful people *biastes* ^{ix} have been seizing *harpazo* it. All the Prophets and Moses' Teachings prophesied up to John. If you are willing to accept their message, John is the Elijah who was to come. Let the person who has ears listen. **Mathew 11:11-15**]

5. The Luke and Matthew passage are the only verses where the word *biazo* is used. What does it mean that people are attempting to take the Kingdom of God by force?

PERICOPE 62

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

^{16:18} Any man who divorces his wife to marry another woman is committing adultery. The man who marries a woman divorced in this way is committing adultery.

COMMENTS

Jesus was consistently firm that divorce is appropriate only in the event of unchastity by either partner. God did not want divorce. But because of the hardness of men's hearts he permitted it if a married partner committed adultery.

This is what you must do if a husband writes out a certificate of divorce, gives it to his wife, and makes her leave his house. He divorced her because he found out something indecent about her and she no longer pleased him.

Deuteronomy 24:1

This was done to protect the woman. Jesus quoted Genesis:

That is why a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife and they will become one flesh. **Genesis 2:24**

Then Jesus added:

Therefore, don't let anyone separate what God has joined together. **Mark 10:9**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 5:31-32; 19:2-9; Mark 10:2-12

1. Why does Luke place this teaching here? It is the only place in this Gospel where Jesus mentions divorce. Matthew mentions divorce in **Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9**. Mark discusses divorce in **Mark 10:2-12**. Jews were much stricter about divorce and remarriage than Gentiles under Roman law. Under Roman law, women could even divorce their husbands.

PERICOPE 63

The Parable of a Rich Man and Lazarus

^{16:19} There was a rich man who wore expensive clothes. Every day was like a party to him. ²⁰ There was also a beggar named Lazarus who was regularly brought to the gate of the rich man's house. ²¹ Lazarus would have eaten any scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Lazarus was covered with sores and dogs would lick them.

²² One day the beggar died and the angels carried him to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ He went to Hell *hades*, where he was constantly tortured.

As he looked up, in the distance he saw Abraham and Lazarus. ²⁴ He yelled: Father Abraham! Have mercy on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool off my tongue. I am suffering in this fire.

²⁵ Abraham replied: Remember my child that you had a life filled with good times while Lazarus' life was filled with misery. Now he has peace here, while you suffer. ²⁶ Besides, a wide area separates us. People couldn't cross it in either direction even if they wanted to.

²⁷ The rich man responded: Then I ask you Father Abraham to send Lazarus back to my father's home. ²⁸ I have five brothers. He can warn them so that they won't end up in this place of torture. ²⁹ Abraham replied: They have Moses' Teachings and the Prophets. Your brothers should listen to them.

³⁰ The rich man replied: No, Father Abraham! If someone comes back to them from the dead, they will turn to God and change the way they think and act. ³¹ Abraham answered him: If they won't listen to Moses' Teachings and the Prophets, they won't be persuaded even if someone comes back to life.

COMMENTS

The Jews did not talk about a life after death, except to say that souls went to Sheol, a dark place under the earth where souls became weak like a vapor. The souls were not aware of events

happening in the land of the living or of God. **Psalm 6:5; 30:9; Isaiah 38:18.** However, King David says that God is in Sheol. **Psalm 139:8**

But in the Book of Daniel, the angel tells Daniel:

[At that time Michael, the great commander, will stand up on behalf of the descendants of your people. It will be a time of trouble unlike any that has existed from the time there have been nations until that time. But at that time your people, everyone written in the Book, will be rescued. Many sleeping in the ground will wake up. Some will wake up to live forever, but others will wake up to be ashamed and disgraced forever. **Daniel 12:1-2**]

So after this time, at the time of the Maccabees [164 BC], the Pharisees talked about an afterlife different from Sheol with a final judgment by God. But the Sadducees still did not believe in an afterlife and a final judgment. So apparently this change came during the Inter-Testamental Period, the 400 years of silence from God.

Jesus talks about the afterlife and the separation of people when he says:

[I can guarantee that many will come from all over the world. They will eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. The citizens of that Kingdom will be thrown outside *ekballo* into the *exoteros*—outer darkness *skotos*. People will cry and be in extreme pain there. **Matthew 8:10-12**]

In this parable, Jesus describes this separation in different terms. The rich man, although he is being tortured, can talk to Abraham. He also can see Lazarus with Abraham. He asks if Abraham will send Lazarus to his brothers to warn them of this coming afterlife torture for not being kind to Lazarus. Jesus expresses this same torture in his Parable of the Sheep and the Goats:

[When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all his angels are with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. The King will say to those on his left: Get away from me. God has cursed you. Go into the everlasting fire that was prepared for the Devil and his angels. **Matthew 25:31, 41**]

Yet Abraham declines the rich man's request. He says that even if the rich man's brothers should listen to Moses' Teachings and that even if someone returned to earth from the dead, the brothers would still not believe him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus describes Hell as *outer darkness*. Jesus considered separation from God as the worst possible event. Why is outer darkness such an appropriate description for being separated from God?
2. Is Hell being described as a fiery place because it is simply torture? The Book of Revelation describes Hell as *the fiery lake of burning sulfur*. **Revelation 20:10**
3. Jesus describes Hell as a place *where the fire is not quenched, where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*. **Mark 9:43-44**. This is the same picture Isaiah draws at the end of his vision:

[The New Heaven and earth that I am about to make will continue in my presence, declares the Lord. From one month to the next and from one week to the next all people will come to worship me, declares the Lord. Then they will go out and look at the corpses of those who have rebelled against me. The worms that eat them will not die. The fire that burns them will not go out. All humanity will be disgusted by them. **Isaiah 66: 22-24**]

How do we reconcile the descriptions of darkness and fire in Hell.

4. Even though the Jews did not believe in a final judgment until the intertestamental period from 400 BC -26 AD, Isaiah in 735 BC describes a separation of good and evil people. What does this tell us about the origin of Biblical prophecy?
5. Lazarus was the only person named in a parable of Jesus. Why is the rich man not also named?
6. The rich man still regarded Lazarus as his servant, twice asking God to send him. How does this demonstrate the attitude of the rich man toward those with less wealth?
7. Was the rich man asking Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers a sincere concern about his brothers or was he complaining he had not received adequate warning about the final judgment?

PERICOPE 64

Jesus Warns His Disciples Not to Cause Others to Lose Faith

^{17:1} Jesus told his disciples: Situations that cause people to lose their faith *skandalon*—stumbling block are certain to arise *erchomai*—come. But how horrible it will be *ouai*—woe for the person who causes someone to lose his faith. ²It would be best for that person to be thrown into the sea with a large stone hung around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones *mikros* to lose his faith *skandalon*. ³So watch *prosecho* yourselves

COMMENTS

Jesus is warning his disciples of their serious responsibility as his disciples. They are in a position to cause people to lose their faith in Jesus. Rather than being harsh when people sin, Jesus teaches them to be gentle with a friendly reproof aiming at restoration. This forgiveness for sin should follow the example of God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 18:6-10; Mark 9:42-50

1. Jesus taught that disciples must always model discipleship. A bad example can cause a person to see Christians as not being good examples to follow. Jesus taught:

[Salt is good. But if salt loses its taste, how will you restore it flavor. It's not good for the ground or for the manure pile. People throw it away. Let the person who has ears listen. **Luke 14:34-35**]

How can disciples ensure they stay on a good track?

2. Jesus demonstrates the seriousness of causing a person to lose their faith by using the Greek word translated *woe*. Luke uses the word 13x, although Matthew uses it 12x. But Isaiah uses it 21x. Define the meaning of the word translated *woe*.

3. Jesus got angry and cursed the Pharisees. **Luke 11:37-53**. How did he restrain his anger?

PERICOPE 65

Jesus Teaches to Forgive Everyone for Everything

^{17:3} If a believer sins, correct him. If he changes the way he thinks and acts, forgive him. ⁴ Even if he wrongs you seven times in one day, and comes back to you seven times and says that he is sorry, forgive him.

COMMENTS

Forgiveness is what characterizes a true believer in Jesus. I was convinced God had transformed my life and was justified when I forgave a person I really didn't want to forgive. Most believers, even the most devout, have forgiveness issues. During our journey of sanctification, this issue constantly arises.

Jesus counsels us to forgive everyone for everything. When we hold onto unforgiveness, bitterness becomes a heavy burden that becomes increasingly more difficult to bear. The only way to release that burden is to truly forgive. And that means never bringing it up again under any circumstance. The saying also implicitly forbids the nursing of grudges and criticism of the offender behind his back.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 6:12-15; 18:21-22, 34-35; John 20:23

1. This is a difficult issue. Read **Genesis 50:17**. This is the first instance of forgiveness in the Bible. What is the lesson taught here?
2. Read the Parable of the Prodigal Son. **Luke 15:11-32**. Describe the issues of forgiveness that are discussed.
3. Does Jesus forgive the Pharisees for what they have said about him?
4. What is the greatest action of forgiveness by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke?
5. Why should disciples ask God to give them more faith to forgive? Reference the man in **Mark 9:25** who said: *I believe. Help my unbelief*. Why must we always forgive no matter how difficult it is?

PERICOPE 66

The Apostles Ask for More Faith

^{17:5}Then the apostles said to the Lord: Give us more faith. ⁶The Lord said: If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree: Pull yourself up by the roots and plant yourself in the sea, and it would obey you.

COMMENTS

Notice that the apostles' request for more faith follows the pericope on Jesus' warning not to cause someone to lose their faith. They also realize that they need God's help if they are always to forgive.

A mustard seed was quite small. Mulberry trees grew to be as tall as 35 feet and were difficult to uproot.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 18:6-10; Mark 9:42-50

1. Jesus' example doesn't seem very practical. Is this even possible?
2. Is Jesus saying that only a little more trust in God can result in an unbelievable change?
3. Was Jesus really saying that the disciples didn't need more faith, but only to apply fully the faith they had been given by God?

PERICOPE 67

Jesus Teaches Servants Must Perform Their Duty

⁷Suppose someone has a servant who is plowing fields or watching sheep. Does he tell his servant when he comes from the field: Have something to eat? ⁸No. Instead, he tells his servant: Get dinner ready for me. After you serve me my dinner, you can eat yours.

⁹He doesn't thank the servant for following orders. ¹⁰That's the way it is with you. When you've done everything you're ordered to do, say: We're worthless servants. We've only done our duty.

COMMENTS

Jesus teaches that increases in faith come through inward and outward obedience to God's will. This is what Jesus demonstrated as he said constantly in the Gospel of John: *My will is to do the will of him who sent me.* **John 6:38**

Peter learned this lesson when he said:

[Make every effort to add integrity *arete*^{4x} to your faith *pistis*, and to integrity add knowledge *gnosis*, to knowledge add self-control *egkrateia*—temperance ^{4x}, to self-control add endurance *hypomone*—patient endurance, to endurance add godliness *eusebeia*, to godliness add Christian affection *philadelphia*—brotherly love, and to Christian affection add love *agape*—self-sacrificing love. **2 Peter 1:5-7**]

Jesus and the apostles taught elsewhere that the prospect of reward should motivate disciples to serve the Lord. **Matt. 6:19-21; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 9:24-27; 2 Cor. 5:9-10.** Jesus was not contradicting that here. His point here was that God is under no obligation to reward us. He will do so because he chooses to do so, not because he has to do so. Our attitude should be that God does not need us to serve him, and that serving him is our duty—for which he is under no obligation to reward us.

The point is not the master's attitude in failing to express thanks for services rendered, but the slave's attitude in doing his duty without placing his master under obligation to him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. One of the mistakes Christian leaders make is that they think God should reward them when they are successful. God does reward them in ways they don't realize. Discuss this.

2. Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?
3. God disciplines us often to increase our faith. Comment on **Hebrews 12:4-11**.
4. The Pharisees taught their doing righteous deeds put God in their debt. Why were they wrong in saying this?

PERICOPE 68

Ten Lepers Are Healed but Only One Returns to Thank Jesus

¹¹ Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee on his way to Jerusalem. ¹² As he went into a village, ten men with a skin disease met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and shouted: Jesus, *iesous* Teacher *epistates* Master, have mercy on us.

¹⁴ When he saw them, he told them: Show yourselves to the priests. As they went, they were made clean.

¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he turned back and praised God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He quickly bowed at Jesus' feet and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Jesus asked: Weren't ten men made clean? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Only this foreigner came back to praise God.

¹⁹ Jesus told the man: Get up and go home. Your faith has made you well.

COMMENTS

Jesus encounters ten lepers on the border between Galilee and Samaria. Apparently, these Jews and Gentiles had gathered together in spite of the usual hostility between them because of their need to survive. They had knowledge of Jesus' healings and therefore called out to him from the usual distance they kept from people. Luke portrays them using the name *Jesus*. Only a few people in his Gospel do so. They ask for his mercy.

Jesus tells them to go to a priest and be declared clean so you can rejoin society. As they left, they were healed. When one saw that he was healed, he returned and thanked Jesus. Jesus asks: Weren't ten lepers healed? Where are the other nine? Jesus clarified that it was the man's faith in him that led to his obedience and was responsible for his restoration, not just his obedience to Jesus' command.

THINKS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Again Jesus uses a Samaritan as the hero. See **Luke 10:25-37**. Why does Jesus do this?
2. This is really a story of faith. Jesus never told the lepers they were healed. When would they be healed?

PERICOPE 69

Jesus Teaches the Kingdom of God Is Within You

^{17:20}The Pharisees asked Jesus when God's Kingdom would come. He answered them: People can't observe *parateresis* ^{ix} the coming of God's Kingdom. ²¹They can't say: Here, or there it is. You see God's Kingdom is within *entos*—among ^{2x} YOU.

COMMENTS

Why did the Pharisees keep asking Jesus to give them a sign from Heaven that he was the Messiah? **Luke 11:16**. They wanted proof he was who he said he was. But Jesus says the knowledge of the Kingdom of God will come suddenly. In fact, it will not come physically but spiritually when God places faith in Jesus in your heart. Then you will receive Eternal Life – a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus. The messianic kingdom was already among Jesus' hearers in the person of the King.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The Kingdom of God is spiritual, therefore, it cannot be seen. How can we know that we have entered the Kingdom of God?
2. Who opens the door to the Kingdom of God – you or God?
3. What do the Pharisees have to do to enter the Kingdom of God?
4. Didn't Jesus really give the Pharisees the proof he was the Messiah? How?
5. How did the Pharisees envision the coming of God's Kingdom?
6. Is having Eternal Life and entering the Kingdom of God the same thing?

PERICOPE 70

Jesus Teaches about His Second Coming

^{17:22} Jesus said to his disciples: The time will come when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it.

²³ People will say: There he is, or here he is. Don't run after those people.

²⁴ The Day of the Son of Man will be like lightning that flashes from one end of the sky to the other. ²⁵ But first he must suffer a lot and be rejected by the people of his day.

²⁶ When the Son of Man comes again, the situation will be like the time of Noah. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, and getting married until the day that Noah went into the ship. Then the flood destroyed all of them.

²⁸ The situation will also be like the time of Lot. People were eating, drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But on the day that Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from the sky and destroyed all of them. ³⁰ The day when the Son of Man is revealed *apokalypto*—appear will be like that.

³¹ “On that day, those who are on the roof shouldn't come down to get their belongings out of their houses. Those who are in the field shouldn't turn back. ³² Remember Lot's wife. ³³ Those who try to save their lives will lose them, and those who lose their lives will save them.

³⁴ I can guarantee that on that night, if two people are in one bed, one will be taken and the other one will be left. ³⁵ Two women will be grinding grain together. One will be taken, and the other one will be left.

³⁷ They asked him: Where, Lord? Jesus told them: Vultures will gather wherever there is a dead body.

COMMENTS

Jesus' disciples were told by Jesus that one day the bridegroom would be taken from them and then they would fast. **Luke 5:35**. So then the disciples would be looking eagerly for Jesus to

return. This would be the day of the Son of Man when he could come with his angels. **Luke 9:26; 21:27.**

Jesus' return to the earth will be unmistakable. The earthly kingdom of Messiah will not creep up on people. People living on the earth then will not discover that it had begun some time ago or that they were suddenly aware of being in it. It will not take place in some remote, out-of-the-way place that only a few people will observe. Everyone will know when it begins.

His disciples will know this as certainly as they see lightning light up the sky. False prophets can't imitate this. But before this happens, Jesus will be rejected in Jerusalem and die on the cross.

On the day of the Son of Man, people will be doing the things they do normally. But this day will be abnormal, as dramatic as the day God rained down sulfur and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah. **Genesis 19:24.** Then Jesus will take believers to Heaven in a rapture. Jesus will take only believers to Paradise with him.

The disciples ask: Where will this separation occur? Jesus replies with a proverb: Wherever there is a dead body, vultures will appear. Where will God's judgments appear? Wherever they are needed.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 24:4-31; Mark 13:5-27; Luke 21:8-28**

1. What will be the sign that Jesus will appear?
2. How will people know Jesus when he comes?
3. When Jesus comes, everything will happen suddenly. People shouldn't go back into their houses. If Jesus is rapturing them to Paradise, why should he say this?
4. How does Jesus determine who is taken to Paradise with him and who is left on earth for the tribulation to follow?

PERICOPE 71

Jesus Teaches Perseverance in Prayer

^{18:1} Jesus used this illustration with his disciples to show them that they need to pray *proseuchomai* all the time *pantote*-always and never give up *ekkakeo*-faint 6x.

²He said: In a city there was a judge who didn't fear God or respect people.

³In that city there was also a widow who kept coming to him and saying: Give me justice.

⁴For a while the judge refused to do anything. But then he thought: This widow really annoys me. Although I don't fear God or respect people, ⁵I'll have to give her justice. Otherwise, she'll keep coming to me until she wears me out.

⁶The Lord added: Pay attention to what the dishonest judge thought.

⁷Won't God give his chosen people *eklektos*^{9x} justice when they cry out *boao* to him for help day and night? Is he slow to help them *makrothymeo*-patiently suffer with them ^{10x}? ⁸I can guarantee that he will give them justice quickly *ekdikesis*-avenge ^{9x}.

But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith *pistis* on earth?

COMMENTS

Jesus encourages people to be persistent in their prayers, not to pray continuously, but in all circumstances. He gives an example of an unjust judge who finally gives into a widow who won't give up demanding justice. In severe contrast to this, God isn't slow to help his people. He simply waits for the right time.

The judge granted the widow's petition solely because of her persistence. Jesus was not teaching that God takes the same attitude toward disciples that this judge took toward this widow. The judge contrasts with God. His point was that since persistence is effective with unjust judges, how much more effective will it be with the righteous Judge.

But the real question is: When the Son of Man returns, will he find his people faithfully waiting for him?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. While God always answers our prayers, he answers them as he wills and in his own time. Is this the reason Jesus says for us to be persistent in prayer or is there another reason?
2. God uses our prayer time with him to develop our character in the sanctification journey. Is this why he often does not give us what we want when we want it but later?
3. Why does Jesus ask the last question in this pericope? *When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?* Does Jesus feel most of the people on earth will abandon their faith in him?

PERICOPE 72

A Pharisee and a Tax Collector

^{18:9} Jesus also used this illustration with some who were sure *peitho*—trusted *epi*—in *heautou*—themselves that God approved of them *dikaios*—righteous while they looked down on *exoutheneo*—despised everyone else *loiapos*. ¹⁰ He said:

Two men went into the Temple courtyard to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed: God I thank you that I'm not like other people. I'm not a robber or a dishonest person. I haven't committed adultery. I'm not even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and I give you a tenth of my entire income.

¹³ But the tax collector was standing at a distance. He wouldn't even look up to Heaven. Instead, he became very upset and he said: God be merciful *hilaskomai* to me a sinner *hamartolos*.

¹⁴ I can guarantee that this tax collector went home with God's approval *dikaioo*—justified, but the Pharisee didn't.

Everyone who honors *hypsoo*—exalts himself will be humbled *tapeinoo* but the person who humbles *tapeinoo* himself will be honored *hypsoo*.

COMMENTS

This is an important teaching in Luke and also in Isaiah. The word *hypsoo* appears 5x in **Luke 1:52; 10:15; 14:4; 18:14** 2x. The word *tapeinoo* appears in **Luke 3:5; 14:11; and 18:14**.

Even though the Pharisee addressed God in prayer, Jesus noted that he was really talking to himself and reviewing his own self-righteousness. He told God what a superior person he was, using the behavior of others as his standard of comparison. He took pride in his supposed superior status and the works that he performed that separated him from others.

The tax collector did not boast of his own righteousness but pled with God for mercy, acknowledging his sinfulness. He used God as the standard of righteousness and confessed that he fell short. He knew that his only hope was God's mercy.

Jesus declared the tax collector "justified" (i.e., declared righteous in God's sight, a judicial act, not made righteous). God declared him righteous because he looked to God for the gift of righteousness, rather than claiming to be righteous on his own merit like the Pharisee did.

Jesus repeated the principle that God humbles those who exalt themselves, but he exalts those who humble themselves. **Luke 13:30; 14:11**. In the context, Jesus meant that in order to be righteous in God's sight, one must acknowledge his lack of personal righteousness, rather than claiming to have righteousness that he does not have. Justification depends on God's grace, not on human works or merit.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. The tax collector humbled himself, so God honored him. Where did Luke say this before?
2. Why is being humble so easy for a little child but so difficult for an adult?
3. What was wrong with what the Pharisee said to God? He was just stating that he obeyed the instructions of the Towrah – legal righteousness.
4. Isaiah said:

The High and Lofty One lives forever and his name is holy. This is what he says: I live in a high and holy place. But I am with those who are crushed and humble. I will renew the spirit of those who are humble and the courage of those who are crushed. **Isaiah 57:15**

What is God saying here?

PERICOPE 73

Jesus Teaches You Must Receive the Kingdom as a Little Child

¹⁵ Some people brought infants to Jesus to have him hold them. When the disciples saw this, they told the people not to do that.

¹⁶ But Jesus called the infants to him and said: Don't stop the children from coming to me. Children like these are part of God's Kingdom.

¹⁷ I can guarantee this truth: Whoever doesn't receive *dechomai* God's Kingdom as a little child receives it, will never enter *eiserchomai* it.

COMMENTS

Jesus corrected the disciples and encouraged the parents to continue bringing their children to him. Jesus had a special interest in the children because they illustrated the humility necessary to enter the kingdom. Obviously, infants are not humble in the same sense that adults show humility, but infants are humble in the sense of being totally dependent and unable to provide for themselves. They receive rather than provide, and in those qualities they are good examples of humility. Without this sense of being unable to provide for oneself, and a willingness to receive from another, no adult can enter the messianic kingdom.

Jesus has now told us why many people are not converted. Their pride keeps them from accepting that God is in charge of their lives.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-14

1. Why must God's gift of salvation be accepted as a gift rather than be demanded to be given to us because of our good works? HINT: Read **Ephesians 2:8-10**.
2. Is this requirement of humility why many intelligent people know the things of religion well and yet cannot develop hearts that God loves? How are these generally nice people to be genuinely converted?
3. How can this statement of God to Isaiah help intelligent people to give up their pride?

[My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways, declares the Lord. Just as the Heavens are higher than the earth, so my

ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts. **Isaiah 55:8-9**]

4. What is the relationship of this pericope to **Luke 9:47-48**?

PERICOPE 74

The Rich Ruler Refuses to Become Jesus' Disciple Because of His Wealth

^{18:18} An official asked Jesus: Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit Eternal Life? ¹⁹ Jesus said to him: Why do you call me good? No one is good except God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: Never commit adultery. Never murder. Never steal. Never give false testimony. Honor your father and your mother. **Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5: 16-21**

²¹ The official replied: I've obeyed all these commandments since I was a boy.

²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him: You still need one thing. Sell everything you have. Distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then follow me.

²³ When the official heard this, he became sad, because he was very rich.

²⁴ Jesus watched him and said: How hard it is for rich people to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

People Are Astonished at What Jesus Said

^{18:26} Those who heard him asked: Who, then, can be saved *sozo*? ²⁷ Jesus said: The things that are impossible *adynatos*_{IOX} for people to do are possible *dynatos* for God to do.

²⁸ Then Peter said: We've left everything to follow you. ²⁹ Jesus said to them: I can guarantee this truth: Anyone who gave up his home, wife, brothers, parents, or children because of the kingdom of God ³⁰ will certainly receive many times as much in this life and will receive Eternal Life in the world to come.

COMMENTS

It seems the perfect candidate to be a disciple of Jesus has come. This man wants to receive Eternal Life. And he obeys the commandments of the Towrah. Jesus, however, says: One thing is missing. You love your wealth. Sell everything you have, give the money to the poor

and then come and follow me. The man went away sad because he was unwilling to give up his wealth. Jesus repeats his comment that it is hard for rich people to only have one God.

[A servant cannot have two masters. He will hate the first and love the second, or he will be devoted to the first and despise the second. You cannot serve God and wealth. **Luke 16:13**]

Love of wealth is a god that some can't give up. Then he gave an impossible example. When people heard this, they said: *Who then can be saved?* Jesus said: It is still possible for God to save wealthy people, even though it is difficult. *Nothing is impossible for God.*

Then Peter said: We've given up everything to follow you. Jesus replied: And you will be given more than you can imagine in this life and Eternal Life in the world to come. Peter's comment was an implicit request for assurance that they would be rewarded for doing so. Jesus replied that everyone who denies himself the normal comforts and contacts of life in order to advance God's mission will receive a greater reward from God for doing so.

The Jews viewed wealth as a sign of God's blessing, since God had blessed many of the most godly in the past with riches (e.g., Abraham, Job, Joseph, David, et al.). The idea that riches really could hinder a person from entering the messianic kingdom, rather than paving the way for his or her acceptance, shocked them. Apparently Jesus meant that no one, not even the rich, could enter the messianic kingdom apart from God's grace. Entrance is impossible from the human viewpoint, but God can produce repentance and faith in the heart of anyone, even the rich.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31

1. Can wealthy people be disciples of Jesus? How? What do they have to do?
2. It is surprising that the people ask: How can anyone be saved if it is so hard for wealthy people to enter Heaven. This is quite surprising for most people in Galilee and Judea were very poor. Is Luke writing to a specific group of middle or upper class people with many possessions? Remember that Antioch was the third largest city in the Roman Empire. There were many elites living there with great wealth.
3. List all the places in this Gospel where Luke speaks of not letting possessions be your main goal in life, where you had two gods: **YHWH** and Mammon.
4. Look at the many people God told nothing is impossible for God. Abraham in **Genesis 18:13**; Moses in **Numbers 11:23**; Isaiah in **Isaiah 50:2**. Zechariah in **Zechariah 8:6**. When did God say this in the Gospel of Luke besides here and to whom?

5. Why did Peter say what he did? He wasn't telling Jesus anything Jesus didn't already know.
What did Peter give up to follow Jesus?

PERICOPE 75

Jesus Predicts His Passion for a Third Time

^{18:31} Jesus took the Twelve Apostles aside and said to them: We're going to Jerusalem. Everything that the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will come true. ³² He will be handed over to foreigners. They will make fun of him, insult him, spit on him, ³³ whip *mastigoo*-scourge 7x him, and kill him. But on the third day he will come back to life.

³⁴ But they didn't understand *syniemi* any of this. What he said was a mystery *krypto*-hidden to them and they didn't know *ginosko* what he meant.

COMMENTS

This is the most detailed of the three passion predictions of Jesus in Luke. The disciples have been with Jesus for 3 ½ years. Why didn't they know what he meant? Will they get it even when it happens? Mark and Matthew describe the disciples' fear and amazement. Luke stresses their lack of understanding.

Do the disciples actually think Jesus is going to set up his kingdom and rule the world from Jerusalem soon? Isaiah 60. If not, why is he coming to Jerusalem? The rich young ruler failed to understand the Good News about Jesus. The disciples fail to understand the bad news about what will happen to Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34

1. Review the first Luke 9:22 and second Luke 9:44 passion predictions. What information does Jesus include here that he hasn't included before?
2. Is there anything Jesus says here that he hasn't already said somewhere else in this Gospel? HINT: This is the first time Gentiles are mentioned in Jesus' suffering.
3. Doesn't Jesus expect his disciples to understand what he has said?
4. What now do Jesus' disciples understand about his identity? What do they understand about his mission for God?
5. What do Jesus' disciples say while they are in Jerusalem? Do any of their words reveal what they are thinking?

PERICOPE 76

Jesus Gives Sight to a Blind Man

^{18:35} As Jesus came near Jericho, a blind man was sitting and begging by the road. ³⁶ When he heard the crowd going by, he tried to find out what was happening. ³⁷ The people told him that Jesus from Nazareth was passing by.

³⁸ Then the blind man shouted: Jesus *iesous*, Son of David, have mercy on me. ³⁹ The people at the front of the crowd told the blind man to be quiet. But he shouted even louder: Son of David, have mercy *eleeo* on me.

⁴⁰ Jesus stopped and ordered them to bring the man to him. When the man came near, Jesus asked him: ⁴¹ What do you want me to do for you? The blind man said: Lord, I want to see again. ⁴² Jesus told him: Receive your sight. Your faith has made you well.

⁴³ Immediately, he could see again. He followed Jesus and praised God. All the people saw this, and they, too, praised God.

COMMENTS

Jesus has finally reached Jericho. He is only 15 miles from Jerusalem, but it is a six hour walk 3,300 feet up to Jerusalem. As Jesus was passing through Jericho, probably Israel's oldest city, he is met by a blind man who calls him Jesus. He is the first to call Jesus the Son of David, the Davidic Messiah's title. And he asks Jesus to have mercy on him, Jesus gives him his sight. So he follows Jesus and praises God.

Luke probably included this incident, partially, to contrast the faith of the blind man with the unbelief of the religious leaders. Again, we see the humble received salvation, while others who failed to realize their need for Jesus' grace did not. The incident was a lesson for the disciples, as well as for the multitudes.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52

1. Who else calls Jesus by his name *Jesus* in this Gospel?
2. Why is this man the only one to call Jesus the Son of David? What is the blind man signifying by using this title for Jesus ?

3. Does Luke imply others received sight when Jesus gave this man his sight? Does this connote recognition now by the crowd of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah long awaited by Israel?
4. The blind man after receiving his sight follows Jesus on the way to Jerusalem. What is his sight as compared to Jesus' disciples' sight of Jesus' identity and mission?
5. This is the first open proclamation of Jesus as the Davidic Messiah. What is Luke telling us about the crowd's identification of Jesus' identity?
6. Jesus doesn't forbid the man to call him this or even comment on his identification of Jesus' identity. Why is this? Has a new time arrived?

PERICOPE 77

The Director of Taxes Repents and Follows Jesus

^{19:1} Jesus was passing through Jericho. ²A man named Zacchaeus was there. He was the director of tax collectors, and he was rich.

³He tried to see who Jesus was. But Zacchaeus was a small man, and he couldn't see Jesus because of the crowd. ⁴So Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed a fig tree to see Jesus, who was coming that way.

⁵When Jesus came to the tree, he looked up and said: Zacchaeus come down. I must stay at your house today. ⁶Zacchaeus came down and was glad to welcome Jesus into his home. ⁷But the people who saw this began to express disapproval. They said: He went to be the guest of a sinner.

⁸Later, at dinner, Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord: Lord, I'll give half of my property to the poor. I'll pay four times as much as I owe to those I have cheated in any way.

⁹Then Jesus said to Zacchaeus: You and your family have been saved *sozo* today. You've shown that you, too, are one of Abraham's descendants.

¹⁰Indeed, the Son of Man has come *erchomai* to seek *zeteo* and to save *sozo* people who are lost *apollymi*.

COMMENTS

Jesus is still in Jericho. He sees Zacchaeus watching him from a tree and says he must stay at his house that day. But again people criticize Jesus for going to the home of a sinner – a man who does not follow the Towrah. At dinner, Zacchaeus repents of his lifestyle and promises to give half of his property to the poor and restore any money he has stolen by cheating people.

Jesus assessed Zaccheus' promises as evidence of saving faith. Salvation had come to his house because Zaccheus had exercised saving faith and had thereby proved to be a genuine descendant of Abraham, who is the spiritual father of all believers. Zaccheus' faith and works proved that he was a true, spiritual son of Abraham, and not just one of his physical descendants. Now he had salvation, not because he was a Jew physically, but because he was a believer in Jesus.

God has done the impossible. He has brought a rich man to faith and salvation. Zaccheus resembles the rich young ruler in that he was wealthy. But his response to Jesus was precisely the opposite of that other rich man. His salvation is a great example of the truth that with God all things are possible.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How did Jesus know that God wanted him to go to Zacchaeus' home?
2. How are the stories of the blind man and Zacchaeus alike and how are they different?
3. How does Matthew, a former tax collector, react to Zacchaeus conversion?
4. How does this story show that nothing is impossible for God?
5. Jesus says Zacchaeus is truly a son of Abraham? Is saying this the same thing as saying that Zacchaeus is saved?
6. Zacchaeus calls Jesus Lord. What image of Jesus' identity does this convey?
7. Explain what Jesus means by saying he seeks people who are lost? Greek words translated *lost* appear 7x in the Gospel: **Luke 14:34; 15:4, 6, 9, 24, 32; 19:10.**

PERICOPE 78

The Parable of the Trustworthy Servants

^{19:11} Jesus was getting closer to Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God would appear *anasphaino* 2x suddenly *parachrema*-immediately.

Luke, like Mark, uses *parachrema* for *suddenly* or *immediately*. Out of the 19x this word *parachrema* appears in the Bible, Luke uses it 17x -- 10x in this Gospel and 7x in Acts. Mark and also Matthew use *eutheos*. 40x in Mark, 15x in Matthew, but only 8x in Luke's Gospel and 9x in Acts.

While Jesus had the people's attention he used this illustration *parabole*.

¹² He said: A prince went to a distant country to be appointed king and then he returned. ¹³ Before he left, he called ten of his servants and gave them ten coins. He said to his servants: Invest this money until I come back.

¹⁴ The citizens of his own country hated him. They sent representatives to follow him and say to the person who was going to appoint him: We don't want this man to be our king.

¹⁵ After he was appointed King, he came back. Then he said: Call those servants to whom I gave money. I want to know how much each one has made by investing.

¹⁶ The first servant said: Sir, the coin you gave me has earned ten times as much. ¹⁷ The king said to him: Good job! You're a good servant. You proved that you could be trusted with a little money. Take charge of ten cities.

¹⁸ The second servant said: The coin you gave me, sir, has made five times as much. ¹⁹ The king said to this servant: You take charge of five cities.

²⁰ Then the other servant said: Sir, look! Here's your coin. I've kept it in a cloth for safekeeping because ²¹ I was afraid of you. You're a tough person

to get along with. You take what isn't yours and harvest grain you haven't planted.

²²The king said to him: I'll judge you by what you've said you evil servant. You knew that I was a tough person to get along with. You knew that I take what isn't mine and harvest grain I haven't planted. ²³Then why didn't you put my money in the bank? When I came back, I could have collected it with interest.

²⁴The king told his men: Take his coin away and give it to the man who has ten. ²⁵They replied: Sir, he already has ten coins.

²⁶ I can guarantee that everyone who has something will be given more. But everything will be taken away from those who don't have much.

²⁷Bring my enemies who didn't want me to be their king. Kill them in front of me.

COMMENTS

This is also called the Parable of the Ten Minas or Ten Pounds. Jesus' long journey is coming to an end. Crowds are with him and they are excited. They think now the Messiah is going to bring in his kingdom and reign from his throne in Jerusalem.

People who become Jesus' disciples are given gifts. Paul calls them spiritual gifts:

[The evidence of the Spirit's presence is given to each person for the common good of everyone. The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak with wisdom. The same Spirit gives another person the ability to speak with knowledge. To another person the same Spirit gives courageous faith.

To another person the same Spirit gives the ability to heal. Another can work miracles. Another can speak what God has revealed. Another can tell the difference between spirits. Another can speak in different kinds of languages. Another can interpret languages.

There is only one Spirit who does all these things by giving what God wants to give to each person. **I Corinthians 12:7-II**]

[In the church God has appointed first apostles, next prophets, third teachers, then those who perform miracles, then those who have the gift of healing, then those who help others, those who are managers, and those who can speak in a number of languages. 1 Corinthians 12:28]

Jesus tells a parable about a prince who was going to a distant country to be appointed king. Before he left, he called ten of his servants and gave them coins. He told them to invest this money until I return. The king's enemies sent ambassadors to the far country telling them they didn't want this man to be their king.

When he returned, he asked for an accounting of their investment. The first servant said he had increased the coin ten times. The king said: *You're a good servant. Take charge of ten cities.* The second servant said he had increased the coin five times. The king said: *You're a good servant. Take charge of five cities.* The third servant said: *I am returning your coin. I was afraid of you. You are difficult to get along with.*

The king replied: *You knew I am difficult. But why didn't you at least give the coin to the bankers and provide me with interest.* Then the king said: *Take this coin and give it to the man who produced ten coins.* Then the king ordered his servants: *Bring my enemies before me and kill them.*

The king in Jesus' parable represents Jesus. The distant country that he went to stands for heaven, and the place to which he would return is the earth. Jesus went to heaven to receive an earthly kingdom from his Father. The correctness of these identifications becomes clearer as the parable unfolds.

It appears Jesus is telling how he will go to Jerusalem, but his enemies will oppose him. Jesus would be killed, be risen to life, and then go to Heaven. But one day he will return. While Jesus is away, two of his servants are using the spiritual gifts God has given them and providing fruit for God. Yet some who claim to be his disciples aren't producing any fruit. Jesus will reward the servants who produce fruit and not reward the others who do not produce fruit.

The servant who did nothing represents someone who does nothing of eternal value with his life. The servant explained that his fear of the master was responsible for his lack of fruit. But this man was lying. He did not fear his master. If he had feared him, he would have obeyed him. He would have gotten busy and served the master if he feared him. His assessment of the master was correct, but it did not have the proper effect on him.

The parable shows that God expects the disciples of Jesus to take risks as they produce fruit and harvest for God. The disciple who refuses to take risks and hoards the spiritual gifts he has been given is unfaithful.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 25:14-30

1. God gives us spiritual gifts to build the Kingdom of God not just to satisfy ourselves but to take risks trusting that the Holy Spirit will aid us. We will not always succeed and may face criticism and persecution. How many times in this Gospel does Luke say that we must be willing to risk our lives for him and for the Gospel?
2. Jesus is apparently teaching this parable while he is sitting with Zacchaeus at his house. He is there with tax collectors and sinners and his disciples. Why would he use this time to speak about disciples producing fruit? Is he attempting to make the tax collectors and sinners jealous of his disciples?
3. What important lesson about the future is Jesus teaching here? Is he teaching the Kingdom of God will not come on earth until he returns again?
4. Why does Jesus give the unfaithful servant's mina to the servant who created the most fruit?
5. Why do Jesus' disciples question Jesus giving the one coin to the servant who has ten? Why do they think this is unjust?
6. What does it signify when the king kills his enemies?
7. How does this parable describe the responsibility of recipients of God's salvation?

Part Four – Jesus in Jerusalem

Pericopes 79-102

During the day Jesus would teach in the Temple courtyard. But at night he would go to the Mount of Olives to spend the night there. All the people would get up early *orthizo* ^{ix} to hear him speak in the Temple courtyard. **Luke 21:37-38**

Luke spends 24 pericopes describing the events of the last week of Jesus' life out of the 102 pericopes in this study. He wants to be certain everyone knows that Jesus was open in what he did. Jesus didn't do things secretly. The Jewish religious leaders, the High Priest, the Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, and the Roman Governor were given every opportunity to question Jesus and learn what his identity and teachings were. They knew exactly what they were doing. And what they did was self-serving and unrighteous.

They were fighting against God but were unwittingly fulfilling God's plan for his Son. The Covenant of Redemption, cut by the three persons of the Holy Trinity before the Creation was created, was being fulfilled.

Certainly, all of these leaders already knew a great deal about Jesus. Israel was really not that big a country only 50-60 miles wide and 120 miles long. All of these officials had their spies and Jesus' enemies – the Pharisees – certainly kept all of them informed of Jesus' activities. So none of them could say they didn't know who Jesus was and what he taught.

PERICOPE 79

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem and Cleanses the Temple

^{19:28} After Jesus had given this illustration *parabole*, he continued on his way to Jerusalem. ²⁹ When he came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives as it was called, Jesus sent two of his disciples ahead of him. ³⁰ He said to them: Go into the village ahead of you. As you enter, you will find a young donkey tied there. No one has ever sat on it. Untie it, and bring it. ³¹ If anyone asks you why you are untying it, say that the Lord needs it.

³² The men Jesus sent found it as he had told them. ³³ While they were untying the young donkey, its owners asked them: Why are you untying the donkey? ³⁴ The disciples answered: The Lord needs it. ³⁵ They brought the donkey to Jesus, put their coats on it, and helped Jesus onto it.

Before Jesus Enters Jerusalem

^{19:36} As he was riding along, people spread their coats on the road. ³⁷ By this time he was coming near the place where the road went down the Mount of Olives. Then the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God for all the miracles they had seen. ³⁸ They shouted joyfully:

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in Heaven and glory in the highest Heaven. **Psalm 118:26**

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus: Teacher tell your disciples to be quiet. ⁴⁰ Jesus replied: I can guarantee that if they are quiet, the stones will cry out.

We recall John the Baptist saying that *God can raise up descendants for Abraham from these stones.* **Luke 3:9**

Jesus Cries Over Jerusalem

⁴¹ When he came closer and saw the city, he began to cry *klaio*. ⁴² He said: If you had only known *ginosko* today *hemera* what would bring you peace *eirene*. But now it is hidden *krypto* so you cannot see it.

⁴³The time will come when enemy armies will build a wall to surround you and close you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will level you to the ground and kill your people. One stone will not be left on top of another because you didn't recognize *ginosko*-know the time *kairos*-significant time when God came to help *episcope*-visit YOU.

Luke will use the word *kairos* 12x meaning *significant time* in contrast to chronological time *hora* in his Gospel. *Kairos* appears in **Luke 1:20; 4:13; 8:13; 12:42, 56; 13:1; 18:30; 19:44; 20:10; 21:8, 24, 36**. This is the only time in this Gospel that Jesus weeps. No other Gospel portrays this event.

Jesus Enters the City and Cleanses the Temple

^{19:45}Jesus went into the Temple courtyard and began to throw out those who were selling things there. ⁴⁶He said to them: Scripture says:

My house will be a house of prayer **Isaiah 56:7**, but you have turned it into a gathering place for thieves. **Jeremiah 7:11**

Luke really understates Jesus' cleansing of the Temple. He describes this event in only two verses. Matthew and Mark use twice as many verses. John uses nine verses.

⁴⁷Jesus taught *didasko* in the Temple courtyard every day. The chief priests, the experts in Moses' Teachings, and the leaders of the people looked for a way to kill *apollymi* him. ⁴⁸But they could not find a way to do it, because all the people were eager *ekkremamai* IX to hear *akouo* him.

COMMENTS

Jesus and his disciples finish walking the 15-mile road from Jericho which is below sea level up to Jerusalem which is 2,500 feet above sea level. It is an exhausting climb, taking 4-6 hours. When they get to Bethany, a secret disciple of Jesus had a donkey waiting in front of his house. The disciples give the code word: *The Lord needs it*, and they place coats on the donkey for Jesus to ride. As they ride on the road down the Mount of Olives into the city of Jerusalem, his disciples praise God saying: *Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord*, a quotation from **Psalm 118**.

But when Jesus saw the city and its Temple, he began to weep. *If you only knew what would give you peace*. But you didn't realize when God came to visit you, so this city will be destroyed and the people in it killed.

Then Jesus entered the city and immediately went to the Temple. He saw the High Priest had authorized the sale of sacrificial animals in the Temple courtyard. This was the only location in the Temple the Jews allowed Gentiles to enter and pray. With the noise going on during the selling, Gentiles could hardly pray there. This infuriated Jesus, so he drove out the sellers and their animals, quoting Isaiah's words about God's Temple being a place of prayer for faithful Gentiles: *A House of Prayer for All Nations*. Every day Jesus taught in the Temple courtyard. All the people in Jerusalem were eager *ekkremamai* IX to hear *akouo* him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 1:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; John 12:12-19

1. Did Jesus ride the donkey all the way into the city of Jerusalem?
2. Why does Jesus immediately weep over the city?
3. Why does Jesus immediately go to the Temple when he first goes into the city?
4. How long has it been since Jesus has been in the Temple?
5. Why isn't the High Priest concerned he is preventing Gentiles from praying in the Temple courtyards?
6. Why don't either the Sanhedrin or the Roman Governor arrest Jesus for creating a disturbance in the Temple?
7. What was the attitude of the people of Jerusalem toward Jesus?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why does Luke focus on Jesus' lamentation over the city, rather than on Jesus' triumphal entry into the city?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Why is Jesus' cleansing of the Temple not as significant to Luke as it is to John?

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Luke could have quoted here these verses from Isaiah: Why didn't he?

[I will remember the foreigners who have joined the Lord to worship him to love the Lord's name, and to be his servants. I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them happy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offering and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar because my

house will be a house of prayer for all nations. The Almighty Lord who gathers the scattered people of Israel declares: I will gather still others besides those I have already gathered. **Isaiah 56:6-8**]

PERICOPE 80

Jesus' Authority Challenged

^{20:1} One day Jesus was teaching the people in the Temple courtyard and telling them the Good News. The chief priests, the experts in Moses' Teachings, and the leaders came up to him. ²They asked him: Tell us what gives you the right to do these things? Who told you that you could do this?

³Jesus answered them: I too have a question for you. Tell me, ⁴did John's the Baptist right to baptize come from Heaven or from humans?

⁵They talked about this among themselves. They said: If we say: from Heaven, he will ask: Why didn't you believe him? ⁶But if we say: from humans, everyone will stone us to death. They're convinced that John was a prophet. ⁷So they answered that they didn't know who gave John the right to baptize.

⁸Jesus told them: Then I won't tell you why I have the right to do these things.

COMMENTS

While the members of the Sanhedrin are able to question Jesus, they cannot arrest him because they believe the people of Jerusalem will start a riot. Remember, the city is filled with pilgrims who have come for the Passover Festival, perhaps the most important festival in Judaism. So these people from all over Judea, Galilee and the Diaspora – the places where Jews lived outside the Holy Land – loved to hear the good Towrah teaching that Jesus did. Luke says they even got up early to hear him.

When the members of the Sanhedrin questioned him, Jesus fended them off with his own question regarding John the Baptist. Since John was held in high regard, as many people from Jerusalem went out the short distance to the Jordan River to hear him, the Sanhedrin couldn't deride John without creating a great protest.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33

1. What would the Sanhedrin have said if Jesus had simply said: God told me to do this?

PERICOPE 8I

Jesus' Parable of the Vineyard

^{20:9} Then using this illustration Jesus spoke to the people:

A man planted a vineyard, leased it to vineyard workers, and went on a long trip.

The nation of Israel is seen as a vineyard in many places in the Bible:

[You brought a vine from Egypt. You forced out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it so that it took root and filled the land. Its shade covered the mountains. Its branches covered the mighty cedars. It reached out its branches to the Mediterranean Sea. Its shoots reached the Euphrates River. **Psalm 80:8-11**]

¹⁰ At the right time he sent a servant to the workers to obtain from them a share of the grapes from the vineyard. But the workers beat the servant and sent him back with nothing.

¹¹ So he sent a different servant. The workers beat him, treated him shamefully, and sent him back with nothing. ¹² Then he sent a third servant. But they injured this one and threw him out of the vineyard.

¹³ Then the owner of the vineyard said: What should I do? I'll send my son whom I love *agapetos*-beloved. **Luke 3:22; 9:35**. They'll probably respect him.

¹⁴ When the workers saw him, they talked it over among themselves. They said: This is the heir. Let's kill him so that the inheritance will be ours.

¹⁵ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

What will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will destroy these workers and give the vineyard to others.

Those who heard him said: That's unthinkable.

The people listening thought Jesus said God would turn the nation and its Temple completely over to Gentiles foreseeing the end of Judaism.

¹⁷Then Jesus looked straight at them *emblepo* and asked: What then does this Scripture verse mean:

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone **Psalm 118:22** ? ¹⁸ Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken. If that stone falls on anyone, it will crush that person. **Isaiah 8:14-15**

When Jesus gazed at them directly, he was asking them: Do you realize how serious this is? Luke later records Jesus looked at Peter who just denied him in the same way. **Luke 22:61**. God would use the cornerstone the builders rejected as his agent of judgment.

Jesus was recalling King Nebuchadnezzar's dream:

[Your Majesty, you had a vision. You saw a large statute. This statue was very bright. It stood in front of you and it looked terrifying. The head of this statue was made of fine gold. Its chest and arms were made of silver. Its legs were made of iron, Its feet were made partly of iron and partly of clay.

[While you were watching, a stone was cut out but not by humans. It struck the statue's iron and clay feet and smashed them. Then all at once, the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were smashed. They became like husks on a threshing floor in summer. The wind carried them away and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a large mountain which filled the whole world. This is the dream. Now we'll tell you its meaning. **Daniel 2:31-36**]

[The God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed. No other people will be allowed to rule it. It will smash all the other kingdoms and put an end to them. But it will be established forever. This is the stone you saw cut out of the mountain but not by humans. It smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver and gold. The great God has told you what will happen in the future, Your Majesty. The dream is true and you can trust that this is its meaning. **Daniel 2:44-45**]

¹⁹The experts in Moses' Teachings and the chief priests wanted to arrest him right there but they were afraid of the people. They knew that he had directed this illustration at them.

COMMENTS

Jesus now tells a parable against the Sanhedrin that they can't possibly misunderstand, nor can the people of God fail to see that Jesus is not afraid of these religious rulers. They seem to admire his courage.

The parable clearly shows that Jesus knows the Jewish religious rulers want to kill him. But Jesus also says that when the Sanhedrin kills him, God will give the vineyard – the Temple – to the Gentiles. The rulers are aghast. Jesus proves what he says by quoting two Scriptures that they and the people standing there immediately understood.

As a result, the Sanhedrin wanted to kill Jesus right then by stoning, but they couldn't because the people would start a riot.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 21:33-36; Mark 12:1-12

1. Read Isaiah's *Song of the Vineyard*:

[Let me sing a love song to my Beloved about his vineyard:

My Beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. He dug it up, removed its stones, planted it with the choicest vines, built a watchtower in it, and made a winepress in it. Then he waited for it to produce good grapes but it produced only sour, wild grapes.

Now then you inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could I have done for my vineyard than what I have already done for it? When I waited for it to produce good grapes, why did it produce only sour, wild grapes?

Now then, let me tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will tear away its hedge so that it can be devoured and tear down its wall so that it can be trampled. I will make it a wasteland. It will never be pruned or hoed. Thrones and weeds will grow in it and I will command the clouds not to rain on it.

The vineyard of the Lord of Armies is the nation of Israel and the people of Judah are the garden of his delight. He hoped for justice but saw only slaughter; for righteousness but heard only cries of distress. **Isaiah 5:1-7**]

Compare Jesus' parable to Isaiah's parable. How are they different? How are they the same?

2. God had given Abraham's descendants the Promised Land. **Genesis 12:7**. And he gave them the freedom to develop it. The men who were sent for the fruit are the prophets. All of them were rejected, especially Jeremiah, the weeping prophet. So God finally had enough and allowed the Babylonians to destroy the Temple Solomon built and deport the people. The land laid vacant for 70 years. Then God brought them back from the Babylonian captivity. But now, the same thing has happened as before. God's prophet Jesus is rejected.

So what will God do? He will not now exile the people but will give the vineyard to Gentiles.

State what happened to Jerusalem in 70 AD and then in 135 AD under the Roman Emperor Hadrian. What was the new name Hadrian gave to Judea and to Jerusalem? What did Hadrian build on the Temple mount where the Temple had once stood?

PERICOPE 82

Members of the Sanhedrin Attempt to Embarrass Jesus

^{20:20} So they watched *paratereo* 6x for an opportunity to send out some spies *egkathetos* IX. The spies were to act *hypokrinomai* IX like sincere religious people *dikaios*-righteous. They wanted to catch *epilambanomai* him saying the wrong thing so that they could hand him over to the Roman Governor. ²¹They asked him: Teacher *didaskalos*—Master, we know that you're right in what you say and teach. Besides, you don't play favorites. Rather, you teach the way of God truthfully *aletheia*.

A Question about Paying Taxes to Rome

^{20:22} Is it right for us to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor or not? ²³He saw through their scheme, so he said to them: ²⁴Show me a coin. Whose face and name is this?

They answered: The Emperor's. ²⁵He said to them: Well then give the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor and give God what belongs to God. ²⁶They couldn't make him say anything wrong in front of the people. His answer surprised them so they said no more.

The Sadducees Ask Jesus about Life after Death

^{20:27} Some Sadducees, who say that people will never come back to life, came to Jesus. They asked him: ²⁸Teacher, Moses wrote for us: If a married man dies and has no children, his brother should marry his widow and have children for his brother. **Deuteronomy 25:5-6**

²⁹There were seven brothers. The first got married and died without having children. ³⁰Then the second brother married the widow, ³¹and so did the third. In the same way all seven brothers married the widow, died, and left no children. ³²Finally the woman died. ³³Now, when the dead come back to life, whose wife will she be? The seven brothers had married her.

³⁴ Jesus said to them: In this world people get married. ³⁵ But people who are considered worthy to come back to life and live in the next world will neither marry ³⁶ nor die anymore. They are the same as the angels. They are God's children who have come back to life.

³⁷ Even Moses showed in the passage about the bush that the dead come back to life. He says that the Lord is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **Exodus 3:15.** ³⁸ He's not the God of the dead but of the living. In God's sight all people are living.

Jesus stated the then-current belief that the souls of all people go to Sheol where they remain. Souls are not annihilated.

³⁹ Some experts in Moses' Teachings responded: Teacher that was well said.
⁴⁰ From that time on, no one dared to ask him another question.

The scribes were probably Pharisees who believed in resurrection and were glad to see Jesus best the Sadducees, their rivals.

Jesus Now Asks Them a Question

^{20:41} Jesus said to them: How can people say that the Messiah is David's son?
⁴² David says in the Book of Psalms:

The Lord *YHWH* said to my Lord *'Adonay*. Take the honored position — the one next to me God the Father on the Heavenly throne — ⁴³ until I put your enemies under your control. **Psalm 110:1**

⁴⁴ David calls him Lord *'Adonay*. So how can he be his son?

Jesus asks: How can King David call the Messiah his Lord if the Messiah is his son? The answer is: The Messiah can be King David's Lord only if he is God. Jesus is saying he is not only the human descendant of David the Jews anticipated but he is also God.

COMMENTS

The members of the Sanhedrin try their best to trap Jesus into saying something wrong they can accuse him with. First, they attempt to get him in trouble with the Roman Governor by saying people should not pay poll or customs taxes to Rome. Since Jesus is popular with the

people, they think Jesus would play this card. If he says this however, the Roman authorities will persecute him. Jesus sees their plan, so he answers in a way that offends no one.

Then they send the Sadducees, who do not believe in an afterlife. Using the concept of Levirate marriage, they propose a hypothetical situation. Jesus answers the question by giving them *new information* about the afterlife. Then he proves the afterlife exists quoting a passage from the first five books of the Towrah, the only books the Sadducees believe in. They don't believe in books of the prophets like Daniel.

Then Jesus asks a question, quoting **Psalm 110**. How can the Messiah, who is the son or descendant of David, call the Messiah the Lord who sits at the right hand of God? In saying this, Jesus is saying the Messiah is God himself.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT Matthew 22:15-33; 41-46; Mark 12:13-27; 35-37

1. What does it mean to *give what belongs to the Emperor to the Emperor and what belongs to God to God*?
2. Why is there no need for marriage in Heaven?
3. What does Jesus assume when he quotes **Genesis 3:14** to say *God is the God of the living*?
4. Why couldn't the members of the Sanhedrin answer Jesus' question?

PERICOPE 83

Jesus Warns of the Example Set by the Experts in Moses' Teaching

^{20:45} While all the people were listening, Jesus said to the disciples: ⁴⁶ Beware of the experts in Moses' Teachings scribes.

They like to walk around in long robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces, to have the front seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at dinners. ⁴⁷ They rob widows by taking their houses and then say long prayers to make themselves look good.

The experts in Moses' Teachings will receive the most severe punishment.

COMMENTS

Jesus says that the scribes abuse the authority given to them. He is incensed when religious leaders take advantage of people and act proudly. They should act with humbleness. And they even violated the sixth commandment when they steal from estates given to widows to live on. Jesus says God will punish them severely.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Mathew 23:1-12; Mark 12:37-40

1. Why do the scribes think they should be honored by people?
2. Jesus had already criticized the scribes in **Luke 11:37-54**. How is Jesus' criticism of them here different in emphasis?
3. How do the scribes attempt to gain exalted social status?
4. The scribes attempted to judge Jesus, but Jesus turns the tables on them. How does he do this?

PERICOPE 84

Jesus Praises a Widow's Contribution

^{2:1} Looking up, Jesus saw people, especially the rich, dropping their gifts into the Temple offering box. ² He noticed a poor widow drop in two small coins.

³ He said: I can guarantee this truth: This poor widow has given more than all the others. ⁴ All of these people have given what they could spare. But she in her poverty has given everything she had to live on.

COMMENTS

In the Temple there were thirteen trumpet-shaped chests where people placed their offerings. A poor widow dropped in two small coins, but she gave willingly all she had in devotion to God. The wealthy gave out of their abundance. Jesus is saying the widow's gift is more meaningful to God than the large gifts of the rich.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Mark 12:41-44

1. Why is the lawyer's piety false while the poor widow's piety is genuine?
2. Why does God appreciate the widow's gift more than the rich lawyer's gifts?
3. Why doesn't Matthew include this pericope in his Gospel?

PERICOPE 85

Jesus Teaches His Disciples about the Last Days

^{21:5} Some of the disciples were talking about the Temple complex. They noted that it was built with fine stones and decorated with beautiful gifts. So Jesus said: ⁶ About these buildings that you see — the time will come when not one of these stones will be left on top of another. Each one will be torn down.

⁷ The disciples asked him: Teacher, when will this happen? What will be the sign when all this will occur?

Phase One: False Messiahs Will Come

^{21:8} Jesus said: Be careful that you are not deceived. Many will come using my name. They will say: I am he! and The time is near. Don't follow them!

Phase Two, Three and Four: Wars, Earthquakes, and Plagues

^{21:9} When you hear of wars and revolutions, don't be terrified. These things must happen first, but the end *telos* will not *ou* come immediately *eutheos*.

¹⁰ Then Jesus continued: Nation will fight against nation and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be terrible earthquakes, famines, and dreadful diseases in various places. Terrifying sights and miraculous signs will come from the sky.

Phase Five: Persecution of Christians

^{21:12} Before all these things happen, people will arrest and persecute you. They will hand you over to their synagogues and put you into their prisons. They will drag you in front of kings and governors because of my name.

The Holy Spirit Will Assist You to Testify about Me

^{21:13} It will be your opportunity to testify *martyrion* to them. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to worry beforehand *promeletao* ^{IX} how you will defend yourselves *apologeomai* ^{IOX}. ¹⁵ I will give you words and wisdom that none of your enemies will be able to oppose *anteipon* ^{2X} or prove wrong *anthistemi*.

¹⁶ Even parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will betray you and kill some of you. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because you are committed to me. ¹⁸ But not a hair on your head will be lost. ¹⁹ By your endurance *hypomone*-patient endurance you will save *ktaomai*-possess ^{7X} your life.

Jesus Prophecies about the Roman Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD

^{21:20} When you see armies camped around Jerusalem, realize that the time is near for it the city to be destroyed. ²¹ Then those of you in Judea should flee to the mountains. Those of you in Jerusalem should leave it. Those of you in the fields shouldn't go back into them. ²² This will be a time *hemera*-days of vengeance *ekdikesis* ^{9X}. Everything that is written about it will come true.

²³ How horrible it will be for women who are pregnant or who are nursing babies in those days. Indeed, the land will suffer very hard times and its people will be punished. ²⁴ Swords will cut them down, and they will be carried off into all nations as prisoners. Nations will trample Jerusalem until the times allowed for the nations to do this are over.

Phase Six: A Cosmic Disturbance

^{21:25} Miraculous signs will occur in the sun, moon, and stars. The nations of the earth will be deeply troubled and confused because of the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ People will faint as they fearfully wait for what will happen to the world. Indeed, the powers of the universe will be shaken.

Phase Seven: The Coming of the Son of Man

^{21:27} Then people will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to happen, stand with confidence

epairo-lift up *hymon*-your *kephale*-heads. The time when you will be set free *apolytroisis*-redemption 10x is near *engizo*.

How to Tell When the Son of Man Is to Come

^{21:29} Then Jesus used this story as an illustration. Look at the fig tree or any other tree. ³⁰ As soon as leaves grow on them, you know without being told that summer is near *engys*. ³¹ In the same way when you see these things happen, you know that the kingdom of God is near *engys*.

³² I can guarantee this truth: This generation *genea* will not disappear *parerchomai* until all this takes place. ³³ The earth and the Heavens will disappear but my words *logos* will never disappear *parerchomai*.

[Look at the sky. Look at the earth below. The sky will vanish like smoke. The earth will wear out like clothing and those who live there will die like flies. But my salvation will last forever and my righteousness will never fail.

Listen to me you people who know righteousness, you people who have my teachings in your hearts. Don't be afraid of being insulted by people. Don't be discouraged by their ridicule. Moths will eat them like clothing. Worms will devour them like wool. But my righteousness will last forever and my salvation will last throughout every generation. Isaiah 51:6-8]

Jesus Warns to Be Alert So You Aren't Taken by Surprise

^{21:34} Make sure that you don't become drunk, hung over *kraipale* 1x, and worried *merimna* 6x about life *biotikos* 3x. Then that day could suddenly catch you by surprise *aiphnidōs* 2x ³⁵ like a trap *pagis* 5x that catches a bird. That day will surprise all people who live on the earth.

³⁶ Be alert *agrypneo* 4x at all times. Pray *deomai* so that you have the power *kataxiōo*-accounted worthy 4x to escape *ekpheugo* 7x everything *pas*-all that is about to happen and to stand *histemi* in front of *emprosthen* the Son of Man.

The word *deomai*-pray is a favorite word of Luke's. He will use it 8x in his Gospel and 7x in Acts.

Jesus' Activity in Jerusalem

^{21:37} During the day Jesus would teach in the Temple courtyard. But at night he would go to the Mount of Olives as it was called and spend the night there. ³⁸ All of the people *laos* would get up early *orthrizo* to hear him speak in the Temple courtyard.

The word *laos* is Luke's favorite word for the people. He will use it 36x while Matthew uses it 15x, Mark and John only 3x.

COMMENTS

Each of the three Gospels relates this teaching of Jesus about the Last Days. They all follow the same seven phases. Then in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the *seal judgments* follow the same patterns: (1) the anti-Christ on a white horse, (2-4) riders on fiery red, black, and pale green horses representing war, famine, and death; (5) persecution of believers under the altar, (6) a cosmic disturbance; and (7) silence for half an hour. **Revelation 6:1-16; 8:1**

Jesus says all through this Gospel that his disciples must expect to be persecuted. But he says that those who keep the faith and do not deny their faith in him will be saved. Moreover, Jesus says that he will give them strength to testify about him when they are called up to testify. Patient endurance *hypomone* is the key. Luke uses this word 2x while it appears in Revelation 7x and 32x in the New Testament.

Finally, Jesus compares the progression of these events to the early appearance of leaves on a fig tree showing summer is near. So he counsels his disciples to be alert and watch for what is happening. And he reminds them to keep the faith that the Son of Man will return soon.

Luke reminds us that Jesus taught in the Temple courtyards every day. And the people of Jerusalem would get up early to hear him preach.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 24:1-25; Mark 13:1-31

1. Did Jesus tell these things to everyone or only to his disciples?
2. What was the best encouragement Jesus gives to his disciples to remain faithful and not give up their faith in him?

3. Read Jesus' accounts of the future in **Luke 12:35-48; 17:22-37**. Are there any details that conflict? Remember that two events are discussed: the destruction of the Temple and Jesus' Second Coming.
4. Jesus has previously said God will give disciples assistance in testifying for Jesus in **Luke 12:11-12**. However, the Holy Spirit will not be poured out until Pentecost. Won't disciples have help in the interim?
5. In verse 36, Jesus advises his disciples to pray to be worthy to be able to stand with honor before the Son of Man when he judges. What must disciples pray for?
6. What does Jesus want his disciples to do when he tells them to *be alert*?
7. Why do the people of Jerusalem love to listen to Jesus?

EXTRA CREDIT

Read similar accounts in **Mark 13:1-37** and **Mathew 24:1-51**. What is similar and what is the same. Does Jesus make the same instruction for his disciples in all three accounts? What is it?

EXTRA, EXTRA, CREDIT

Some scholars say all three Gospels must have been written after 70 AD, because the writers mention Jerusalem will be destroyed. Why is this not a good argument?

PERICOPE 86

Satan Induces Judas Iscariot to Betray Jesus to the Sanhedrin

^{22:1} The Festival of Unleavened Bread called Passover was near. ²The chief priests and the experts in Moses' Teachings were looking for some way to kill *anairoo* Jesus. However, they were afraid *phoboo* of the people.

³Then Satan entered Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve Apostles. ⁴Judas went to the chief priests and the Temple guards and discussed with them how he could betray Jesus. ⁵They were pleased *chairo*-glad and agreed *syntithemi* ^{4x} to give him some money. ⁶So Judas promised *exomologeoo* to do it. He kept looking *zeteoo* for an opportunity *eukairia* ^{2x} to betray *paradidomi*-hand over Jesus to them when there was no crowd.

COMMENTS

Luke says that Satan entered into Judas *before* the Last Supper. John says that Satan "had already put the idea of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas" before the Last Supper **John 13:2**, but says Satan entered Judas *at* the Last Supper. **John 13:27**

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What was Judas Iscariot's motive for handing over Jesus to the Sanhedrin?
2. With whom did Judas make his agreement to hand Jesus over?
3. How did Judas know where Jesus would be alone away from the crowds?

PERICOPE 87

Jesus' Last Supper with His Disciples

^{22:7}The day came during the Festival of Unleavened Bread *azymos*^{9x} when the Passover *pascha* lamb had to be killed. Exodus 12:1-30

Jesus Sends Peter and John into the City to Prepare the Meal

^{22:8} Jesus sent Peter and John and told them: Go, prepare the Passover lamb for us to eat. ⁹They asked him: Where do you want us to prepare it?

¹⁰ He told them: Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a jug of water. Follow him into the house he enters. ¹¹Tell the owner of the house that the Teacher asks: Where is the room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples? ¹² He will take you upstairs and show you a large furnished room. Get things ready there.

¹³The disciples left. They found everything as Jesus had told them and prepared the Passover.

A Passover Seder Meal

^{22:14} When it was time to eat the Passover meal, Jesus and the Apostles were at the table.

¹⁵ Jesus said to them: I've had a deep desire *epithymia epithymeo* to eat this Passover with you before I suffer *pascho*. ¹⁶ I can guarantee that I won't eat it again until it finds its fulfillment *pleroo* in the kingdom of God.

¹⁷ Then he took a cup and spoke a prayer of thanksgiving *eucharisto*. He said: Take this and share it. ¹⁸ I can guarantee that from now on I won't drink this wine until the kingdom of God comes.

Jesus Initiates the Eucharist

^{22:19} Then Jesus took *lambano* bread and spoke a prayer of thanksgiving *eucharisto*. He broke *klao* the bread, gave *didomi* it to them and said: This is my body *soma* which is given up *didomi* for you. Do *poieo* this to remember *anamnesis*^{4x} me.

²⁰When supper was over, he did the same with the cup. He said: This cup *poterion* that is poured out *ekcheo* for you is the New *kainos* Covenant *diatheke* made with my blood *haima*.

Jesus Knows Who Will Betray Him

^{22:21}The hand of the one who will betray *paradidomi* me is with me on the table. ²²The Son of Man is going to die *poreuo* the way it has been planned *horizo*-determined 8x for him. But how horrible it will be for *ouai*-woe that person who betrays him. ²³So they began to discuss with each other who could do such a thing.

The Disciples Argue: Who Is the Greatest?

^{22:24}Then a quarrel *philonekia* IX broke out among the disciples. They argued about who should be considered the greatest *meizon*. ²⁵Jesus said to them: The kings of nations have power over their people and those in authority call themselves friends of the people.

²⁶But you're not going to be that way! Rather, the greatest among you must be like the youngest and your leader must be like a servant *diakoneo*. ²⁷Who's the greatest, the person who sits at the table or the servant? Isn't it really the person who sits at the table? But I'm among you as a servant *diakoneo*.

²⁸You have stood by me in the troubles that have tested me. ²⁹So as my Father has given me a kingdom, I'm giving it to you. ³⁰You will eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. You will also sit on thrones and judge *krino* the twelve tribes of Israel.

See **Matthew 19:28** paralleling these last three verses.

Jesus Tells Peter Satan Is Going to Test Him

^{22:31}Then the Lord said: Simon, Simon, listen. Satan has demanded to have you Apostles for himself. He wants to separate you from me as a farmer separates wheat from husks. ³²But I have prayed *deomai* for you Simon that

your faith *pistis* will not fail *ekleipo* 3x. So when you recover *epistrepho*, strengthen *sterizo* the other disciples.

³³ But Peter said to him: Lord, I'm ready to go to prison with you and to die with you. ³⁴ Jesus replied: Peter, I can guarantee that the rooster won't crow tonight until you say three times that you don't know me.

Jesus Tells His Disciples to Arm Themselves

^{22:35} Then Jesus said to them: When I sent you out without a wallet, traveling bag, or sandals, you didn't lack anything, did you? **Luke 9:1-6**. Not a thing, they answered. ³⁶ Then he said to them: But now, the person who has a wallet and a traveling bag should take them along.

The person who doesn't have a sword should sell his coat and buy one. ³⁷ I can guarantee that the Scripture passage which says: He was counted with criminals **Isaiah 53:12** must find its fulfillment in me. Indeed, whatever is written about me will come true. ³⁸ The disciples said: Lord look! Here are two swords! Then Jesus said to them: That's enough.

COMMENTS

Each of the four evangelists tells the story of the last supper Jesus had with his disciples in his own way.

Jesus inaugurates the New Covenant that was prophesied by Jeremiah 600 years before:

[The Days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah. It will not be like the Covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of Egypt. They rejected that Covenant, although I was a husband to them, declares the Lord.

But this is the Covenant that I will make to Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my teachings inside them and I will write those teachings on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people.

No longer will each person teach his neighbors or their relatives by saying: Know the Lord. All of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me, declares the Lord, because I will forgive their wickedness and I will no longer hold their sins against them. **Jeremiah 31:31-34**]

Luke then says something the other Gospels don't. Just after Jesus has said that one of the Twelve will hand him over to the Sanhedrin, the disciples immediately argue about who is the greatest. This for me is one of the saddest events in the Gospel. How can they fail to be concerned about the fate of their Master? This callous disregard for the feelings of Jesus is beyond belief.

Yet Jesus, compassionate as he is, does not upbraid them, but promises them that they will eat and drink at his table in the kingdom of God and sit on thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.

Then Jesus predicts Peter's denial of him and advises his disciples to get ready to protect themselves as Jesus will now be counted with transgressors *anomos* ^{10x} of the law. Jesus even mentions they buy a sword. The sword was thought of as part of the equipment required for the self-sufficiency of any traveler in the Roman world. Nothing more than protection of one's person is in view.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 26:17-35; Mark 14:12-31; John 13:21-39**

1. Who arranged for the private Upper Room in the city crowded with Passover pilgrims?
2. Why is a code word needed to direct the disciples to the Upper Room?
3. What is new about the New Covenant?
4. Jesus performs the Eucharist immediately at the beginning of the meal as they apparently recited the traditional Passover Seder liturgy. After describing his death, Jesus then says the person who will hand him over is sitting at the table. Why aren't the disciples overcome with anger at whoever it is?
5. How are disciples able to argue about who is the greatest just after Jesus has announced his death? What does this say about their attitude at the Last Supper?
6. Why does Jesus talk about the disciples judging the 12 tribes of Israel? This doesn't seem to be an appropriate time to say this. When will this occur?
7. Jesus tells them to buy swords. This is contrary to Jesus' non-violent actions. Why does he say this?

EXTRA CREDIT

We would think Jesus would get furious when the disciples still argue about who is the greatest. Yet he shows the greatest patience. What does this tell us about Jesus' human emotions at this time?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Judas participates in the Eucharist. What does this teach us about who is qualified to receive Holy Communion?

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

When Jesus tells Peter that Satan is going to tempt him, Jesus calls him Simon. It is only when Peter declares his allegiance to Jesus that Jesus calls him Peter. Notice how the Bible in Genesis continues to call Israel Jacob even after God has re-named him Israel. What is the purpose of a person's name?

PERICOPE 88

Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

^{22:39} Jesus went out of the city to the Mount of Olives as he usually did *ethos*-custom. His disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ When he arrived, he said to them: Pray *proseuchomai* that you won't be tempted *peirasmos*.

⁴¹ Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed *proseuchomai*. ⁴² Father, if it is your will *boulomai*, take *paraphero*-remove ^{2X} this cup *poterion* of suffering away from me. However, your will *thelma* must be done not mine.

⁴³ Then an angel from Heaven appeared to him and gave him strength *enischyō*.
^{2X}.

This word *enischyō* appears only here in Luke and once in Acts.

⁴⁴ So he prayed *proseuchomai* very hard *ektenesteron*-more earnestly ^{IX} in anguish *agonia* ^{IX}. His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground.

The writer To the Hebrews characterizes Jesus' intense praying this way:

[During his life on earth, Jesus prayed to God who could save him from death. He prayed and pleaded with loud crying and tears, and he was heard because of his devotion to God. Although Jesus was the Son of God, he learned to be obedient through his sufferings. **Hebrews 5:7-8**]

Here we see Jesus in his most human nature.

⁴⁵ When Jesus ended his prayer *proseuche*, he got up and went to the disciples. He found them asleep *koimao* and overcome with sadness *lype*-sorrow. ⁴⁶ He said to them: Why are you sleeping *katheudo*? Get up *anistemi*-arise and pray *proseuchomai* that you won't be tempted *peirasmos*.

COMMENTS

Jesus' time in the Garden of Gethsemane is a period of intense suffering. I believe that at this time, Jesus learned for the first time that in his human nature he would feel separated from his Heavenly Father as Jesus was made sin for all mankind on the cross. A holy God cannot look

at sin. Remember that Jesus had given up his power of deity in being omnipotent – knowing everything.

[Your eyes are too pure to look at evil. You can't watch wickedness.
Habakkuk 1:13]

In reality, the Father was never separated from his Son. But in his human nature, Jesus knew he would feel separated from his Heavenly Father and he anticipated the feeling would be horrific.

Notice that after the angel came and gave him strength, Jesus continued to pray rather than resting in this new strength. Yet the disciples were overcome with sadness and slept soundly with exhaustion.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42

1. What did Jesus warn his disciples they would be tempted to do?
2. Did the disciples attempt to pray or simply give in to their emotions and sleep?
3. This appears to be the only time other than Jesus' temptation by Satan in the Judean wilderness that God sent an angel to help him. What does this say about the severity of this attack by Satan? What does this say about Jesus' continuing to pray allowing the Holy Spirit to help Jesus in his human nature? How is this an example for us?
4. What was Satan whispering to Jesus at this time in the garden?
5. Jesus is an obedient Son. He has been so all of his earthly life. Why is this particular time so difficult for him?

EXTRA CREDIT

Matthew and Mark each say Jesus goes back to his disciples three times to tell them to pray and not sleep. Luke does not. In fact, Matthew implies Jesus is praying for three hours. Luke seems to concentrate here entirely on Jesus and not on the disciples. Why is he doing this? What is he emphasizing?

PERICOPE 89

Jesus Is Arrested by the Sanhedrin

^{22:47} While Jesus was still speaking to the disciples, a crowd arrived. The man called Judas, one of the Twelve Apostles was leading them. He came close to Jesus to kiss him. ⁴⁸ Jesus said to him: Judas, do you intend to betray the Son of Man with a kiss?

⁴⁹ The men who were with Jesus saw what was going to happen. So they asked him: Lord, should we use our swords to fight? ⁵⁰ One of the disciples cut off the right ear of the High Priest's servant. ⁵¹ But Jesus said: Stop! That's enough of this. Then he touched the servant's ear and healed him.

Jesus Rebukes the Arresting Party

^{22:52} Then Jesus said to the chief priests, temple guards, and leaders who had come for him: Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a criminal? ⁵³ I was with you in the Temple courtyard every day and you didn't try to arrest me. But this is your *hymon* time *hora*—hour, when darkness *skotos* rules *exousia*—power.

⁵⁴ So they arrested Jesus and led him away to the High Priest's house.

COMMENTS

Only John says that Roman soldiers were involved in this arrest. Only John says that the High Priest's Servant was Malchus, who was directing the arrest. Only John says that it was Malchus' ear Peter cut off with a sword. But only Luke tells us that Jesus healed Malchus' ear.

And despite the arrest, Jesus takes the time to criticize the Sanhedrin's fear of the people. **Luke 19:48; 20:19; 22:2.** They will only act in the dark in an attempt to put out the light of God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; John 18:1-14

1. The other three Gospels have more details than Luke. Why is this?
2. Jesus certainly doesn't demonstrate any fear at the arrest. In fact, in some ways, he acts as if he was still in command. How does he show this?

3. Some might conclude that when Jesus in the Upper Room told his disciples to purchase swords, that might have induced Peter to cut off Malchus' ear? Why did Jesus tell his disciples to do this?
4. Why did one of the disciples cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant, rather than the ear of Judas if Judas was leading the arresting party?
5. Why does Luke identify Judas by name and not identify Peter by name?
6. Matthew and Mark say the disciples ran away after the arrest. Neither Luke nor John mention this. Why not?
7. Mark makes a point of Judas saying: *Tie up Jesus securely when you take him away.* **Mark 14:44**. Why doesn't Matthew or Luke mention this? What is Mark attempting to convey about the power of Jesus? John says that *Jesus was still tied up* at the High Priest's house. **John 18:24**

PERICOPE 90

Peter Denies Jesus in the High Priest's Courtyard

^{22:54} Peter followed at a distance.

⁵⁵ Some men had lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard. As they sat together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶ A female servant saw him as he sat facing the glow of the fire. She stared at him and said: This man was with Jesus. ⁵⁷ But Peter denied it by saying: I don't know him woman.

⁵⁸ A little later someone else saw Peter and said: You are one of them. But Peter said: Not me.

⁵⁹ About an hour later another person insisted: It's obvious that this man was with him. He's a Galilean. ⁶⁰ But Peter said: I don't know what you're talking about.

Just then, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ Then the Lord turned and looked directly *emblepo* at Peter. Peter remembered *hypomimnesko*^{7x} what the Lord had said: Before a rooster crows today, you will say three times that you don't know me. **Luke 22:34**

⁶² Then Peter went outside *exo* and cried *klaio* bitterly *pikros*^{2x}.

COMMENTS

All the four Gospels record this story. Strong Peter is shown here at his weakest. He is impulsive and he really loves Jesus. But he is also human and he is greatly afraid of also being arrested by the Sanhedrin. So at the time while Jesus is being questioned by his enemies upstairs in the house of the High Priest, Peter says to the High Priest's servants that he doesn't even know Jesus.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; John 18:15-27**

1. Why does Peter even go to the High Priest's courtyard if he is going to deny knowing Jesus?
2. What is Peter thinking about while he is sitting around the fire?

3. How long is Peter there in the High Priest's courtyard? Some speculate that Jesus and his disciples came to the Garden of Gethsemane from 9 pm to midnight. Jesus was arrested at midnight. If cockcrow comes in the 4th watch in Roman time, this is 3 am. Peter has been there in the courtyard three hours. The Sanhedrin will take Jesus to Pilate at 4 am. Pilate orders Jesus crucified at 6 am and Jesus will be hung on the cross at 9 am. From noon to 3 pm, there is darkness. Jesus dies at 3 pm and his body is placed in the tomb before dusk as the Sabbath begins then. Does this time make sense to you?

It is based on the four Roman watches. Jesus then would be able to look at Peter when he is taken to Pilate at 4 am. This means Peter has been in the High Priest's courtyard a total of four hours. This seems an extraordinarily long time.

4. Why does the story of Jesus at this time so carefully calculate the time of events?
5. Why don't the servants ask: If Peter doesn't know Jesus, what is he doing there in the High Priest's courtyard?
6. Why does Peter cry bitterly? What will his relationship with Jesus be now?
7. Jesus looks *emblepo* at Peter in the High Priest's courtyard. This word *emblepo* was only used elsewhere by Luke in **Luke 20:17**, when Jesus looked intently at the Pharisees when he told them the Parable of the Vineyard and then asked his question. What kind of look is Jesus giving to Peter?

EXTRA CREDIT

Jesus has previously told his disciples to pray to avoid temptation. **Luke 22:46**. During these four hours shouldn't Peter have been praying? What difference would it have made?

Pericope 91

Jesus at the High Priest's House

^{22:63} The men who were guarding at the High Priest's House Jesus made fun of him *empaizo*—mocked as they beat *dero*—struck him. ⁶⁴ They blindfolded him and said to him: Tell us who hit you. ⁶⁵ They also insulted *blasphemeo* him in many other ways.

The High Priest Attempts to Conduct a Trial

^{22:66} In *hos*—as soon as the morning *hemera*—day the council *synedrion* of the people's leaders *presbyterion*, the chief priests *archiereus* and the experts in Moses' Teachings *grammateus* gathered together. They brought Jesus in front of their highest court *synedrion* and asked him: ⁶⁷ Tell us, are you the Messiah *christos*—anointed one?

Jesus said to them: If I tell you, you won't believe me. ⁶⁸ And if I ask you, you won't answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man will be in the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the Heavenly throne. ⁷⁰ Then all of them said: So you're the Son *yhios* of God *theos*? Jesus answered them: You <re> <right to> say that I am *hymeis lego hoti ego emi*.

⁷¹ Then they said: Why do we need any more testimony *eti*—further *martyria*—witnesses? We've heard him say it ourselves.

Luke hasn't portrayed the Sanhedrin as having brought any witnesses. According to the Towrah, they needed two or three reliable witnesses to convict a person of a crime. **Deuteronomy 19:15**. The Sanhedrin knew this as it was the high court of Israel.

COMMENTS

The timing of the High Priest's questioning here is difficult. The Romans began their business very early in the day usually at daybreak before the day became hot. Mark says it was nine in the morning when they crucified him. **Mark 15:25**. So the Sanhedrin would have conducted this hearing or trial ending before the sun rose.

Luke says nothing about the false witnesses. According to the Towrah, two or three witnesses had to give reputable testimony in order to convict a person. The accused person was not allowed to say anything.

[One witness is never enough to convict someone of a crime, offense or sin he may have committed. Cases must be settled based on the testimony of two or three witnesses. **Deuteronomy 19:15.**]

And the High Priest demands that Jesus incriminate himself. This isn't allowed. A person is convicted solely on the testimony of two or three reliable witnesses. Yet Jesus answers saying: *You will see the Son of Man sitting at God's right hand.* Jesus will identify himself to these leaders when asked. They can never say they didn't know who he claimed to be.

Jesus is referring to Daniel's prophecy when he uses the title, the Son of Man:

[In my visions during the night, I saw among the clouds of Heaven someone like the Son of Man. He came to the Ancient One, who has lived for endless years, and was presented to him. He was given power, honor, and a kingdom. People from every province, nation, and language were to serve him. His power is an eternal power that will not be taken away. His kingdom will never be destroyed. **Daniel 7:13-14**]

At that, the entire company says: *So you're the Son of God?* Jesus replies: *You say so.* Then the Sanhedrin says: What more do we need? This is blasphemy – a human claiming to be God.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT? **Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65**

1. Why does the Sanhedrin, the highest legal body in Israel, allow their officers to abuse the prisoner Jesus?
2. The Sanhedrin is the High Court of Israel. Why do they violate the rules of the Towrah in their trial of Jesus?
3. What is the crime the Sanhedrin will use to accuse Jesus before the Roman Governor? It must be a crime against Roman Law.
4. What in the Sanhedrin's mind characterizes the Messiah? Is the Messiah the Son of God? Use Scriptures to support your answer.

PERICOPE 92

The Roman Governor Pontius Pilate Questions Jesus

^{23:1} Then the entire assembly stood up and took him to Pilate.

²They began to accuse Jesus by saying: We found that he stirs up *anaseio* ^{2X} trouble *diastropho*-perverting ^{7X} among our people *ethnos*. He keeps them from paying taxes to the Emperor and he says that he is Christ, a king. ³Pilate asked him: Are you the king of the Jews? Yes, I am *sy lego*-you say, Jesus answered.

⁴Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd: I can't find this man guilty of any crime *oudeis*-no *aition*-fault ^{4X},

⁵The priests and the crowd became more forceful *epischyo* ^{IX}. They said: He stirs up *anaseio* the people throughout Judea with his teachings *didasko*. He started *archomai* in Galilee and has come here *hode*-place.

COMMENTS

Pilate, the Roman Governor already knows a great deal about Jesus. Pilate became Governor of the Province of Judea in 26 BC, three years before Jesus began his earthly ministry. From his palace in Caesarea Maritima on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Pilate kept informed of all activities in the province through a network of military reports and spies. Three times a year, he came to Jerusalem when the city was crowded with pilgrims attending the festivals at the Temple. He was fully aware of almost everything Jesus did that week in Jerusalem.

So when the Sanhedrin told Pilate that he stirred up trouble Pilate was not surprised. But he was surprised the Sanhedrin falsely accused Jesus of saying not to pay taxes to Rome. If Jesus had said that, Pilate would have arrested him on the spot. But when the Sanhedrin accuses Jesus of saying he is the King of the Jews, that is sedition - a crime under Roman Law. Any king in the Roman Empire had to be approved by the Roman Senate.

Pilate asked Jesus: *Are you the king of the Jews?* Jesus answers: *You say so.* Then Pilate says surprisingly: I don't find him guilty of a crime under Roman Law. Pilate has been given no evidence that Jesus ever said this. But the Sanhedrin protests: He stirs up the people both in Judea and in Galilee where he started. So Pilate sends the man to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea to be judged.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 27:11-14; Mark 15:1-5; John 18:28-38

1. The worst the Sanhedrin can say about Jesus is that he breaks the peace. He stirs people up with his teachings, implying that his teachings are contrary to traditional Jewish religious teaching. But Pilate does not want to get involved in Jewish religious disputes. However, breaking the peace is a crime under Roman Law. Why then does Pilate say Jesus has not committed a crime?
2. The Sanhedrin is the High Court of Israel. Yet they lie when they say Jesus has told the citizens of Judea not to pay taxes. Pilate knows better. His spies have been watching Jesus carefully. Does the Sanhedrin think Pilate is not well informed?
3. Why doesn't Pilate consider Jesus calling himself the King of the Jews a crime? Is it because his spies have never heard Jesus say this?
4. Under military occupation, the Jewish Sanhedrin has limited authority. They cannot kill anyone. That is reserved for the Roman Governor. And besides, the Sanhedrin wants Jesus killed by crucifixion rather than by stoning. Why is that?

HINT: Read **Deuteronomy 21:22-23**.

5. At this point, Pilate seems to be acting as a good Roman Governor following the law. But he doesn't criticize the Sanhedrin leaders for lying. Why is that?

PERICOPE 93

Jesus Is Sent to King Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Galilee

^{23:6}When Pilate heard that, he asked if the man was from Galilee. ⁷When Pilate found out that he was, he sent Jesus to Herod. Herod ruled Galilee and was in Jerusalem at that time.

⁸Herod was very pleased to see Jesus. For a long time he had wanted to see him. He had heard about Jesus and hoped to see him perform some kind of miracle. **Luke 9:7-9.** ⁹Herod asked Jesus many questions but Jesus wouldn't answer him. ¹⁰Meanwhile the chief priests and the experts in Moses' Teachings stood there and shouted their accusations against Jesus.

¹¹Herod and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt *exoutheneo* and made fun of him *empaizo*-mocking. They put a colorful robe on him and sent him back to Pilate. ¹²So Herod and Pilate became friends that day. They had been enemies before this.

COMMENTS

Herod had long wanted to see Jesus ever since Jesus had sent the 12 disciples out throughout Galilee. But he didn't learn anything about Jesus from this encounter. So he sent Jesus back to Pilate. Herod was pleased that Pilate acknowledged his authority. Apparently, they had been distant before this.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does only Luke mention this incident?
2. What would King Herod Antipas have liked to hear Jesus say or do?
3. What questions did Herod ask Jesus?
4. Why didn't Herod simply have Jesus killed then and there as he had killed John the Baptist?

PERICOPE 94

Governor Pilate Again Declares Jesus as Having No Fault

^{23:13} Then Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people.
¹⁴ He told them: You brought me this man as someone who turns the people against the government. I've questioned him in front of you and haven't found this man guilty of the crimes of which you accuse him. ¹⁵ Neither could Herod. So he sent this man back to us.

This man hasn't done anything *oudeis*-no *aition*-fault to deserve the death penalty.
¹⁶ So I'm going to have him whipped *paideuo*-chastised and set free *apolyo*.

The Crowd Rejects Jesus and Demands Barabbas Be Set Free

^{23:18} The whole crowd then shouted: Take him away. Free Barabbas for us.
¹⁹ Barabbas had been thrown into prison for his involvement in a riot that had taken place in the city and for murder. ²⁰ But because Pilate wanted to free *apolyo*-release Jesus, he spoke to the people again. ²¹ They began yelling *epiphoneo*
^{3x}: Crucify him *stauroo*! Crucify him!

A Third Time Pilate Declares Jesus Innocent

^{23:22} A third time Pilate spoke to them. He asked: Why? What has he done wrong? I haven't found this man deserving *aition*-cause ^{4x} of the death penalty *thanatos*. So I'm going to have him whipped *paideuo*-chastened and set free.

Mark and Matthew use the word *phragelloo* ^{2x} meaning *scourged*, a more severe beating. Mark 15:15; Matthew 27:26. The word *paideuo* often means *chastened*. Revelation 3:19

²³ But the crowd pressured *epikeimai*-insistent ^{7x} Pilate. They shouted *megas*-loud *phone*-voices that Jesus had to be crucified *stauroo*, and they finally won *katischyō*-prevailed. ²⁴ Pilate decided *epikrino*-gave sentence ^{ix} to give in to their demand. ²⁵ He freed Barabbas, who had been put in prison for rioting and murdering, because that's what they wanted. But he let them do what they wanted *paradidomi*-delivered to Jesus.

COMMENTS

Pilate has one goal: To maintain peace in the Roman Province of Judea. But the Sanhedrin has brought a crowd with them. It is early in the morning so many in the city of Jerusalem are not in the crowd. People in the crowd have been hand picked by the Sanhedrin. It is probably between 4-6 am.

Pilate attempts to reason with the crowd. He even offers to release Barabbas, a known Zealot who has opposed the Romans and perhaps killed many soldiers. But the crowd has been paid to yell, scream, and shout until they get what the religious leaders want. They want Jesus crucified, so people think he is cursed by God as a false prophet.

[When a convicted person is put to death, never leave his dead body hung on a pole *ets* →wood, tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day because anyone whose body is hung on a pole is cursed *qelalah* by God. The land that the Lord your God is giving you must never become unclean. Deuteronomy 21:22-23]

Pilate sees he can't negotiate with these paid agitators so he reluctantly scourges Jesus and orders him to be crucified. He has been set up.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 15:6-15; John 18:39-40

1. Many criticize Pilate for cowardice. But Pilate has been set up by the Sanhedrin. They accuse Jesus of breaking the peace of Rome – the *Pax Romana* of which the Romans are so proud. Pilate knows that if he irritates the Sanhedrin, they will accuse him to the Emperor in Rome of not maintaining the peace which is his primary job as Governor, besides collecting taxes. His job will be in jeopardy. So he gives in. What else is he to do?
2. Luke doesn't say why Pilate released Barabbas. Why not?
3. What mistake does Pilate make in thinking the crowd will choose Barabbas? Is this a typical crowd of Jews?
4. Why does Pilate allow a crowd of Jews to shout at him? They aren't respecting his office.
5. Why does Pilate order Jesus scourged before his crucifixion?
6. Ironically, Luke presents two witnesses – Herod and Pilate – that testify that Jesus is innocent. How does this support a point Luke is making about Jesus' conviction?

7. Remember that Luke is writing to Gentiles and perhaps to Romans. What does this trial say about the guilt of Jesus breaking Roman Law?

EXTRA CREDIT

Didn't Pilate have another way he could have released Jesus? Why didn't Pilate simply send him to another Roman official – the legate in Syria or to the Roman Emperor?

PERICOPE 95

Jesus Is Led Away to Be Crucified

^{23:26}As the soldiers led Jesus away, they grabbed a man named Simon who was from the city of Cyrene. Simon was coming into Jerusalem. They laid the cross *stauros* on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Jesus Addresses the Crowd Watching Him

²⁷A large crowd followed Jesus. The women in the crowd cried and sang funeral songs for him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said: You women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me. Rather cry for yourselves and your children.

²⁹The time is coming when people will say: Blessed are the women who couldn't get pregnant, who couldn't give birth, and who couldn't nurse a child.

³⁰Then people will say to the mountains: Fall on us, and to the hills: Cover us. **Hosea 10:8**

³¹If people do this to a green tree, what will happen to a dry one?

³²Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be executed with him.

COMMENTS

Jesus is first made to carry the cross bar of the cross to his crucifixion. He is led through the streets of Jerusalem to Golgotha, a place outside the city. Because of Jesus' weakened condition, a Jew from Cyrene who has just come into the city, is then compelled by the Roman soldiers to carry the crossbar behind Jesus.

As Jesus is walking through the city, a crowd of women laments for him. Jesus tells them: *Don't cry for me. Cry for yourselves. A terrible time of vengeance is coming.* **Luke 21:22.** If the Romans do this to an innocent man who does not revolt against them, what will they do to Jews who do revolt against the Roman Empire?

Two criminals were also led away with Jesus to be crucified.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:20:21

1. What is the significance of Simon of Cyrene carrying Jesus' crossbar to the cross?
HINT: Read **Luke 9:23**.
2. Jesus again prophesies that the Romans will fight against the Jews in Jerusalem. Why does he do this as he is walking to the cross?
3. What point is Luke making with this prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem? Jesus has prophesied this five times before in **Luke 11:49-51; 13:1-5, 34-35; 19:41-44; 21:20-24**. Why does Luke place so much emphasis on this?
4. Why are two criminals crucified with Jesus? Why isn't he crucified alone?
5. Luke uses the word cross *stauros* three times in his Gospel. Where are the other two places? What does he mean by the word *cross* there?

PERICOPE 96

Jesus is Mocked as He Is Crucified

^{23:33} When they came to the place called The Skull *kranion*—Calvary ^{4x}, they crucified *stauroo* him. The criminals *kakourgos*—evil doers ^{4x} were also crucified, one on his right and the other on his left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said: Father, forgive *aphiemi* them. They don't know *eido* what they're doing.

Meanwhile, the soldiers divided his clothes among themselves by throwing dice.

³⁵ The people stood there watching *theoreo*. But the rulers were making sarcastic remarks *ekmykterizo*—deriding ^{2x}. They said: He saved *sozo* others. If he's the Messiah *christos* that God has chosen *eklektos*, let him save *sozo* himself. ³⁶ The soldiers also made fun of him. They would go up to him, offer him some vinegar ³⁷ and say: If you're the King of the Jews, save *sozo* yourself.

Notice that ironically the Jewish religious leaders use the same title for Jesus God used at the transfiguration, *My Chosen One*. **Luke 9:35**. God had said this previously of his Servant of YHWH in **Isaiah 42:1**.

The Titulus

^{23:38} A written notice *epigraphe* ^{5x} was placed above him [in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. KJV] It said: This *hoytos* is *esti* the King *basileus* of the Jews *ioudaios*.

One Criminal Asks Jesus to Remember Him

^{23:39} One of the criminals hanging there insulted Jesus by saying: So you're really the Messiah *christos*, are you? Well, save *sozo* yourself and us!

⁴⁰ But the other criminal scolded *epitimao*—rebuked him: Don't you fear *phobeo* God at all? Can't you see that you're condemned *krima* in the same way that he is? ⁴¹ Our punishment is fair *dikaios*. We're getting *apolambao* what we deserve *axios*—reward. But this man hasn't done anything wrong *atopos* ^{3x}.

⁴²Then he said: Jesus, remember *mnaomai* me when you enter your kingdom.
⁴³Jesus said to him: I can guarantee this truth: Today *semeron* you will be with me in Paradise *paradeisos*^{3x}.

COMMENTS

The first words Jesus says from the cross are: *Father, forgive them for they know not what their doing*. Jesus walks the walk the way he talks the talk. He will do what he teaches others. **Luke 6:27-28**.

Luke says the people stood there watching, saying nothing. But the rulers can't restrain their glee at having accomplished their purpose of getting rid of Jesus. They said: *If you're the Messiah, save yourself*. Even the Roman soldiers joined in by saying: *If you're the King of the Jews, save yourself*.

But Pilate got his revenge on the Jews. The titulus he had made said: This is *esti* the King of the Jews.

Jesus was hung in the middle of two criminals. One criminal joined the rulers in saying: *If you're the Messiah, save yourself*. But the other criminal rebuked him. *Don't you fear God? We're being punished correctly but this man hasn't done anything wrong. Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom*.

Jesus replied: *Today you will be with me in Paradise*.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT Matthew 27:31-44; Mark 15:20-32; John 19:16-24

1. When Jesus prayed: Father forgive them, who was he praying for?
2. Why were the people of Jerusalem standing there saying nothing? What were they thinking?
3. Why does Luke portray the Roman soldiers joining in with the rulers in mocking Jesus? Is this to contrast with the reaction of the Roman Centurion when Jesus died?
4. What did the good criminal confess when he asked Jesus to remember him?
5. How does Jesus' reply to the good criminal demonstrate that faith is a gift of God?

PERICOPE 97

Jesus Dies on the Cross

^{23:44} Around noon darkness came over the entire Land and lasted until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁵ The sun had stopped shining.

Luke doesn't tell us any of Jesus' emotions as he hung on the cross for six hours. However, we get an idea in reading King David's **Psalm 22**:

[My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer – also at night, but I find no rest.

Yet I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned by humanity and despised by people. All who see me make fun of me. Insults pour from their mouths. They shake their heads and say: Put yourself in the Lord's hands. Let the Lord save him. Let God rescue him since he is pleased with him.

I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It has melted within me. My strength is dried up like pieces of broken pottery. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You lay me down in the dust of death.

Dogs have surrounded me. A mob has encircled me. They have pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. People stare. They gloat over me. They divide my clothes among themselves. They throw dice for my clothing.

Do not be far away, O Lord. Come quickly to help me, O my strength. Rescue my soul from the sword, my life from vicious dogs. Save me from the mouth of the lion and from the horns of the wild oxen. **Psalm 22:1-2, 6-8, 11-21**]

The Temple Veil Separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place is Torn from Top to Bottom

^{23:45} The curtain in the Temple was split in two.

[Brothers and sisters, because of the blood of Jesus, we can now confidently go into the Holy Place. Jesus has opened a new and living way for us to go through the curtain. The curtain is his body. **Hebrews 10:19**]

The most sacred place in the Temple was the Holy of Holies. Originally, this cube-shaped room that was totally dark housed the Ark of the Covenant, a symbol of the presence of God. **Exodus 25:21-22**. In Jesus' day, this room was empty. The Ark of the Covenant had disappeared just before the Babylonians destroyed the Jerusalem Temple in 586 BC. Yet still only the High Priest could enter this room and only once a year on the Day of Atonement called Yom Kippur. **Leviticus 16:1-34**. Now everyone who believed in Jesus could enter into the presence of God because of Jesus' sacrificial atoning death.

⁴⁶ Jesus cried out in a loud voice:

Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit. **Psalm 31:5**

After he said this, he died *ekpneo* ^{3x}.

A Roman Centurion Is Impressed with the Way Jesus Died

^{23:47} When an army officer *hekatontarches*—Roman Centurion saw what had happened, he praised *doxazo* God *theos* and said: Certainly *ontos*, this man was innocent *dikaios*—righteous *anthropos*—man

The People of Jerusalem Go Home Beating Their Breasts

^{23:48} Crowds had gathered *symparaginomai* ^{2x} to see the sight *theoria* ^{ix}. But when all of them saw what had happened, they cried *typto*—struck *heautou*—their *stethos*—breasts and returned to the city. ⁴⁹ All his friends, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance and watched everything.

COMMENTS

Jesus was hung on the cross at 9 am. At noon, darkness came over the land. At 3 pm, Jesus died. Before dusk, Jesus' body was placed in a nearby tomb. At dusk, the Sabbath began and the Passover was celebrated in Jerusalem.

When Jesus was first placed on the cross, he prayed that his Heavenly Father would forgive everyone involved in this unjust crucifixion. But Jesus knew from the time of the Covenant of Redemption, this is what would happen. And he was determined to fulfill his role in this plan of God, his Heavenly Father.

From 9 am to noon, the people of Jerusalem that also included many pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival stood silently watching. But the members of the Sanhedrin were mocking Jesus. Even the Roman soldiers joined in. One criminal on the cross beside Jesus asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into his kingdom. Jesus promised: *Today you will be with me in Paradise.*

Then at noon darkness came over the land. God was placing all the sin of humanity on Jesus, his Beloved Son. For three hours it was dark. The huge, heavy curtain in the Jerusalem Temple separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place was torn in two. Jesus quoted **Psalm 31:5** placing his soul in the hands of his Heavenly Father in a loud voice. Then he died.

The Roman Centurion who was in charge of this execution saw how Jesus had died, he praised God and said: *Certainly, this was an innocent man.* Then the crowds left to go back into the city, beating their breasts in sorrow. They had gotten up early each morning that week and listened to Jesus teach in the Temple courtyards. And they were helpless to stop this unjust action.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT **Matthew 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; John 19:28-30**

1. Luke tells the story of Jesus' death on the cross simply without describing the physical characteristics of his suffering? Why does he do this?
2. Why was it dark when Jesus was made sin for the world?
3. Why don't any of the Gospels explain why the Temple curtain was torn?
4. Jesus cried out his last words in a loud voice. How could he do this after hanging on the cross for six hours?
5. What did the Roman Centurion see in Jesus' death that convinced him to declare Jesus innocent of any crime against the Roman Empire?

6. Why did the crowds go home in sorrow? What were they feeling at this moment?
7. Where were Jesus' disciples when this happened?

EXTRA CREDIT

Read Peter's speech to the Jerusalem crowd in **Acts 2:14-41**. Peter says: *You crucified Jesus. Acts 2:23*. How would this speech given 50 days after Jesus' crucifixion convict those who were standing there watching Jesus die? Is there anything else in Peter's speech that would severely affect those eyewitnesses of Jesus' crucifixion?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Read **Isaiah 52:13-53:12**. What do you read in this prophecy made in 735-698 BC that reflects on the actual crucifixion of Jesus in 33 AD?

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Luke portrays the curtain in the Temple as being torn *before* Jesus dies. Mark and Matthew show it occurring *after* Jesus died. What difference does this make in their reasoning as to why the curtain was torn?

PERICOPE 98

Jesus' Body Is Placed in a Tomb

^{23:50} There was a good man who had God's approval. His name was Joseph. He was a member of the Jewish council *bouleutes* ^{2x} Sanhedrin ⁵¹ but he had not agreed *sygkatatithemi* ^{1x} with what they had done *boule*. He was from the Jewish city of Arimathea and he was waiting *prosdechomai* for kingdom of God.

⁵² He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ After he took it down from the cross, he wrapped it in linen. Then he laid the body in a tomb cut in rock, a tomb in which no one had ever been buried. ⁵⁴ It was Friday and the Day of Rest — a holy day, was just beginning.

The Sabbath would begin at dusk.

⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed closely behind Joseph. They observed the tomb and how his body was laid in it. ⁵⁶ Then they went back to the city and prepared spices and perfumes.

But on the Day of Rest — a holy day *sabbaton*, they rested *hesychazo* ^{5x} according to the commandment *entole*.

COMMENTS

Joseph, who was waiting for the Kingdom of God and a member of the Sanhedrin, although he did not agree with their decision to eliminate Jesus, boldly went to Pilate and asked to bury his body. This is not normal with a crucifixion as the bodies were left out in the open to be humiliated by the birds and wild animals. Yet Pilate approved. Joseph had to hurry because the Sabbath Day and the Passover Feast would begin at dusk.

Jesus' female disciples who had been watching the crucifixion from a distance followed Joseph and the body and saw where the tomb was. Then all these pious Jews rested on the Sabbath Day.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT Matthew 27:57-61; Mark 15:42-47; John;19:38-42

1. Why did Pilate allow Jesus' body to be buried instead of being kept on the cross as was usual procedure in a crucifixion?

2. Why does Luke mention this was a new tomb in which no one had ever been buried? Is this significant?
3. Luke doesn't mention the large stone rolled against the entrance to the tomb. Why not?

PERICOPE 99

God Raises Jesus from Death to Life

^{24:1} Very early *orthos*-dawn 3x on Sunday morning the first Day of the week the women went to the tomb.

[A new day will dawn on us from above because our God is loving and merciful. He will give light to those who live in the dark and in death's shadow. He will guide us into the way of peace. **Luke 1:78-79**]

They were carrying the spices that they had prepared. ²They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. ³When they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

This is the first time the title *the Lord Jesus* is used in this Gospel.

⁴While they were puzzled about this *diaporeo* 5x, two men in clothes *esthesis* 1x that were as bright as lightning *astrapto*-shining 2x suddenly stood beside them.

Why are there two angels? It takes two witnesses to establish a fact. **Deuteronomy 19:15**

⁵The women were terrified *emphobos* 6x and bowed to the ground.

The men asked the women:

Why are you looking *zeteo* among *meta* the dead *nekros* for the Living One *zao*?
⁶He's not here. He has been brought back to life *egeiro*-risen. Remember *mnaomai* what he told you while he was still in Galilee. ⁷He said: The Son of Man must *dei* be handed over to sinful people, be crucified, and come back to life on the third day. **Luke 9:22; 18:33**

The word *dei* meaning *must* appears 19x. It appeared first when Jesus said: *I must be about my Father*. **Luke 2:49**. Matthew uses the word 8x, Mark 6x, and John 10x.

⁸Then the women remembered what Jesus had told them.

⁹The women left the tomb and went back to the city. They told everything to the eleven apostles and all the others. ¹⁰The women were Mary from

Magdala, Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James. There were also other women with them. They told the apostles everything.

¹¹The apostles thought that the women's story didn't make any sense, and they didn't believe them. ¹²But Peter got up and ran *trecho* to the tomb. He bent down to look inside and saw only the strips of linen. Then he went away wondering *thaumazo* what had happened.

COMMENTS

On the first day of the week after the Sabbath had ended, three named female disciples of Jesus who had joined him in Galilee and some other unnamed women went to the tomb of Jesus with spices to anoint the body. They found the tomb empty.

Suddenly two angels appeared, frightening the women. The angels asked the women: *Why are you looking here for the Living One among the dead. He is risen. Don't you remember how he predicted this to you while you were in Galilee?* The women left and told the Eleven apostles, but they did not believe them.

Then Peter got up and ran to the tomb to see for himself. But he could only wonder what had happened.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; John 20:1-10

1. Why didn't the Eleven believe the women's story of an empty tomb?
2. Why did only Peter run to the tomb to check it out? What does this say about the faith of the Eleven disciples? Why did Peter run to the tomb?
3. In the other three Gospels, Jesus is mentioned as going to Galilee. Why doesn't Luke mention this?

PERICOPE 100

Jesus Appears to Disciples on a Road to Emmaus

^{24:13} On the same day, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village called Emmaus. It was about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking to each other about everything that had happened.

¹⁵ While they were talking, Jesus approached *engizo* them and began walking with them *symporeuomai* ^{4x}. ¹⁶ Although they saw him, they didn't recognize *epiginosko*-know him. ¹⁷ He asked them: What are you discussing *logos*? They stopped and looked very sad *skythropos* ^{2x}.

¹⁸ One of them, Cleopas, replied: Are you the only one *paroikeo*-stranger ^{2x} in Jerusalem who doesn't know *ginosko* what has happened recently? ¹⁹ What happened *poios*-things? he asked.

They said to him: We were discussing what happened to Jesus from Nazareth. He was a powerful *dynatos* prophet *prophetes* in what he did and said in the sight of God and all the people. ²⁰ Our chief priests and rulers had him condemned *krima* to death *thanatos* and crucified *stauroo*.

²¹ We were hoping *elpizo* that he was the one who would free *lytroo*-redeem ^{3x} Israel. What's more, this *semeron*-today is now the third day since everything happened.

²² Some of the women from our group startled *existemi*-astonished us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ and didn't find his body. They told us that they had seen *optasia*-vision ^{4x} angels *angelos* who said that he's alive *zao*. ²⁴ Some of our men went to the tomb and found it empty, as the women had said, but they didn't see him *autos*.

²⁵ Then Jesus said to them: How foolish *anoetos* ^{6x} you are. You're so slow *bradys* ^{2x} *kardia*-heart to believe *pisteuo* everything the prophets said. ²⁶ Didn't the Messiah *christos* have to suffer *pascho* these things and enter *eiserchomai* into his glory *doxa*? Isaiah 53:4-12. ²⁷ Then he began with Moses' Teachings and the

Prophets to explain *diermenueo*^{6x} to them what was said about him throughout the Scriptures.

The Two Disciples Recognize Jesus

^{24:28} When they came near the village where they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. ²⁹ They urged *parabiazomai*^{2x} him: Stay *meno*-abide with us. It's getting late *hespera*-evening, and the day is almost over *klion*. So he went to stay with them.

³⁰ While he was at the table *kataklino*-meal^{3x} with them, he took *lambano* bread *artos* and blessed *eulogeo* it. He broke *klao* the bread and gave *epididomi* it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened *dianoigo*^{8x} and they recognized *epiginosko* him. But he vanished *ginamai aphantos*^{ix} from their sight *apo autos*.

³² They said to each other: Weren't we excited *kardia*-hearts *kaio*-burn *en*-within *hemin*-us when he talked with us on the road and opened up *dianoigo* the meaning of the Scriptures *graphe* for us?

³³ That same hour they went back *hypostrepho*-returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven apostles and those who were with them gathered together *synathroizo*. ³⁴ They were saying: The Lord *kyrios* has really come back to life *egeiro*-risen *ontos*-indeed and has appeared *optanomai* to Simon. ³⁵ Then the two disciples told *exegeomai*^{6x} what had happened on the road *hodos*-way and how they had recognized *ginosko*-knew Jesus when he broke *klasis* the bread *artos*.

COMMENTS

On that same first day of the week, two disciples were returning home from Jerusalem. As they walked, they discussed the things that had happened before the Sabbath Day. They were quite sad for their hopes had been dashed. They had thought Jesus was the Messiah and he would set up his throne in Jerusalem and rule the world. Yet the Sanhedrin had arrested him, handed him over to the Romans, who had executed him. This all happened three days ago.

A stranger met them and asked what they were discussing. They told him and then said that this morning some female disciples went to the tomb where his body lay to anoint the body. The tomb was empty, but they were met by two angels who said he had risen and was alive.

The stranger then upbraided them saying how foolish they were. Didn't they know the Scriptures that said the Messiah would have to suffer, but then enter into his glory? Then the stranger began telling them all the prophecies about the Messiah from the Hebrew Bible scrolls.

They soon arrived at Emmaus. They begged the stranger to stop and have a meal with them. At the table, the stranger acted as host and blessed and broke the bread. Immediately, the eyes of Cleopas and his friend were opened and they recognized him as Jesus, the Lord and Savior. But then he immediately disappeared.

What should they do? They immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples what had happened. And they commented how their hearts burned while Jesus opened the meaning of the Scriptures to them. And how they immediately recognized Jesus when he blessed and broke the bread.

But then the others revealed that they already knew the Lord had come back to life and had appeared to Peter.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why didn't the two disciples recognize Jesus?
2. Why didn't the two disciples ask the stranger who he was? Wouldn't they have wanted to know who was explaining the Scriptures to them? They must have asked him questions as to how he knew what he was teaching them.
3. Why did Jesus act as host at the table, reveal himself to them, and then disappear?
4. Why did Jesus appear only to Peter out of all the eleven apostles?
5. What did Cleopas and his friend mean when they said their hearts were burning?
6. Is Luke by this story emphasizing teaching his readers that one of the ways to believe in Jesus is to search the Scriptures and see how Jesus fulfills the words of the prophets? Luke uses the word *pleroo* meaning fulfilled 7x in the Gospel: **Luke 1:20; 2:43; 4:21; 9:31; 21:22, 24; 22:16; 24:44** and *ginamai* in **Luke 21:32**. Most scholars point more to Matthew who talks about fulfillment 16x.
7. What does this story teach about genuine discipleship of Jesus? HINT: Read **Luke 9:35**.

EXTRA CREDIT

Why didn't Jesus show the two disciples the marks of the nails in his hands and feet? Then they would have known who he was immediately?

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Why is it that Peter first recognized Jesus as the Messiah just after a meal for the 5,000 men and now these two disciples recognize Jesus at a meal?

EXTRA, EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

How do genuine disciples of Jesus recognize the presence of Jesus today?

PERICOPE 101

Jesus Appears to the Apostles in Jerusalem

^{24:36} While they were talking about what had happened, Jesus stood among them. He said to them: Peace *eirene* be with you. ³⁷ They were terrified *ptoeo* ^{2x} *emphobos*-trembled ^{6x} and thought *dokeo* they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸ He asked them: Why are you afraid *tarasso*? Why do you have doubts *dialogismoas*? ³⁹ Look at my hands and feet, and see that it's really me *eimi*-it is *ego*-I *auto*-myself. Touch me, and see for yourselves. Ghosts don't have flesh and bones, but you can see that I do. ⁴⁰ As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

⁴¹ The disciples were overcome with joy *chara* and amazement *thaumazo* because this seemed too good to be true *apisteo*-not believe ^{7x}. Then Jesus asked them: Do you have anything to eat? ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish. ⁴³ He took it and ate it while they watched him.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them: These are the words *logos* I spoke to you while I was still with you. I told you that everything written *grapho* about me in Moses' Teachings, the Prophets, and the Psalms had to come true *pleroo*-fulfilled. ⁴⁵ Then he opened *dianoigo* their minds *nous* to understand *syniemi* the Scriptures *graphe*.

⁴⁶ He said to them: Scripture says that the Messiah would suffer *pascho* and that he would come back to life *anistemi*-rise from the *nekros*-dead on the third day.

[Let's return to the Lord. Even though he has torn us to pieces, he will heal us. Even though he has wounded us, he will bandage our wounds. After two days he will revive us. On the third day he will raise us so that we may live in his presence. **Hosea 6:1-2**]

⁴⁷ Scripture also says that by the authority *onoma*-name of Jesus people would be told to turn to God and change the way they think and act *metanoia*-repent SO that their sins *hamartia* will be forgiven *aphesis*-remission.

[I have made your rebellious acts disappear like a thick cloud and your sins like the morning mist. Come back to me because I have reclaimed *ga'al*-redeemed YOU. **Isaiah 44:22**]

This would be told *kerysso*-preached to people from all nations *ethnos*, beginning in the city of Jerusalem. **Isaiah 42:6; 49:6.** ⁴⁸You are witnesses *martys* to these things.

⁴⁹I'm sending *apostello* you what my Father promised *epangelia*. Wait *kathizo* here in the city until you receive *endyo*-clothed with power *dynamis* from Heaven *hypsos* on high 6x. **Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Ezekiel 39:29; Joel 2:28-29**

COMMENTS

Suddenly, Jesus appears to the disciples who are apparently gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. He says: *Peace be with you*, the common greeting among pious Jews. The disciples are frightened and think they are seeing a ghost. Jesus shows them the wounds in his hands and feet and the disciples are overcome with joy. Despite the reports of Jesus being alive, apparently they still didn't believe it.

Then Jesus asked for something to eat to prove he was alive. They gave him a piece of broiled fish.

Then Jesus opened up the Scriptures for them as he had done for Cleopas and his friend. He mentioned two Scriptures: One said the Messiah would suffer and rise on the third day. The second said by the authority of the Messiah people were to repent so that their sins would be forgiven. Jesus said the disciples were to tell this to people of all nations – Jews and Gentiles beginning in Jerusalem. Then he commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until he sent them power from Heaven.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

John 20:19-23

1. Luke will use the words translated *peace* 18x in his Gospel compared to Matthew 5x, Mark 8x, and John 5x. The word *eirene* appears the most in Luke 13x. The expression *Peace be unto you* only appears in Luke here, but in John three times. Words translated *peace* appear over 400 times in the Bible – the most in Leviticus 31x, Isaiah 29x, Psalms 27x, and Numbers 25x. What is the significance of this word in the life and teachings of Jesus?

2. Why does Jesus *only* appear to his original disciples after his resurrection in Luke? Paul says that Jesus appeared to over 500 brethren at one time. **1 Corinthians 15:6**. When did this happen?

3. Why did the disciples think they were seeing a ghost when Jesus appeared, if they had reports Jesus had appeared to Peter and now to Cleopas and his friend? What does this say about their faith?
4. Jesus in effect gives them their commission as disciples in much the same words as Matthew. **Matthew 28:18-20**. Why does he do this in Jerusalem, not Galilee?
5. The theme of the Gospel going out from Jerusalem to all the nations *ethnos*-Gentiles is very strong in Luke. It is also very strong in Isaiah, especially in God's dream which is repeated in **Micah 4:1-2**:

[In the Last Days the mountain of the Lord's House will be established as the highest of the mountains and raised above the hills. All the nations will stream to it. Then many people will come and say: Let's go to the mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways so that we may live by them. The teachings will go out from Zion. The Lord's Word will go out from Jerusalem. **Isaiah 2:2-3**]

Finally, God's dream will be accomplished. But why has it taken God's Chosen People 700 years?

6. Jesus must have given his Twelve disciples the Holy Spirit as he sent them out to preach the Gospel, heal the sick, and exorcise demons. Why must they now wait in Jerusalem to receive the power they have already been given?
7. Jesus had previously appeared after his resurrection to Peter. **Luke 24:34**. Wasn't Peter with the other ten when Jesus appeared? Why didn't they believe Peter's testimony about the risen Jesus?

PERICOPE 102

Jesus Ascends into Heaven

^{24:50} Then Jesus took them to a place near Bethany. There he raised his hands and blessed *eulogeo* them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing *eulogeo* them, he left them *diistemi*-parted 3x and was taken *anaphero*-carried up 10x to Heaven *ouranos*.

⁵² The disciples worshiped *proskeyno* him and were overjoyed *meGas*-great *chara*-joy as they went back *hypostrepho*-returned to Jerusalem. ⁵³ They were always *diapantos*-continually 7x in the Temple where they praised *eulogeo*-blessing God *theos*.

COMMENTS

This is the only place where Luke says the disciples *worshiped* Jesus. Luke uses *proskeyno* 3x compared to Matthew using the word 13x, John using it 7x, and Mark using it twice.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jesus' ascension seems to have taken place on Easter night. Jesus first met the disciples in the Upper Room and then took them out to Bethany. There he blessed them and then ascended. Why didn't Jesus just ascend from the city of Jerusalem? Is there a reason Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives? See **Zechariah 14:4**.
2. Jesus' deity is presented by Luke many times in his Gospel as he is called *Lord*, but at only one time is Jesus called the Son of God by humans. Who calls Jesus the Son of God?
3. Jesus ascension, his return to Heaven, is already in view in **Luke 9:51**: *The time was coming closer for Jesus to be taken to Heaven. So he was determined set his face to go to Jerusalem.* What does this tell us about Jesus' knowledge of his identity?
4. Jesus blesses his disciples before he leaves, probably using the traditional Aaronic blessing, **Numbers 6:24-26**. How does this demonstrate Jesus is our High Priest?
5. How does the ascension of Jesus remind us of the prophet Elijah's departure? **2 Kings 2:11**
6. After Jesus ascends to Heaven, the disciples worship him. How does that remind us that Jesus is our King?

7. The Gospel According to Luke begins with the priest Zechariah praising God with incense in the Temple and ends with the disciples praising God in the Temple. Why is the Temple so important to Luke?

EXTRA CREDIT

After his resurrection Jesus took back his divine powers of being omnipresent, of being everywhere present. Why did he ascend here? Was this just for his disciples' understanding of where he went?

Epilogue

Luke presents the story of Jesus to Gentiles. Before God created Creation, the three members of the Holy Trinity covenanted a Covenant of Redemption **Revelation 13:8**, where God the Father would send God the Son to earth. He would be given a human nature by God to witness to God's plan of redemption to people on earth and then die on the cross to reconcile all wicked humans to a holy God. The Holy Spirit would empower Jesus in his human nature to perform miracles just as he would later empower humans on Pentecost.

Jesus is thus a Savior. The key verse of the Gospel is:

The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. **Luke 19:10**

Luke uses the word *soteria* meaning *salvation* in **Luke 1:69, 71, 77; 19:9**. He uses the word *soterios* in **Luke 2:30; 3:6**. He uses the word *soter* meaning Savior in **Luke 1:47; 2:11** and the verb *sozo* meaning *save* in **Luke 6:9; 7:50; 8:12, 36, 48, 50; 9:24 2x, 56; 13:23; 17:19 2x, 33; 18:26, 42; 19:10; 23:35 2x, 37, 39**.

That God sent Jesus to save *all* people is important to Gentiles, because the Jews say they are the Chosen People and Jesus is a Jew.

But Luke wants to show Gentiles that Jesus came for *all* people. God is the Creator of Heaven and earth and he loves *all* the people he has created. The Jewish people cannot keep Jesus for themselves, even though God promised Abraham to give his descendants a land.

God also promised King David that his descendants would always rule Israel. But the Messiah, the Anointed One, God's angel proclaimed to the shepherds: *Today, your Savior, Messiah the Lord, was born in David's city. Luke 2:11*. And a chorus of angels proclaimed: *Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace eirene, good will eudokia 9x toward men. Luke 2:14 KJV*. God's peace and good will was not limited only to Jews.

Jesus heals and exorcises demons not only from Jews, but also from Gentiles. He heals the servant of a Roman Centurion. **Luke 7:1-10**. He exorcises 6,000 demons from a Gentile man, and makes him his first missionary. **Luke 8:26-30**

The Messiah is not only a Jew. The Messiah is God's Son. So twice in this Gospel, God himself will speak declaring Jesus is his Beloved Son – at his baptism **Luke 3:22** and at his transfiguration **Luke 9:35**. And Jesus himself declares that he will return to earth again in glory and power and with God's angels accompanying him. **Luke 9:26; 12:40; 17:24; 21:27**

Jesus is also perfectly human. He has very human characteristics. He is able to perform supernatural deeds only because he prays to his Heavenly Father constantly and so receives power from God's Holy Spirit as his disciples will later receive after Jesus has returned to Heaven. Jesus tells his disciples *they will be able to do the things he had done and even greater things.* **John 14:12**

Jesus obeys his parents. **Luke 2:51.** He goes off alone to pray to his Heavenly Father for strength. **Luke 4:42.** He doesn't know who in the crowd touched him. **Luke 8:4.** He is frustrated at his disciples lack of faith.

[You unbelieving and corrupt generation. How long must I be with you and put up with you? **Luke 9:41**]

Jesus is filled with joy. **Luke 10:21.** Jesus is depressed, because he knows that one day the city of Jerusalem will be destroyed. **Luke 13:35.** Again, he cries because the people of Jerusalem don't realize what will bring them peace. The Holy City will be destroyed because they didn't realize the time when God came to visit them. **Luke 19:41-44**

But Jesus is most human in the Garden of Gethsemane right before his arrest by the Sanhedrin. He prays so hard that God sends an angel to strengthen him. But instead of resting in the strength he has been given, he prays even harder and his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. **Luke 22:41-44**

Luke does not portray Jesus' human emotions as he is nailed to the cross for six hours. But a Roman Centurion observes the way Jesus conducted himself and declares: *Certainly this man was innocent.* **Luke 23:47.** How did Jesus act to make him say this?

So Luke presents Jesus as a *perfect* man and *perfect* God who never sins and who accomplishes the mission for which his Heavenly Father had sent him to earth. Because of Jesus, all who believe in him are promised a close, personal relationship with our Heavenly Father, the Creator of Heaven and earth, through prayer in Jesus' name. By his action, Jesus has reconciled wicked sinners to a holy God.

Truly, Jesus has come to earth *to seek and to save the lost.*

A Final Word

Paul says:

[My dear friend Luke, the physician, and Demas greet you. **Colossians 4:14**]

This has been quite a journey. I praise God who has inspired me to write this commentary at the beginning of the new year of 2021. After all of the uncertainties of the year 2020, with the Covid-19 pandemic and the traumatic election of the President and Vice President, we need a new start.

So God has given me many new insights into this wonderful Gospel. It has never been one of my favorites. The Gospel of John was my first love and has continued to be. Isaiah's Vision was second and then Deuteronomy. God has shown me how Luke has managed to present similar concepts in his Gospel focusing on Jesus' identity as perfect God and perfect man, teaching his Jewish disciples that God's dream for his Chosen People was to present God as *the Savior to all the nations of the world*.

Luke does this by being very definite in his language, using many rare Greek words to precisely describe Jesus' actions and his disciples and the peoples' reactions to what Jesus says and what Jesus does. Comparing the **GOD'S WORD**© translation with the original Greek in the King James Translation has helped me understand how precise Luke was in his wording.

Studying this Gospel by breaking it down into small pericopes, instead of the larger chapters, also forced me to ask many more questions than I have ever asked. Remember, that some of these questions do not have obvious answers or even any answers. This has been an awesome experience. I praise God for blessing me by inducing me to set out on this journey and to accomplish it.

Rusty Rutherford

January 23, 2021

Sermons of Alistair Begg on Luke

Reliable Information	Dec 6, 1988	Luke 1:1
Here Comes John	Dec 13	1:5
The Angel and the Virgin-Part One	Dec 20	1:26
The Angel and the Virgin-Part Two	Dec 27	1:26
The Song of Mary	Jan 10, 1999	1:39
His Name is John: Part One	Jan 31	1:57
His Name is John: Part Two	Jan 31	1:57
Christ the Lord: Part One	Feb 7	2:1
Christ the Lord: Part Two	Feb 7	2:1
The Song of Simeon	Feb 14	2:21
Simeon's Prophecy	Feb 15	2:33
The Man Who Is God: Part One	Feb 21	2:39
The Man Who is God: Part Two	Feb 21	2:19
A Strange Plan for a Strange Man	Mar 7	3:1
Repentance: Part One	Mar 28	3:7
Repentance: Part Two	Mar 28	3:7
The Good News	Dec 3, 2009	3:15-20
The Baptism of Jesus	May 2, 1999	3:21
The Temptation of Jesus: Part One	May 9	4:1
The Temptation of Jesus: Part Two	May 9	4:1
Isn't this Joseph's Son?	May 30	4:14
All in a Day's Work	Jun 6	4:31
The Calling of Committed Followers	Jun 27	5:1

The Power, Purpose and Presence of Jesus	July 4	5:12
Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath	Jul 11	6:1-11
The Delight of the Sabbath	Jul 18	6:1-11
The Gift of the Sabbath	Jul 18	6:1-11
The Master's Men: Part One	Aug 22	6:12-19
The Master's Men: Part Two	Aug 22	John 4:27-42
A Christian Manifesto: Part One	Dec 3, 2009	6:20-27
A Christian Manifesto: Part Two	Dec 3	6:2-27
The Law of Love	Sep 5, 1999	6:27-36
The Golden Rule	Sep 12	6:31-35
Measure for Measure: Part One	Sep 19	6:36-38
Measure for Measure: Part Two	Sep 19	6:36-38
Pictures that Tell a Story	Oct 10	6:39-45
Obedience: Evidence of a Strong Foundation	Oct 17	6:46-49
The Compassion of Christ	Oct 31	7:1-17
Jesus and John	Nov 7	7:18-35
The Sinful Woman	Nov 7	7:36-50
The Parable of the Sower	Nov 14	8:1
Listening, Belonging, and Trusting	Nov 21	8:16
From Fear to Faith	Dec 5	John 20:1
Transforming Power of Christ: Part 1	Dec 5	8:26
Transforming Power of Christ: Part 2	Dec 5	8:26
Who Do You Say I Am?	Dec 12	9:1
What Is Discipleship?	Dec 12	9:1

The Disciple's Discipline	Jan 9, 2000	9:37
Following Jesus	Jan 9	9:57
Like Lambs Among Wolves: Part One	Jan 30	10:1
Like Lambs Among Wolves: Part Two	Jan 30	10:4
The Good Samaritan: Part One	Feb 13	10:25
The Good Samaritan: Part Two	Feb 13	10:25
Solid Joys and Lasting Treasure: Part 1	Feb 20	10:17
Solid Joys and Lasting Treasure: Part 2	Feb 20, 2000	10:21
First Things First	Feb 27	10:38
Father	Mar 12	11:1-4
Hallowed Be Your Name	Mar 19	11:1-4
Your Kingdom Come	Mar 19	11:1-4
Give Us Each Day	Mar 26	11:3
Forgive Us Our Sins	Apr 2	11:4
Forgiven and Forgiving: Part One	Apr 9	11:4
Forgiven and Forgiving: Part Two	Apr 9	11:4
Lead Us Not into Temptation	May 7	11:4
More Help on Prayer	May 28	11:5-13
No Neutral Ground: Part One	Jul 2	11:14
No Neutral Ground: Part Two	Jul 2	11:14
A Crucial Contrast	Jul 9	11:33
Hollow Religion	Jul 16	11:37
Woe to the Experts	Jul 16	11:45
Hypocrisy, Intimidation, Unforgivable Sin	Oct 22	12:1-2

On Guard Against Greed	Oct 29	12:13
Why Worry: God's In Charge	Nov 12	12:22
A Call to Righteousness: Part One	Jan 14, 2001	12:35
A Call to Righteousness: Part Two	Jan 14	12:35
Fire Baptism: Division	Jan 21	12:49
Questions for the Crowd	Jan 28	12:54
The Nature and Necessity of Repentance	Feb 11	13:1
Mercy and Judgment: Part One	Feb 18	13:6
Mercy and Judgment: Part Two	Feb 18	13:6
Kingdom Business	Feb 25	13:10
Will Only a Few Be Saved?	Mar 18	13:22
Jesus and Jerusalem	Mar 25, 2001	13:31
Three Dinner Lessons	Apr 1	14:1
Invitation to a Banquet	May 6	14:15
Counting the Cost	May 6	14:25
Amazing Love: Part One	May 13	15:1-13
Amazing Love: Part Two	May 20	15:11-24
Amazing Love: Part Three	Jun 17	15:11-24
Amazing Love: Part Four	Jun 17	15:25-32
Investing in Eternity: Part One	Jun 24	16:1
Investing in Eternity: Part Two	Jul 1	16:10
The Rich Man and the Beggar	Jul 15	16:19
Law and Gospel	Jul 22	16:14
Be Careful How You Live	Aug 5	17:1

A Thankful Samaritan	Sep 2	17:11
A Coming of the Kingdom	Sep 9	17:20
A Parable on Prayer	Sep 30	18:1
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector	Oct 14	18:9
How to Enter the Kingdom	Oct 21	18:15
Believing Is Seeing	Oct 28	18:31
A Big Change for a Small Man	Nov 4	19:1
Living with Significance: Part One	Nov 11	19:11
Living with Significance: Part Two	Nov 11	19:11-27
Jesus: King, Prophet, Priest	Nov 18	19:28
The Authority of Jesus	Nov 25	20:1
The Tenants Parable	Dec 2	20:9
Render to Caesar	Dec 16	20:20
The Hope of Resurrection	Dec 30, 2001	20:27
Teaching at the Temple	Jan 6, 2002	20:40
The Temple's Destruction	Feb 16, 2003	21:5
Questions about the End	Mar 2	21:8
The Coming of the End	Mar 9	21:20
What Does "This Generation" Mean?	Mar 30	21:32
Watch and Pray	Mar 30	21:34
Judas, An Enigma	Apr 6, 2003	22:1
The Extent of His Love	May 18	22:7
Betrayal	May 25	22:21
Betrayal and Denial	Jun 1	22:21

Trouble	Jun 1	22:21
Jesus the Word	Jun 8	John 1:14
Jesus the God-Man	Jun 29	Hebrews 1:1-14
Jesus Our Substitute	Jul 13	22:39-46
Jesus in Gethsemane	Jul 20	22:39
Jesus Deserted	Nov 2	22:47
Jesus Denied	Nov 2	22:54
Jesus, Despised and Rejected	Nov 9	22:63
The Sound of Silence	Nov 9	23:8
Pilate Caves In	Nov 16	23:13
Do Not Weep for Me	Nov 23	23:26
The Crucifixion	Nov 30	23:32-43
A Prayer and A Promise	Dec 7	23:32
The Death of Christ	Dec 14	23:44
The Burial of Jesus	Dec 14	23:50
The Resurrection: Part One	Jan 18, 2004	24:1-53
The Resurrection: Part Two	Feb 1, 2004	24:1-2
Getting the Big Picture	Feb 8	24:13-27
Then They Recognized Him	Feb 8	24:28-35
Peace, Panic, Proof	Feb 15	24:36-43
The Plan and Purpose of God	Feb 29	24:44-49
The Ascension: Part One	Mar 7	Acts 1:1-11
The Ascension: Part Two	Mar 7	