


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

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CHAPTER 1

In the gospel of Luke the emphasis is on the man we know and love as Jesus Christ. Harry Ironside used to say that when Paul used the terms Jesus Christ he intended to speak of the Lord's earthly ministry and when he used the terms Christ Jesus he directed attention to our Lord's heavenly office and ministry. Luke begins with the birth and incarnation of Jesus our incarnate Lord. He emphasises the early emergence of singular character and wisdom in His life. In this first chapter we have 55 references or allusions to the OT – to the Messiah of the prophets -the Son of Man in Daniel and the "root and branch" of David's stem. This book demands a fresh look at character.

THE NOTION OF CHARACTER 1-4

The true nature of spiritual struggle

*We speak of a character reference. A Father had two daughters who looked in the mirror daily-one lovely-one plain. They fell out. Dad said to His lovely lass "Do nothing that would discredit those looks" – to his plain girl "Cultivate the superior attractiveness of inner beauty". A railwayman took 2 weeks holiday instead of one – he was sacked for serious misconduct. That man renamed himself "Mr Serious Misconduct". A golfer *Robert Vincenzo* won a tournament & on 18th was approached by a girl with a sob story of a dying daughter. **He** wrote her a cheque to the value of his prize only to be told it was a fraud. "Best day of my life – he said" – there's no wee baby ill! *George Washington* said "Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder". This book is written to Theophilus – he was likely a priest who was keenly interested in the Lord – but if you could describe yourself as "God friendly" the book is put on your lap just the same by the Holy Spirit. The idea is that you and I through Gods salvation are empowered to a commitment to the cause of God the cause of right so frequently on the scaffold while wrong is on the throne.*

THE CHARACTER OF ZECHARIAH 5-25

The struggle for holiness in ministry

*(A) **Righteous, obedient, blameless**, childless for now. It was his last time at the incense altar-he was a man of prayer-and he had one personal as he prayed for the people in line with his statement in vv. 68-75. God sent to Zecharias (the Lord remembered) Gabriel who ministered for thousands of years before **Him** stood on the side of the altar not daring to interpose between man & God. His message – "Elizabeth will have a son" NB Gabriel stood to the side of the altar – in honour of Christ*

*This good man questioned the angel. He was then given the sign in reply to his "How shall I know?" – "You will be dumb till his naming"v13 – he was to be "John"
(B) vv57-66 Nine months on – CIRCUMCISION V59 The nod to Zecharias brought a written answer "His name is to be John". All feared saying "Surely this is a "Chip of the old block" το παιδιον – clue to **His** prayerful and prophetic nature. NB "The line of Abia – **June** – hence Jesus' incarnate "beginning" was in December and his birth on Tishri or September – the Jewish month of the feast of Tabernacles.*

THE CHARACTER OF THE VIRGIN MARY 26-38 &46-65

The "struggle" of remaining lowly-by praise

(A) Here we have a young woman of the next generation. Let's note **her character reference**. "Grace for a special vocation has been given you – the Lord is with you – you are blessed among women – you have found grace in the very presence of God" Then the glorious statement about Christ's birth then the for her proper question- "How" and Gabriel's explanation – the Almighty's overshadowing and the work of the Holy Ghost and the confession of Gabriel "Nothing is impossible that I have heard in Gods presence" and Mary's reply "Let it run to plan as you say, behold the Lord's handmaid"

(B) vv46-56 Mary desired with her soul – relating to world around to magnify God for He investigated her low estate and determined on a radical countermove. The mighty one has breathed great things into life for me", said Mary. In **His little arm** He has given life.

to new supremacy – put down the proud and dynasties filled the hungry sent plutocrats away empty – Mary had been a student of David (Ps.103), Job(12)"Though **He** slay me", Hannah and Abraham in Gen. 22 & the "Fear Not's" of Isaiah 41.

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST 76-80

A new way of life for man – The "agony" of the cross!

The speech of Zecharias said two things – (1).God has breathed new life into the whole truth of Redemption – raising a means of pushing it forward by Jesus Christ. (2). God has breathed **new** life into "covenant mercy" that **we might be** saved from enemies and serve him in holiness & righteousness all our lives. So to the four infinitives-**John was "to prepare the way"**.

N01 John was to speak of works of character repentance and the fire of the Holy Spirit – of great change and renewal brought about under God.

N02 Christ was to give knowledge of salvation in the circle of forgiven sin by the compassionate mercies of God alone cf. 'the lamb' and God's Great love

N03 Christ was "to shine light among those who sit in the shadow of death" and God's great wisdom

No4 Christ was "to make absolutely plain the way of peace" and great sacrifice

*'Take up thy cross,' the Saviour said
'If thou would my disciple be!
Take up thy cross, with willing heart,
And humbly follow after me.'* (C.W Everest)

CHAPTER 2

This chapter features the glorious birth of our wonderful Lord. Within chapters 1-2 there are 12 historical steps leading us from the end of the old era signed off in the last days of Zecharias right to the opening blessing of our High Priest leaving to take up His station as Melchizadek-King-commander in chief and High priest in glory.

THE LAW THE PROPHETS & THE WRITINGS

There are 21 references to the OT the first of which links the Christ to the chosen people via circumcision. Custom was followed in the matter of cleansing of the mother and sanctifying of the child by offering. Among especially interesting

references are the ten to Isaiah which direct us to the “consolation of Israel” ; and “the glory of salvation” one day to be seen by all – foreseen by Simeon; and the servant passages of *Isa.42.1 & 6 – Isa. 49.6*; and the broad sense of “resurrection” also conveyed by Simeon’s reference to *Isaiah 8.14-v34*; and the ;grand redemption (*ιλασμος*) message poignantly referred to by holy Anna *v.38* and *Isaiah52.9* ; then the customs of “bar-mitzbah” and “Passover” in *v.41* were followed. To summarise we have Law(*νομος*); the movement of the Holy Spirit in prophecy (*παρακλησις*) and thirdly custom(*εθος*). There is a powerful movement of the Holy Spirit of God being described here which would enable believers to break from the ceremonials of the law and the ethos or seasonal customs of Judaism.

CHAPTER 1

A narrative summary

KEY CHANGE – OUT WITH THE OLD PRIESTHOOD – IN WITH THE NEW

- (1) *Luke1.5* The cruel but now short-lived monarchy forms a backcloth to the invasion of God in the flesh bringing a new catechetical certainty – a word not first written but spoken afresh by God and having weight above Talmud or Mishnah with its 6 sections that regulated Jewish custom
- (2) *Luke1.8* Zecharias by the incense altar ending his priestly life and pointing to the fading relevance of the old order – overtaken by the proclamation of John’s “spirit-filled” ministry.
- (3) *Luke1.23* The very sight of a “nodding” priest who left for his house said it all – completion and impotence of ministry.
- (4) *Luke1.41* The Holy Spirit acted upon Elizabeth instant upon Mary’s arrival – signalling the proceeding of the Spirit from the Father through the Son our only Mediator.
- (5) *Luke1.44* Elizabeth commended Mary for total belief in the eternal kingdom of Christ – the Priest or King – the completion of the word of God – with its eight-fold promise (*vv31-33*)

EVENTS 1-7

THE EPHEMERAL FADING MINISTRY OF ZACHARIAS 1.5-7†1 (v.5)

Zecharias service can be designated since the dating of the priestly courses has been preserved. The courses according to Dr.Bullinger changed weekly on the Sabbath. The first fell on the 8th of last day of tabernacles (*John7.37*). Priests in the Abia or Abijah rota served December 6-12 and June 13-19. Bullinger reckons the “city” of Zecharias was Juttah and that he could not leave till Sabbath 20 had ended and on the assumption that he would take two days to travel he would be home by 23 Sivan(June). Bullinger’s determination on the city location and the conception and birth of John could push the determination of the date of Christ’s birth outside the range of the Feast of Tabernacles. I reckon that to Ein Kerem would require a journey of but several hours and he would be back by June 21. The miracle of the conception of Elizabeth soon followed and given that John was six months senior to Jesus as to birth the virgin conception of Christ is able to be fixed circa the third week of December and our Lord’s birth can then be assumed to have taken place in the last week of September within the days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

GOD’S ANGEL MEETS HIM AT THE INCENSE ALTAR 1.8-22 †2 (v.8)

The time was that of the grape harvest. The people were praying. It was between 12 noon and 3pm – about the time – 33 years later when our Lord died. An angel

suddenly appeared by the side of the altar and told the priest that he should have a son and call him John. He would be great. He would not drink of the fruit of the grapevine. He would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. He would turn many to God and he would prepare the way of Messiah. Zacharias asked for a sign over against the unlikely event since he and his wife were very old. Gabriel answered “You will be dumb till the child is born”. On exiting from the Holy place the people observed he was shocked and realised he had received a vision. He could only motion and nod.

END OF A MINISTRY & THE OPENING OF ANOTHER 1.23-38 †3 (v.23)

Luke tells us simply that Zacharias ministry had ended and he went home. But Gabriel was sent back from heaven in the sixth month (Elul) to Nazareth. This is of interest for this angel made the double journey to earth from the presence of God within just over two months. Gabriel spoke with comfort to Mary saying “Blessed are you among women (or) wives”. Mary was understandably concerned at the words. She was told not to be afraid and then given the glorious surprise announcement that she was to be mother of Messiah. Mary’s “How” question concerning the birth was answered as Gabriel said “The Holy Spirit would come upon her and El Shaddai would overshadow her and the One who when He is born or brought forth would be called “Son of God.” Gabriel subsequently told Mary that her cousin was with child and was in her sixth month (1.36)

MARY’S STAY WITH ELIZABETH AT EIN KEREM 1.39-42 †4 (v.41)

Mary arose and departed in those days (whether under pressure we do not know) but she journeyed to a city in the hills of Judah. We know little of her company over those days of travel. She was first to greet Elizabeth and Elizabeth was positively thrilled to receive her and greeted her with a great voice.

ELIZABETH’S GREETING & THE MAGNIFICAT 1.43-56 †5 (v.44)

As Leon Morris observes the word “Adonai” (Lord) is used 25 times in chapters 1-2. Elizabeth immediately acknowledges the conception of the Lord in response to the leap of John who is already responsive to the Spirit of God and leaps in her womb. Mary bursts into the incomparable Magnificat which among other things rejoices in the mighty grasp and power of the beloved little arm just forming in the womb. The mighty deeds of the Lord she acclaimed are: –

He has created strength and power with His arm

He has scattered the proud

He has brought down kings

He has lifted the humble

He has filled the hungry

He has sent the rich away

He has helped Israel.

He has remembered His mercies to Abraham for ever.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for 3 months and then returned to Nazareth. She appears to have remained till the birth of John.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN AND DISCUSSION OF HIS NAME 1.57-64 †6 (v.59)

At the birth of John Elizabeth’s neighbours rejoiced. When the family went to circumcise him there was some question of the name his mother was using but Zacharias confirmed it by writing on a tablet. Upon his action his voice returned according to the word the angel “transacted”.

ZECHARIAS PROPHECIES OF JOHN'S WORK 1.65-80 ¶7 (v.65)

The matter of John's birth set people talking in the whole hill country of Judea. It was a long continued talking point as to what all these words of power and action meant: John's birth to an old man and woman – the dumbness and the miraculous return of Zacharias speech. The story of Mary may even have become known to some confidants. People asked "What is this child going to turn out to be?"

CHAPTER 2

Narrative summary

- (6) *Luke 2.1* The world's pagan high priest & Caesar Augustus had just issued his decree prior to the birth of Christ-the true High priest of God
- (7) *Luke 2.2* Cyrenius was Syrian governor then. (*He held the post first from BC12-BC3 – not during his 6-7AD renewed governorship*). Thus the decree issued by Augustus and enforced by Cyrenius was executed during Passover or a feast so that preoccupation with religion might prevent revolt. The equivalent commentary on *Matthew 2* respecting the earliest years of our Saviour mark BC3-2 as the time charted here.
- (8) *Luke 2.6* The impromptu birth of Christ and the use of crepundia – the virgin's veil as swaddling – and the manger as a cradle – are signs of stunning miracle and disarming humility and accord with prophetic vision.
- (9) *Luke 2.13* The massed army of heaven – without its great captain of salvation – is interpreted by the angel-song which tells of the circle of favoured or acquiescent men among whom that King and captain now battles for their redemption.
- (10) The shepherds discovered Mary "up" or awake and the "cattle-trough" prophecy concerning God's peacemaker exactly fulfilled – and they sang over & over the angelic word.
- (11) Following the significant section on the Holy Spirit's work in Simeon and Anna we are given two other vital historical steps to consider.
- (12) *Luke 2.42* At twelve Jesus went up to Passover in Jerusalem. That must have been AD 9-10 – but more significant it marked his priestly office taking hold – being Himself the Lamb of God He had something to offer.
- (13) *Luke 2.46* The great statement of our Lord "I must be about my Father's business" highlights the ministry he well understood already – as Messiah and redeemer.
- (14) This goes back to *Luke 1.5* where the oral teaching of Jesus in tender years was profound. **One principle holds all these statements together as a thread holds beads – namely the "Melchizadekian work" of Christ – the work of the God-man who is known to Hebrew prophecy as the Son of man and to John as "That man" (a way of expressing Adonai). Luke's εἶπετο "and it happened" does not merely bear testimony to period facts but to the doings inspired by the "proper man" (as Luther called Christ) acting always with the Father – and Luke displays the creative acts of power and healing of the One whose ministry it is to redeem and rule mankind.**

EVENTS 8-12

THE DECREE OF CAESAR AUGUSTUS 2.1-8 (v.1)

This famous decree Luke mentions was promulgated according to W.W.Capes of Queens College, Oxford in the last few years of Augustus life – AD 12-14. His survey of the Empire and first map of the world put together by his old soldier ally Agrippa led to the production of a uniform system of taxation. He wrote out in his own hand the chief statistics. And the balance sheet of expense and expenditure. The “Monumentum Ancyranum” uncovered and transcribed by French archaeologists retains for modern time such details as I have just noted. Augustus was the first emperor to be “worshipped” as God (Latin “Divus”). It was in the days of John the Baptist’s youth that Augustus first issued his taxation policy that affected the entire Roman world.

THE TIMING OF THE DECREE AND JESUS’ REGISTRATION 2.2-5 (v.2)

Luke’s next historical note is the application of the taxation code of Rome to Syria and hence Judea. The governor who introduced it was Cyrenius. Cyrenius had hegemony of Syria at the time and Augustus’ “handwritten” law of Augustus was followed to further audit statistics in the province in the tenth year of Archelaus who reigned from 4BC to 6AD. Thus Cyrenius or Quirinius did indeed do a survey in 5-6 AD. according to Josephus . However from the bronze Tibertine tablet we know that **Quirinius was previously Syrian governor 4BC-0BC**. His success in setting up the census and getting lots of money for Augustus landed him a consulship in Rome. It is this earlier governorship that Luke mentions. The reference neatly confirms the birth of Christ as occurring at the time of this governorship – probably at the time of his arrival in 4BC. After making lots of money he returned to Syria.

JESUS’ BIRTH IN THE INN 2.6-7 (v.6)

Luke tells us that Mary brought forth her Firstborn and that she herself wrapped Him in swaddling bands or as it may mean “rags” of torn garments and laid him in a horses’ feeding trough because there was no place for them in the inn with its beds where one could lie down.

SHEPHERD’S VISION & ANGEL MESSAGE 2.8-14 (v.13)

The shepherds were under some cave cover at night while they watched their gathered flock at night. The angel of the Lord stood by them giving attention to them as one who knew with whom he was to deal. God’s “glory” or Shekinah focussed upon them and they were terribly frightened. The angel set them at their ease and told them he had a surprise for them – joyful news of the birth of a Saviour of David’s line – the Messiah. He told them they would find the child wrapped in torn garment pieces and lying in a horse feeder. Then the whole host of heaven appeared in the skies and sang “Glory to God among the highest ones and peace on earth to men in the circle of His good pleasure.”

THE SHEPHERDS VISIT JESUS & RETURN WITH JOY 2.15-20 (v.15)

The action the shepherds took was to immediately decide among themselves that they would all go and see the sight. They were so thrilled and so stunned that they should enjoy this high privilege that they went off together – who would miss it for the world!

They ran speedily and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby and told the entire story that had been spoken or perhaps they said “sung” by the angel messengers. This must

have deeply heartened Mary amid such difficulties and doubtless these rough men immediately supplied what they could – maybe goat's milk and better shelter. The shepherds told their story everywhere. Luke speaks of all that heard it once continuing to wonder. Did the shepherds take up not just the saying but the song of the angels? This was in a sense the first Christmas carol. Luke's use of "LALÉW" (The Greek term for "poetic song" as well as "excited speech") is highly suggestive of song.

THE MOVEMENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 2.21-39

EXCURSUS 1 LUKE'S CHRISTMAS CHARACTERS

Simeon otherwise known as Symeon –is supposed by the ancients to have been father to Gamaliel was a man upon whom the Holy Spirit had come. **It was revealed to him that he would not die till he saw the Lord's Christ.** He quoted *Isaiah 40* "Speak like a prophet" the subject of which scripture is 'exchange of strength' and he referred to *Isaiah 49* 'sing like a bird' the subject of which passage is the divine love that could say 'I have carved you on the palms of my hands': this man had a message and a song cantering on atonement and the love of God. He had a world view of Christ "prepared before all nations" – a Saviour as "treasure kept" by Israel and as a "light to the Gentiles". On the personal level his reference to Jesus as "Set for the falling and rising again of many in Israel" would be consolation to Mary in time to come if we are right in thinking the Joseph's death came early. The prophecy given to her spoke of her heart being circumcised also with the result that divine truth long treasured up privately would be opened up to the world. Luke himself would be aware that he had a part in setting these previously hidden thoughts in the public domain through the gospel.

Anna had been 84 years a widow. She had married early – which leads us to an estimate of her age at 96 plus and when we add the 7 extra years of which Luke speaks we find ourselves thinking about a lady of 103. We have little difficulty affirming with scripture that she was "of a great age and remarkably active physically and spiritually. She was of the tribe of Asher "Whose bread was fat and delivered royal dainties" and she spoke with zeal and evangelistic fervour of the 'bread of life' to all who sought the Messiah. Luke speaks of her as *επιστάτα* –which has an "official ring" about it – meaning 'officer presiding' – a recognised mother in Israel.

Mary & Joseph After 40 days or seven weeks had passed since Jesus birth there was the presentation at the temple. The geomatria speaks of "probation" and it is made up of 5 a multiple of 5 and 8 which stand for grace and renewal. Once more Luke mirrors the work ahead – he provision of grace and the change of re-birth. The offering of 2 pigeons intimates burnt offering and the renewal and grace that will ultimately come with the work of Christ giving His life as a sin offering not only for the sins of ignorance as in *Leviticus 4.2* but for all sin and blasphemy outside that of the Holy Spirit. So the work of the single holder of the office of Melchizedek – the only redeemer come from the kingly line of David gains his priestly task from the Father who said "You are a priest forever" (*Psalms 110.4*) This Melchizedek is one and the same with the priest of God Most High [*God's priest*] referred to in *Genesis 14.18*. There are not two such Fatherless and eternal priests any more than there are two redeemers of God's elect.

Augustus. The Caesar who organised Roman cultic religion and was known as Deus also gained great influence by organising the Roman state and because under his watch the doors of Janus were shut only the 3rd time since the foundation of the

Roman nation 753AUC *Augustus* stabilised finance, he cut knights earnings, he proscribed drinking in the forces beyond 1 pint per day. He organised God out of his world and praised his grandson for not praying to Jehovah. In the world's Gentile religion he was the pagan high priest. Augustus succeeded Julius Caesar on the Ides of March 44BC and *Eusebius* states that **“in his 42nd year Jesus was born –namely in 2BC.** NB Chinese reported a special star which their astronomers noted in 4 BC and assuming that the star speaks of the “beginning” of our incarnate Lord's life on earth (*by conception of the Holy Ghost*) the dating of *Eusebius* its appearance are close but discordant. *Professor Filmer of Oxford* has recalculated the dating as we now can by reverse reading the movement of the heavens and he came up with a 1 BC dating for a star conjunction. If Filmer is correct Herod's death was not in 4BC as assumed in *Julian year* 4710 but in 4712 instead – which would still requires resolution conflicts with received chronology. What the ancient visit of the Magi speaks out loud and clear is that there was an astronomical sign which the Magi were able to connect with a new king in Judea whose birth they knew had happened before their arrival at Jerusalem.

VISIT TO THE TEMPLE 41-45†13 (V.42)

Mary and Joseph went annually to spend Passover at Jerusalem-perhaps in the home of Anna-Mary's mother. When Jesus was twelve He went up by custom to become a “Son of the law” and read His portion of scripture as directed by the Rabbi. On their 80-mile journey back home His parents found Jesus was missing and when they found he was not among friends and their children travelling along with them they were no little disturbed.

DEBATE WITH THE LEARNED RABBIS †14 (V.46)

After three days Jesus was found talking with the Rabbis. One asks “Where did he overnight?” perhaps with His nana. But how would He explain Himself to her—perhaps just as he did to His mother? Mary simply asked him “Why?” and Jesus said “Did you not know that I must be involved in my Father's affairs?” But they did not put together the active implications of the word He spoke.

THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST 2.52

The last verse of the chapter tells of *growth akin to that of Samuel* in the OT. Luke also reminds us in accordance with *Proverbs* 3.2 that Jesus “advanced” [*προκοπτω*] – which speaks He lived actively and victoriously as an army cutting through opposition and making advance. This statement refers to the time covered by v40 – taking us into the years prior to v.42 (*detailing His 12th year*). To meditate on this context is to recognise that even in His primary years 1-11 Jesus was active and showing immense diligence in active input into life at home and in Nazareth. Solomon, who is referred to in this context by Luke, spoke of **“Change of lives.”** Christ changed His estate to become man and by His **perfect obedience** and purity he brought “change” in the sense of “diversity” into the life of man and He brought the humanity into the life of God without changing the nature of God but rather the effect was to apply the grace and love of God to our lives as with the Father He worked among men. Luke is gently but steadfastly taking his readers to see that as Adam was set in the garden so our Lord had come to His garden and His intent and course from the outset was one related to the **work** of redemption.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter sets the politico-religious stage as John the Baptist emerges – outlines his message – emphasises the spirit-filled perceptions of John theologically ethically & socially-his deep respect for the rule of Messiah – his awareness of “spiritual warfare” in its great second phase. The chapter concludes with the genealogy of Mary running over 75 families and 3855 years.

JOHN PROCLAIMS THE COMING OF ISAIAH’S GOD-MAN †15 1-6

In the spring to summer of A.D.28 John the Baptist came preaching “good news” and his swift news (*ευαγγελιζετο* 3.18) of repentance and the requirement for its evidence in the light of the immanent revelation of Messiah gripped Israel and awakened even Roman soldiers. The “trees” who towered over the people in the existing political and religious frame were Tiberius (Rome) Pilate (Judea) Herod (Galilee) Philip (Iturea & Trachonitis) Lysanius (Abilene) and in matters of religion the Sadducean family of Annas and Caiaphas who held priestly office in turn.

The living active word of God [*ρημα*] came to John himself, a son of the priest Zacharias who arrived as a herald in these days along the Jordan banks at Bethabara and Aenon and laid new emphasis on Isaiah’s message (*Isaiah 40 3-5*) to “**prepare**” **for the sudden revelation of Christ**. He screamed out “Ravines and chasms must be filled; mountains and hills must be lowered.” There were streams of people along the Jordan in those days – expectant and tearful people, serious and concerned people – and the word of God came alive and vigorous to John, son of Zechariah, who stirred the whole nation and even the Romans as he delivered his message. John heralded saying “Crooked places must be made straight and rough smooth and ‘all flesh’ said he “**shall see God’s salvation.**”(vv5-6)

EXCURSUS 2 – ISAIAH’S RELEVANCE

This message of Isaiah has a later relevance too –in fact it relates to two decisive times of spiritual warfare – more precisely it relates to:–

- 1 The **battle of Calvary** and the operations since as the Spirit of God indwelt Christ and the church (*σωματικος*) – mirrored by the dove alighting on or indwelling Christ – who bore our judgment & offered us peace.
- 2 The battle beyond **the tribulation** when nations yield to Christ and “all flesh shall see the salvation of God”.

JOHN’S CALL FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS 7-14

We know that John taught his disciples to pray. To him men marches like armies and he confronted them with the query “Who has traced out the way to flee from the wrath to come? This is a good question. The only real answer is the Holy Spirit! In that connection another can be answered too! How can fruits be brought forth demonstrating repentance – by the dove indwelling? John had well understood this matter. The Holy Spirit who made the earliest earth productive is perennially associated with fruit – cf. *Galatians 6*. Where John stood as he spoke we do not know – was it by a graveyard in the Salim Aenon or Bethabara areas –15-20 miles south of the sea of Galilee? He certainly believed in resurrection 3.8 and he believed in the forthcoming judgment of political and religious establishment – “the trees”. He was highly practical on “fruits”

1. Everybody – give food and clothes to those who have any need.
2. Officials – don’t exact more than is appointed.

3. Soldiers – Don't harass, inform or slander the innocent or demand high wages. Soldiers retained 60% after food armour were provided.

JOHN SPOKE OF CHRIST 15-18

1. He is “strong” – since he is heavenly king – and a warrior – who has sandal straps.
2. His baptism is Holy Spirit indwelling and fire that signs a total yieldedness
3. He is judge who cleanses the temple “His floor” it being first Araunah's threshing floor. (*Christ did that twice*) *Both The Essenes and John were critics of the Jerusalem religious authorities of the day. It is hardly possible that there was not a degree of contact where such unanimity existed.*

This leads to the gathering of the wheat and the burning of the chaff.

The term “unquenchable fire” leads us to the Apocalyptic “lake of fire” which has no way out and as in *Rev.20.10* keeps “burning itself” *καιομενος* though nothing else remains there to burn. There the beast and false prophet are tested proved convicted and punished “into ages of ages. The word “brimstone” *θειον* reminds us of a God who is holy-indeed the word has its source in God who has “prepared hell”. We can sojourn *Isa33.14* with “everlasting burnings” or the “flame that swallows” and everlasting “burnt offering”? Even priests had to take turns at the altar. John by Jordan knew had been a good student of the “dead sea” and the conflagration of Sodom –we must not let slip the perception of *Matthew 10.28* – that the rebellious soul can be destroyed in eternity.

JOHN'S CONTINUING BATTLE 19-20

The “Essenes” had a concept of the war between the prince of light and of darkness. John was rather a prophet who guided by the Holy Spirit spoke straight to Herod concerning Herodias. The word used is *ελεγχω* which in *John 16.8* is that used of the Holy Spirit in the world i.e.” convict”. John spoke publicly too.

CHRIST'S BAPTISM 21-22

JESUS THE MAN WHO WAS PROCLAIMED SON OF GOD FROM HEAVEN ¶16

Luke notes that the entire company who came to John were baptised. Not a man demurred. Jesus also was baptised but he prayed and made His vow as He submitted to the whole plan of sharing divine righteousness with man through sacrifice.

The *13th εγενετο* (*3.21*) of the gospel draws attention to the mighty vow of Christ – under which is included His willingness to atone for sin – and which therefore is the effectual vow that opens heaven symbolically here and actually to all believers. As the Lord came out of the water the heavens opened. His vow to be the world's redeemer opened the way to glory. Further the Holy Spirit came into the arena *καταβαινω* in wrestling or powerful form as a dove. The wrestling with the powers of the air and with Satan *σωματικος* tells us of the struggle then begun by the whole triune God – extending to Calvary and to through the church age and ultimately through Israel to the millennium– as the “Spirit is poured out on all flesh”

GENEALOGY 23-37

Jesus was Himself as if beginning His thirtieth year. Just as the Holy Spirit was not an actual dove but the harbinger of a great peace cantered in Jesus Christ so the Lord Jesus was not just thirty – He had been the Son proceeding eternally from the Father. Following some of the best calculations we have Christ was born exactly 4000 years after the Adam's creation and 3052 from Noah's birth, 1992 from Abraham's birth and 986 from David's birth.

THE OT SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

The chapter runs on presenting to faith the “revelation of Gods glory on earth (*Isa40*) The decree on Christ’s Son ship in *Psalms* 2.7 is highlighted (v22) and a collage of OT references behind the genealogy of Christ revealing such joys as grace that takes Rahab into national life by Salmon – the Spirit of God coming upon David from His anointing, the building of the burnt offering altar by Zerubbabel. However illustrious this list of over seventy names, it contains not one “Jesus”. That name was chosen in heaven and sent by angelic messenger and names the only mediator of Gods chosen people.

*There’s no sweeter name than Jesus, name of Him who came to save us
In that saving name of Jesus every knee shall bow.*

CHAPTER 4

This gospel is the Christian's anthropology. It is the record of the best life ever lived and by the enabling of the Word of God in the area of belief and thought and the Spirit of God in the spiritual area of prayer in day to day things. So we are enabled to lead our lives as Paul says in all godliness 1Tim2.2.

THE NATURE OF GODLINESS

In *1&2Timothy* and in *Peter's 2nd epistle* the "reverence" (*ευσεβια*) of right and daily relationship with God is set forth as a Christian priority. There is a beautiful reverence of character which the world can not imitate – which you and I are called on to model in today’s world. It is not an aura but with it comes a peace which is grounded on three things. First, the study of scripture to obtain its promised strengths; second, giving ourselves to God for the filling the Holy Spirit (*cf.2Tim3.5*), and, third – continuing in prayer – without which vision and joy cannot be present and arid sterility will be left.

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS (*the temptation & desert victory*) 1-13

Thrust out into the desert our Lord showed himself God’s Son, the Word – He was able to meet Satan with the stronger words of the second tablet – *Deuteronomy*. In that book Moses got the vision of a great God and a victorious era – Thou hast begun to show thy servant Thy greatness and Thy mighty hand – that goodly mountain and Lebanon *Dt.3.25* The great servant of the Lord made an ark to hold the new law-to show that not Israel’s righteousness but the DEATH OF CHRIST only and his power could cause once besotted Israel to live in victory

So into the same desert came *the proper man* – as *Luther* called Christ. (1) He refused the lust of the flesh – would not create bread from the bread like stones of *Quarantel* (2) He refused the world and it’s envisioned warring kingdoms under Satan – He sought one united realm under His righteous orb.(3) He refused the devil’s way of ostentatious pride. Jesus had prayed and the heavens were opened, He prayed again and the Holy Spirit fell but would he move a foot to leap form the pinnacle at the behest of Satan? Absolutely not! The Son of man seeded miracles day after day-at the Father’s behest – but in Him Satan found no answering consent. To him belonged the house of God and He would insist twice during His wonderful ministry that its religion centred on prayer for the nations. Let us learn three things: that there are margins to materialism "Man does not live by bread alone"; that there are margins to work & leisure" you shall worship the Lord Thy God and serve Him alone" and that

there are margins to sin and suffering and wrong "You shall not tempt the Lord thy God" (*Deut.6 &8*). The Word and Spirit en-nerve and consolidate character.

SPECIAL NOTE: v.5 *στιγμη χρονων*—THE FUTURE “BRAND MARK” PERIOD OF HISTORY or of world slavery to the beast during the tribulation is envisaged.

CHRIST REJECTED 14-28

JESUS, THE MAN WHO OPENED HEAVEN †17

Luke records that Elijah prayed and God locked heaven. He prayed again and rain fell in abundance. This is the background of the address our Lord gave at Nazareth. At His baptism Jesus prayed and the heavens were opened. Later He would pray in Gethsemane and in 40 days the Holy Spirit would fall.

We are shown the "ethos" of Christ – "custom" being the perfect tense of the verb *εθω* – His familiarity with the book was such that he could turn to Isaiah and read from the PLACE – or the local passages *τοπος* where it was written in the evangelical prophet that the gospel is a message for the needy

1. Heralding hope for **the prisoner of sin and habit** – theirs is forgiveness & release (*Isaiah 61*)

2 Heralding **hope for the blind** through a covenant of righteousness – *Isa. 52 6-7(v 18.b)*

3 Heralding hope for the burdened and traumatised (*τραυμα*) LXX *Isa.58.6* – no more yoke. The people recognised Gods wonderful grace – now proclaimed as never before – and the added thrust of mighty truth that found their conscience smitten but when Jesus challenged them on the subject of **the parallel rejection of Elijah who healed a Syro-Phoenician though he prayed for Israel through 3.5 years of famine when the heaven was “locked” and no rain fell. After the miracle, Elijah’s pleas for mercy end with a mighty downpour of rain.** Jesus then spoke of the rejection of **Elisha who healed the Syrian captain.** On hearing of interest in Gentiles the mood changed. Jesus words were not lost on his audience – they were furious – they would have Him thrown off the hill on which the town was first founded.

We have the supreme example of grace and truth" the emphasis Christ brought to life – demonstrated at Nazareth.

CHRIST RECEIVED (*Capernaum – the city amazed by holiness*) †18 31-37

This was a Roman garrison city. The chosen centre of Jesus’ ministry – which was to touch the whole Roman world. A demonised man in the synagogue at Capernaum knew Jesus to be the “Holy one of God” and said so. The demon wanted nothing to do with Jesus but Jesus wanted to rescue the man at the mercy of the devil. Jesus had the compassion to care and the power to deliver. To the demon Jesus said “Be muzzled” and remarkably the demon never said another word. Hell had no reply. Demons that lived in earlier time and have already met their judge recognised the Lord as this demon did. The worshippers were "amazed" *εκπλεσσω* – literally quite full of it. They talked about it – it fired their imagination – but it did not yet capture their souls – they feared its first impact – it asked so much of them, so rightly Luke speaks of them as “amazed” and impressed with Jesus’ authority, he tells us *the "echo"* (*εχος* v.37) of Jesus teaching swept throughout the area. In one sense all the preaching of the Christian centuries is an “echo of what Jesus said”.

CHRIST REACHING 38-44

(The example of a home where Christ is Lord – the beauty of Capernaum)

The needy family immediately sought Jesus. He not only healed Peter's wife's mother – He took charge of her life *επιστημι* He commissioned her – He stood by – He oversaw her life". It was an effective transaction *παραχρημα* v39 and that very evening the home became for the first time a centre of ministry. During many years the crowds came to Jesus in Capernaum and He touched every one of them – with *all colours* of illness – yellow, red, black and white and *the demonised* were made free! So much did they benefit that they pursued Jesus to the quiet place where he was vowing His next days of service as He conversed with The Father. Then he left for the surrounding towns where there was deep need of His kingdom of love and righteousness. He was to open the book of Isaiah again and again before gloriously effecting or bringing into operation the sacrificial covenant death prophesied in the 53rd Chapter.

We need *the fullness* described here as “the power of the Spirit” if we are to effectively proclaim Christ and live holy and minister to others we too would be well to be sure that “The Spirit of the Lord is on me”.

CHAPTER 5

The word of God speaks to the heart of man. It comes to his will, his conscience, it moves his emotions, informs his reason, and challenges his intentions. From Naphtali good words winged their way world-wide. This chapter shows Christ presented aright

LUKE PRESENTS JESUS AS AN OMNISCIENT MAN †19 1-11

Luke tells us that multitudes ran together to the beach to listen to Jesus drawn to Him ostensibly to hear “the word of God” They pressed the Lord into the shallows. The fact Luke is conveying is that the words of Christ were being recognised for what they were– divine words from a man’s lips.

Luke adds “And there He (God) was standing alongside the shore. However, the crowd pressure had the force of an assault and the Lord had, of necessity, to commission the ship of His fishermen disciples and spoke to the crowd who stood on the shore.

When Jesus had finished teaching he directed the fishermen go out into deep water and let down their nets – but after working the area through the night Simon showed deep reticence to get their all dirty again and have to repeat their washing exercise. However Simon finally gave in and let down the nets. Their haul of fish endangered the ship and Simon called out “Lord, save me”. The most strangely he asks the Lord to “depart from him” but we are to suppose that as a man of passion he felt deeply at that moment the gravity of his sin and resistance to the simple loving command of Jesus earlier given.

That he was simultaneously on his knees holding on to Jesus gives us the counterfoil of his body language. He dearly wanted and deeply needed Jesus. He had discovered how little he was listening to Jesus and this realisation no doubt redirected his life not a little.

“The good news” said the old violinist to *Lloyd Douglas* as he struck “A” with his tuning fork is that it is “A” today and it will always be “A”. (*Lloyd Douglas was author of “The Robe”*).

To be eternally saved is to be for ever a servant to Him who alone knows both the depth of the sea of ruin we could face and the depth of need in our hearts.

LUKE PRESENTS JESUS AS A MAN WILLING TO TOUCH THE LEPER †20 12-15

This story of the leper is one that presents a man with a gross and long-term problem of leprosy who wanted only one thing – to have his leprosy removed. The man was apparently living in a town. The story corrects any impression there might be of Jesus as a great humanitarian with no spiritual agenda or clout. Jesus is not content to let the man avoid the presentation of offerings which remind him through the two little sparrows of the fact that one must suffer that the other would fly free (*Leviticus 14*).

AS THE MAN WHO TOUCHED THE LEPER HE BROKE THE MOULD AND RENEWED THE ANCIENT RITE OF THE LEPER'S CLEANSING. He did what currently was considered impossible and this healing of the leper was instant-surpassing even the excellence of modern leprosy treatment.

All men from the highest to the lowest need grace and that is the significance of cedar wood and hyssop in the offering. The law prescribed guilt sin and burnt offerings along with the sparrows that spoke of substitution and the meal offering. The blood of the bird that died was applied (a) to the ear lobe as a sign of obeying God's word and (b) to the hands speaks of service and (c) to the big toe to call for a walk with God. By comparison with *Mark 1.40ff* where the same incident is recorded this ungrateful man appears not to have done what he was told as far as keeping the matter privy. It is not difficult for the man not to have visited the priest but it is unlikely that he fastidiously fulfilled all the law. Had he offered guilt offering and sin offering and put away sin along with burnt offering and yielded obedience and added the meal offering whose flour and oil speak of Jesus and the Spirit of God he would have been in a very different spiritual case.

Jesus withdrew to pray after it became known He had touched a leper. It should be remembered that "prayer" in the case of our Lord during His **manhood** meant daily *confirming His vow προσευχομαι* to share the programme in which the Father worked and He worked.

LUKE PRESENTS JESUS AS MAN WITH DIVINE POWER 17-25 THE PARADOX OF JESUS THE MAN FORGIVING SIN" v.26 †21

Pharisees and teachers trudge from every quarter following the healing of a leper. It would be news that shook the establishment for the offerings for a leper had probably not been invoked since the days of the Kings. On this occasion four friends brought a paralytic and lowered him from the roof in front of Jesus (*cf. Mark 2 1-12*). The power of the Lord was present to heal and in front of the religious zealots and big-wigs our Lord said to the man "Your sins be forgiven" The Religious leaders thought that blasphemy. Jesus knowing their thoughts said "Is it easier to say "Your sins be forgiven" or Get up and walk" and then he added "But that you may know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins said He "I tell you, get up, take your bed and go home. After that transaction he went off praising God. This time the man's spiritual state was affected – he glorified God as did the people. "Glorifying God" they said "We have seen a **paradox** today" expressing ecstasy at this act of the glorious **Man** who saves and renews man. **THE USE OF THE WORD "PARADOX" IN V.26 "ONE WHO CONQUERED IN ALL AREAS" (*Epictetus* OF VICTORY IN BOTH BOXING AND WRESTLING AND *Eusebius* OF MARTYRS WHOSE VICTORY WAS OVERWHELMING) – SO GLORIOUS HAD JESUS BECOME IN THE COMMON MIND.**

LUKE PRESENTS JESUS AS JEHOVAH ROPHE 27-39

The subsequent call of Matthew Levi at the traditional Tabgha tax booth where seafarers paid tax on cargoes sees Jesus and the disciples at a hearty banquet where Levi declared his joy that Jesus would privilege him to call him. Pharisees saw the feature of Jesus and his disciples drinking with tax collectors and sinners as a violation of the ceremonials of purity. For them it was not acceptable that a Rabbi

should consort with a hard-bitten religious apostate wallowing in the world of fraud. Jesus, on the other hand, was mindful of broken heart and careful not to quench that little flame of desire left in the soul of Levi who wanted to find his way back to God from the dark paths of sin. Jesus answered the Jewish teachers with the time-honoured idiom *“It is not the healthy that apply to the physician but those who are unwell!”*

And the great physician of the mind cured him of his craving for this world’s wealth.

LUKE PRESENTS JESUS AS THE BRIDEGROOM 33-39

Before the significant time with the teachers ended they put a poser to the Lord. They said “John’s disciples fast and pray as do ours but yours drink with tax-collectors and sinners” Jesus breaks news to them of the unwelcome truth of the essential change of economy from Jewish to the Church era. Jesus termed his disciples “the guests of the bridegroom” for they were one day to be at the church banquet in glory as part of His church. He hinted that He would be taken away in bitter circumstances from His disciples. He described the old economy as beyond patching up. He showed that he could not use the customs and inflexible restrictions of the passing age and He also recognized that those accustomed to old wine who continue to indulge in it would have anything to do with the new. The new wine of joy truth and power enters the Christian life by what Paul calls the supply of the Spirit.

CHAPTER 6

This chapter records 6 further events the road of the “man of sorrows” – our Melchizadek. Here Christ redefines the showbread in terms of fellowship and healing in terms of salvation – and prayer in terms of the vow or commitment and discipleship as “commission” and here there is a fascinating aside that disciples can “lose office and betray a commission” followed by a story of humility and pride with consequences long as eternity. Jesus’ teaching on grace and mercy is followed by the playacting alternative v42 – and the alternatives of Christ’s and rabbinic teaching.

THE SECOND SABBATH AFTER THE FIRST † 22 1-5

This is correctly **the second day after the first Sabbath** and appears to refer to the end of **the festival of unleavened bread**. In this case the picking of grain it is related to genuine hunger following the period when Jews remembered the years in the wilderness. The Sabbath might otherwise be the “second” Sabbath of the year in importance – namely Pentecost. I favour the end of Passover because all other Sabbaths were numbered from there and Luke is most likely saying the “second” numbered Sabbath of the year. From *Deuteronomy 23.25* the action of the disciples actually gains immunity from legal stricture – indicative of a foreseeing Lord – all of whose provisions are kind. The incident recorded in *1 Samuel 21* tells of the bread that was taken off the altar on Sabbath being eaten by David. The statement **“THE SON OF MAN IS LORD OF THE SABBATH” MEANS NOT JUST THAT HE CAN CHANGE RULES BUT THAT HE MADE THE ORIGINAL RULES**. The fact that “priests” were to eat the bread when transferred into the new dispensation of grace indicates that our Lord as Melchizadek institutes a new priesthood of believers who may eat bread with Him. The point of referring to David and the value of the incident lies in this commentary which is a further step in understanding the mission of Christ – taking

His people led out of the wilderness of man-made ritual to the gospel new corn of Canaan.

ANOTHER SABBATH †23 6-11

The scribes and Pharisees watched Christ, who's Lordship they did not subscribe, heal a man with a "withered" hand on another or different Sabbath. Their purpose is here stated as desiring "grounds of condemnation" (*a 'category' of legal crime*). They had held debate and balanced out that He could not be faulted formerly – but where there was no exception for any action that might be called "work" they were ready to pronounce against Him. Christ took the case offered – a man worshipping with a severe disability – who no doubt had prayed for relief and healing. Here Luke uses the epic "ειπε" three times. **HE IS STRESSING THAT THIS MAN CHRIST JESUS ON THE THIRD SABBATH CONFIRMS BEYOND THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT THAT HE IS GOD'S SON**

1 Arise stand in the midst (*between the congregation and the ark of the Torah*)

2 He asked – "Is it lawful on Sabbath to act once for all for good or ill, to act to save a life or in failing to kill?"

3 He said "stretch out your hand" and he did it – and it was restored to the shape and wholeness of the other.

The people inclusive of leaders were filled with "not knowing" – so they talked over what would be done with Jesus. This last debate is somewhat constrained by His reference to using the Sabbath to plan death. They were "thought foolish" and "annoyed" and "without understanding" in this area. There was no right action they could take on the incident – which showed that Jesus operated on a higher ethic and the mighty principle of redemption. **DR. LUKE DELIVERS THIS INCIDENT WITH ITS AFFIRMATIVE THAT THIS MAN TO BE THE SON OF GOD THROUGH A MIRACLE OF LOVE-THE HEALING OF THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND.**

THE SOURCE RELATIONSHIP †24 12

In these days within the margins of Passover Jesus went to the mountain – the borderland between man and God which was His peculiar territory of intercession and there "He was" through the night "in the midst" of a vow to God – Luke chooses to describe Jesus praying using the *imperfect* of the verb ην (*He was there*). **WHAT IS LUKE TELLING US? HE IS TELLING US THAT THE GOD-MAN JESUS CHRIST WAS PRE-VIEWING HIS MISSION AND GIVING HIMSELF TO ITS LATER OR "PERFECT" COMPLETION.** In this "darkness" in the redemptive matter to which He dedicated Himself his disciples would be involved – even Judas – but light and a great dawn of redemption would follow that dark Calvary just like the dawning when his disciples appeared the morning after the deep contemplation of Calvary. The significance of vow for our understanding of the "man Christ Jesus" is that **He knew** what He was doing. On that other night when He shared bread and wine with these disciples the eleven sang Psalms 113-118 in the upper room immediately before the Lord made good the great dedication and vow emphasised by Luke.

THE DAY CAME †25 13-15

Luke observes that our Lord prayed all night through and as it dawned called His disciples and chose twelve from among them. The call of the twelve disciples and the gospel call both presume a deep need in the heart of mankind which only Christ can

meet. The movement between *προσφωνεω* (*to call*) & *εκλεγω* (*to choose*) is important. The first means more than barely to bring to the mountain – it means to “lay hands on”... The second is specific of choice – as **TO CHOOSE “SOLDIERS” OR “ROWERS” WITH THE NOTION OF A CAMPAIGN AND THE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER WITH KEEN TIMING AND UNDER SPECIFIC DAILY COMMAND OF THE SON OF MAN.** The mountain was the place where Christ fulfilled that daily vow – and the apostles calling was special – beyond His laying hands on them – it included their laying hold on God in personal vow in the struggle or warfare ahead.

THE BETRAYER †26 16-19

The scribes continued to think what to do with Jesus. The Lord had chosen leaders for his church – but Luke tells us that that step between “counting the cost” and “making the vow” had not been genuinely taken by Judas. There is a descant on that theme in the words that follow – for they came down to the *πεδινος* which the 2010 NIV rendered “a level place”. I prefer “battlefield” or “cultivated field” where growth in grace and spiritual warfare both took place. **IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THE GLORIOUS GOD-MAN MOVED FROM PRAYER AND CONTEMPLATION OF THE PASSION IMMEDIATELY INTO ACTION AND CONTEST WITH DEMONS AND THE PLACE WHERE SPIRITUAL LIFE WAS DEVELOPED.** There hosts from north and south arrived to listen and to be healed. There were many who are described as “hangers on” *οχλοι* being “levered” by demons – this is exactly what happened to Judas. He made companions among the opponents of Christ and was levered by Satan who “entered into him.” The mixed multitude “*was being healed*”. Luke uses the imperfect to show that the man with a demon required a process of healing – of his spirit and soul and body too.

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE LIFE OF GRACE †27 20-49

Blessing follows confessed need – sorrow follows living for wealth. **SONS OF THE FATHER FOLLOW THE WAY OF THE SON OF MAN –THE PRINCIPLES OF GRACE** (1) returning love for enmity, (2) giving yet expecting no reward; (3) disciples forgive and give and do not judge but bear in mind the parable of the straw in the wind and the sharp chip from cutting (*i.e. the passing faults of others may be minor by comparison with your own untreated sin*). (4) The disciple’s life is one marked by fruit – what is treasured in the memory and affection that guides the heart (*will, thoughts, emotions*). (5) Finally Lordship means obedience and building on the living rock – Christ. Anything less leads to *ρηγμα* – definable as “a breach in the house – breaking through the army, shipwreck, rupture in the body” – ruin in short. Thus this chapter with its **miniature “sermon on the mount”** shows how there must be a series of vital principles lived out to build up character and prevent the Judas slide into a life of self-will and ruin.

CHAPTER 7

This chapter records Jesus visit to Capernaum – then southwards to Nain – then the meeting with John the Baptist’s emissaries – coming from Bethabara or Aenon. Jesus may have travelled yet further south so that the house of Simon may be the setting of a Bethany welcome. We read that Jesus “had completed all the words that flowed “in the great sermon and indeed a series of events that demonstrated that He was the God-man and now in quite a unique way he makes those claims emphatic

It is not clear that there is a better setting for Luke 7 than John 2.12ff. This would mean that Jesus was travelling south and would subsequently perform the first cleansing of the temple.

LIGHT FROM THE PROPHETS Psa.23.5

Great biblical passages are referred to in this chapter – the first draw us to mighty miracles of Elijah and Elisha which are kindred to the resurrection of the widow of Nain’s son cf. *1Kgs17.17– and 2Kgs 4.36* Further in connection with the Claims of Christ we read in *Psalms 40.7* of the “Lo I come, I delight to do Thy will” that John the Baptist applied to Messiah – along with the passages in *Malachi 3.1* on the “forerunner” which Jesus applied to John-further we read in *Isaiah 35.5* the miracles that Jesus applied to his ministry and in *Isaiah 61.1* of the gospel message Christ proclaimed. In connection with the act of anointing in Simon’s we read in *Psa.23.5* of the eastern custom which like our bath brings “refreshment”

1 GREAT FAITH 1-10

This story is like a thread with 7 “buts”. The Lord enters Capernaum publishing peace like the prophet said – *Nahum 1.15*. His sermon consisted of words to be worked on-to be put into practice-to result in solemn vows in every heart.

1 But a certain centurion’s servant was ill – already at the point of death – he was precious to his master.

2 But having listened to Jesus – on the margins-he sent an embassy of elders asking how he would come and thoroughly save his servant.

3 But the Jews took themselves alongside Jesus and said this is worthy of Jesus presence because he loved Jews & built us a synagogue.

4 But Jesus was marching with them (imperfect)...so rare...so short-lived.

5 But when they were not far from the house the centurion sent servants saying – “do not mangle yourself!” – As if he foresaw some awful act as in the ancient Scylla who turned and mauled her victims “I am not worthy you should come under my roof”.

6 But for this reason I did not come personally – I was not or ever would be worthy to come (aorist). I myself say to one soldier “march” – and he must – I say to another “Come” or “wheel round” or “about turn” in our command diction-and to my servant “do this” and he keeps on doing it **faithfully**”.

7 But Jesus hearing this admired and esteemed him.

8 But to the unmarshalled throng he said “I have not discovered this sort of faith in Israel” the embassy on return found the servant well.

2 THE FICKLE CROWDS MEET THE SON OF MAN AT NAIN- † 28 11-18

Luke in this step shows us that Christ is a “**faithful** high priest”. The crowds march (*imperfect*) with Jesus – enough learners and an uncommitted throng. Equally a sufficient crowd marches (*imperfect*) for the time being with the widow. They carried out a child *κομιζω* – used of “carrying a soldier to safety”. The Lord, ever compassionate says to her “Do not weep” and coming along “touches” or holds” the coffin and the bearers stop. He says “Young man (or) new man – arise” and the corpse sits up and begins to talk or sing. He gives him to his mother. Fear took hold of absolutely everyone in both crowds. They said “a great prophet has arisen among us-God has visited *επεσκεψατο* (*caused Himself to be put about to visit*) His people” This is a felicitous reference to the divine secreted in the prophetic after the fashion of *Chinese boxes*. (*2Kgs 6.12 – like the king of Israel who knew Syrian strategy from his*

bedroom Christ espied need!) This word went out into all Judea about him and into all the surrounding country. This was but 30 or so miles from Aenon – John’s territory

3. THE AENON DELEGATION AND JOHN’S DOUBT 18-35

John heard Jesus being called “a prophet” and was not satisfied. He had baptised “the beloved Son” and “announced the lamb”. Now he seeks re-affirmation. “Are you the coming one?” of *Psalm 40.7* is the query. The added statement is “Do you want us to look for another – i.e. “will we?” Jesus reply after on the spot healings of weakness, plague demon-possession and showing favour to numerous blind advised the delegation to tell John what they have seen and heard-and then he quotes *Isaiah 35.5 & 61.1*. The Lord speaks of every detail of the prophet’s testimony fulfilled in the ministry of grace-and adds “he also is blessed if he has not been offended in me”. Then Jesus applies credits to John. (a) “Did you go out so willing to the desert to see a bending bulrush? (b) Or a man dressing up in fine clothes? Such are among kings. (c) But you went out to see a prophet! And more than this (d) He of whom it is written ‘Behold I send my messenger before my face’ – *Malachi 3.1* (e) none greater is born of a wife than the prophet John.” Then Christ adds “The least one in God’s kingdom is greater than he” The common people **justified God** with the tax gatherers because they willingly received God’s will in John’s baptism – the Pharisees and lawyers set aside that will in not being baptised. Jesus then compared the Pharisees etc. to children who wanted others to dance to their tune and sad faced faster who presented life as a sad charade. The Lord then compared John’s Nazarite ministry of fasting and abstinence to his ministry among publicans and sinners. “Wisdom”, said Jesus “has been justified apart from her children or by the instrumentality of her children”. Different as John’s disciples or His own – they know who He is and alongside tax farmers and sinners all show his grace – cf. 6. 27-36

4. SIMON’S HOUSE 36-50

The Pharisees arose in Ezra’s time. They were purists – PERUSHIM. When *Alexander the Great* established the Decapolis cities they opposed his successors and stood with the *Maccabees* hedging the law with 613 commands – 248 positive – 365 negative. They bought no foreign glass (*soiled by unclean hands*) and avoided non-tithers company. But in refusing John’s baptism they refused the lamb He foretold and set before the people. Christ was asked *ερωταω* – the verb of hostility. Hostilities began at the door-a snub –no foot washing. However a sinful woman “knowing he was set up” *ανακειμαι* stood behind wept washed kissed his feet and anointed him. Jesus in reply to that – “If this man were a prophet he would have known she is a sinner” gave **seven** historic statements which table talk we do well to repair to often.

1. Simon I have a word in season – a word *επος* of “deity” – right “for” *προς* you
2. Say on-give me prophecy – the light of God’s word – pertinent advice
3. The parable of debtors. One owes 50 the other 500 pence. Or one Pentecost – the other 10 Pentecosts. This speaks of **enlightenment**.
So much used in the scholarly world – by now God has spent so much on us and shown us such light – we are under deep obligation. *v43* Who will love him more?” says Jesus.
4. *v43b* . Simon – “The penny drops” *υπολαμβανω* – ‘I take up my conqueror and still fight’ is the effect “He that was forgiven most”
5. *v44* Jesus said “You have judged in an orthodox manner”(on **works**)-“you gave no water – she shed tears, she is still kissing my feet, she used her hair & provided myrrh – “for her favour I tell you her many sins are forgiven” – hers was a continuing

faithful humbling love working by faith – who loves much – is forgiven much – who **loves** little, little is forgiven.

6. He said to her “Your sins are forgiven and they began to rise up together from the recliners saying “Who is this who forgives sin?”

7. He said to the woman” Your **faith** has saved you, march for peace – meaning “be a soldier of Gods peace” So the Lord saw faith at work through love as He looked into the soul. The Son of Man as Luke often notes could read the thoughts of man like an open book.

CHAPTER 8

This chapter takes us through steps 27-30 in the doctrine of the God-man our king-priest. The theme running through the episodes in the chapter is “peace”

SYSTEMATIC WORK IN EVERY CITY AND VILLAGE † 29 1-3

The walled cities and the little country villages were all visited – even little Magdala with its 300 shops and 80 weavers. There Mary Magdalene may have spent much of her time. The order of Christ in outreach was like a military campaign. What glorious victories were achieved! **Kurt Koch** held the view that the word “gospel” was a military term – news of peace and victory being closely related to the word. What peace overwhelmed the life of Mary – cited as a melancholic by *Spurgeon* – believed to be Lazarus sister by *Plumptre Dean Farrar & Bishop Lightfoot* and held to be one and the same as the sinful woman of *Matthew 26.2* by the above and *Jerome! Lightfoot* argues with conviction that if Mary of Lazarus was not Magdalene the absence of Lazarus sister from the cross & tomb is passing strange... *The Talmud* confirms Mary was wealthy and extremely beautiful with lovely pleated hair. The strange proximity of the Simon’s house story of 7.50 and the statement “march for peace” is persuasive. She who brought news of the risen Lord to the upper room would have been on this showing a supporter of the earliest campaigns with Joanna (wife of Herod’s top man?) and Susanna. Peace means Satan is defeated.

THE MESSAGE PREACHED 4-18

The word of Christ was that of one whose life fell like a seed into the ground – to bring forth much fruit. The heart of man could at any time be (1) like the path Satan frequents, (2) or the rock soil of shallow belief and falling away, (3) or thorny ground of riches and cares, (4) or a beautiful good heart that hears once for all. The gospel light is not given to hide but to display. Gospel opportunity is limited and hearing that grasps and confesses and bears fruit and witnesses is what the Master desired. Cf. the lamp stand with Revelation 1.12

THE FAMILY OF JESUS 19-21

Christ most emphatically used this visit of Mary to stress that to be family is to hear and obey His word and to “do it” The word *ποιεω* is often used of “making peace”. So preaching should result in an end of rebellion.

JESUS MAN OF THE RIGHT HAND † 30 22-24

Next Luke writes an incident that occurred on “one of those days” (as we would say- “on a day when everything seems to go wrong”). The difference was with Jesus it turns out for the best and serves to confirm **THE “MAN WHO CALMED THE SEA”** as Lord. As Jesus and His disciple passed over the sea a great hurricane with cloud and

darkness swept over and upwards creating massive waves. The Lord was asleep in the boat. The awake him with the word “Master, master *επιστατα* we are perishing.” Jesus is the “commander” (*the word επιστατα means “supervisor” amongst the Greeks it described a president of an ‘ecclesia’ or gathering*). Luke’s term depicts Jesus not just as a teacher but as “head of the church” as the one who can as easily take us to heaven as to the other side of Galilee. We are seeing the Son of man as our world-sovereign and Lord through Luke’s eyes.

A GREAT CALM – AN ACT THAT THROWS INTO RELIEF THE IDENTITY OF JESUS † 31 8.25

In a sense the resurrection of Christ and our faith in this act of assurance of our Lords victory grants an unrivalled calm like the tranquillity of heaven itself. Faith alone can face death and danger confident that Christ is Lord. It is Matthew who uses the word *ολιγοπιστοι* – “little faiths”. We shall still go from “Great storm to great calm to great fear if we forget Christ controls the “wind” and the “seismics” of the earth (*as Matthew in 8.24 refers to a σεισμος μεγας*). Luke inserts the Greek *αρα* in the disciples question which means that “obliquely” they are agreed Jesus is God.

THE GADARENE MIRACLE 26-39

On the “other side” there is not heaven-just the second part of “one of those days”- Gadara. Here a man totally consecrated to Satan (*as “demon possessed” means*). For a *sufficient period ικανος* this man had been lost. Christ had come to destroy the works of the devil in his life. The herds left and the news was out – did his wife bring him clothes? However he got dressed he was back post-haste to listen to Christ and after appealing to join Jesus went away as an ambassador to the Decapolis. As to the demons they feared hell and saw for themselves another future in the swine to avoid the master demon. Jesus *επιτρεπω* entrusted their future to their hands – and granted the Gadarenes their request too – the only one he refused was the saved man – that he might be a herald. He was told to herald “Jesus as God” v39

THE TRANSACTION OF PEACE WITH GOD □ 32 40-56

It is a remarkable sequel to the telling encounters with teachers that now a Rabbi from the Capernaum synagogue looks diligently for Jesus immediately he returns to the Western shores of Galilee.

Dr. Luke encourages us to understand in what must be eye witness accounts of the twin healings recorded in 8.40-56 that Jesus transacts willingly with those who diligently seek him and that where it is right and good He requires public profession and where there is a minor involved he calls for decorum and respects parental concerns. Luke brings out in the touching of the hem of Jesus that our Lord is the great kinsman redeemer and in the case of Jairus’ daughter the life-giver.

She only touched the hem of His garment as to His side she stole,
Amid the crowd that gathered around Him, and straightway she was whole

(G F Root)

In vv 44 48 & 55 we have the word *παραχρημα* – the transaction and exchange of faith for wholeness in the case of the woman with the issue and the transaction between Jairus’ daughter and the master are different but equally real. The Lord commanded the parents to “say nothing” –this word *παραγγελω* is like the secret of pregnancy – there is a time for witness-when the work in these lives is completed by

the Holy Spirit. That a work of grace was wrought in Jairus' heart is undoubted. Like the wise men at the beginning of Matthew's account and the disciples in *Matthew 28.17* this Rabbi "knelt" in worship of Christ and believed He would raise the dead. Truly peace with God must await an entire appreciation of the person and the work of Christ-and that has to include the "forgiving of sins" Note *Theophylact* (fl.1077 AD) said the woman with the issue is an exact picture of the sinner drawing near the throne of grace in search of purity.

EXCURSUS 3 – A SINGLE TELLING REFERENCE TO THE OLD TESTAMENT (Isaiah 6 9-10) 8.10

*The Lord explained the His use of parable as being apt for those who only wanted to **ρεερ βλεπω** into truth. Because of the unforgettable nature of his parables they would come again and again to mind and because of their "stunning" crescendos as the "fall of the "house built on sand" or the "sudden reaping sickle" or the surprise return of the vineyard owner they would shock the hearer into response.*

As nowhere else in the gospel but as in *Acts 6, 16, 22 & 24* **Luke** includes a single reference in a section. In this case it is the rationale of the use of parable – in particular the parable of the sower – that is related to the quotation from Isaiah. The reference indicates that people can be attentive without comprehending what they hear – taught but not educated. But here the emphasis is on the degree of perspicuity essential to grasping spiritual truth – and that is of the Holy Spirit. The minimum or fundamental understanding in this case is to grasp that the "sower" is to give His life to death for the life of others. In *Acts 5* Stephen and Jeremiah are compared for supposedly speaking against Jewish interests-the city and the law respectively. In *Acts 16* Paul and Silas are compared to Elijah by the authorities for "troubling the people". In his last address to the Jewish people in Jerusalem Paul refers to *Joel 2.32* "all who call on His name shall be saved". In *Acts 24* Paul is referring among other things to *Daniel 12.2* and urges that his hope of the resurrection in Christ is that of the prophets and the fearless Daniel who faced the mighty Nebuchadnezzar. Like the Hebrew children Paul believed God could deliver him – and like Daniel he would carry his testimony before Kings.

SUMMARY

The "proper man" we can still more fully appreciate now – He is the one with an inexorable campaign – who is master of nature – who has the keys of life and death and best of all He is willing for personal transactions with his worshipping creatures to whom He makes most clear his splendid will and purpose.

CHAPTER 9

*This chapter along with 1,2,6,8 & 24 is dense with **εγενετο**'s and fruitful in biblical teaching. The early chapters teach the "incarnation", 6 teaches "grace", 8 teaches "peace", 9 transfiguration and transformation, and 24 "resurrection". Though there is one central lesson in 23 it is pivotal – the lesson of "redemption"*

MISSION OF THE TWELVE – LIFE TRANSFORMING 1-17

They were given power and authority over "all" demons – also power to heal – therapeutic – and sent to herald the kingdom and to minister healing to the weak. They were not to take extra shoes, staff, bread or silver or two coats. One host in each town and they could **shake off the dust of their feet if no one washed it off** and took them in. They reached the villages evangelised & applied the therapy committed to

them. The repute of Jesus engaged Herod's attention. He disclaimed John's return and was sceptical that this was an old prophet. His question was "Who is this?" The return of the apostles lead to a de-briefing session –at a private location near Bethsaida – which is a glorious locale north of the Sea of Galilee. Crowds, never far away, got wind of His presence and soon the Lord was preaching the kingdom and followed the message by "one session" therapy – the "touch of the master's hand". It would appear that here Jesus **went to them** –seeing the needs they had and meeting them. There were 5000 men and there were women and children too (*Matthew 14.21*). The Lord had been homeless at Bethlehem-and he well **knew the nearby inns καταλυμα were not the answer** . He shows compassion and uses 5 loaves & two fishes for all, and 12 fish baskets of fragments were gathered. In *2Kings4.44* Elisha fed 100 men with 20 barley loaves. Elisha's bread came from a believer in Baals country. Here the bread and fish were the gift of a lad. The multiplying in both cases was by God's word. The **proximity of Passover** – when the entire needs of man could be met by the whole offering of Christ – and lives globally transformed. Let us remember the "upward look" *αναβλεπω* registered by Matthew & Mark-and recorded by John as thanksgiving.

JESUS VOW RENEWED IS DAILY HEARD †33 v.18

As Jesus was praying or renewing his vow the disciples came to tell naturally that He was perceived as John – with so many followers – and such transformations in lives. He was for others Elijah or perhaps another prophet! Peter was asked his opinion. Crystal clear he assuredly replied "You are the Christ". This gained a caution – it was "news for later". First there was the cross and the great challenge – "Whoever will follow me must take up his cross **daily**. So we topple to the vow Christ daily renewed on our behalf. Christ could see through to a transformed earth and His return in glory to rule. Then He uttered a temporarily baffling word about *some who were stood nearby who would not taste death till they see the kingdom of God. Walter Liefeld* in the "Expositor's commentary" simply comments that People usually consider it unlikely they will see the kingdom come or God in all his glory this side of death – notwithstanding **the transfiguration** delivered this experience to three disciples and Pentecost enabled a transformation of their lives besides.

SOVEREIGN SON †34 v28

The Transfiguration is linked with the "Exodus" at Jerusalem – now it is something Christ has to communicate seriously to the disciples – something that was the talk of prophets and from the Lord's baptism was the whole interest of heaven. We are at a critical point in Christ's ministry. God introduced Moses and Elijah to the disciples – and the whole consequence and magnitude of Christ's person and work took on a different dimension. The "Glory" of God was unforgettable – excelling anything known since Sinai. The message was that total transformation was afoot – and disciples' minds and lives must be transformed in the wake of this Exodus –and we moderns cannot escape – we too must be transformed by the renewing of our minds and by the work of the "Son of man" at the cross and on the throne. Eight days after Caesarea Philippi the Lord selected Peter James and John as the three to experience the absolute world-wide and timeless reality of God and of Jesus mission.

EXODUS †35 v.29

The face of Jesus became different – His toga of peace or His outer garment was as lightning. It would seem that the "form "or beautiful form of His face changed. Did

they see the man of sorrows radiant because of the joy set before Him? They saw that changed face of the beloved Lord. It perhaps even concerned them – but if His face concerned them His garment attracted them. His concerns are ours to share! His joy is ours too.

THE MAN FROM THE GLORY STAYS – MEN FROM EARTH GO TO GLORY †36 32-33

The disciples were very sleepy – yet they witnessed the separating of the prophets and the Saviour. It is described by Luke as a fast movement *διαχωρίζω* (*ζω is a termination indicative of speed*) that divided them and their world from this one but not taking place gently or gradually like the ascension of Christ. Both Matthew and Mark consent that these men simply “appeared”.

Peter’s words seem obtuse – “Let us make three tabernacles”. To maintain the experience or is it conceivable to revolutionise the state and the world by demonstrating life after death and the powers of another world was in mind. The lawyer and the prophet knew their task began and ended with a demonstration of the centrality of Christ and the cross – and the reality of Paradise.

THE MAN IN THE SHEKINAH GLORY †37 v.34

The three disciples were frightened as they entered the cloud. The effect was to throw them into total shade – the opposite is the word we use for photograph – we might call it a mighty lesson in perspective. Transformation involves this factor of the new perspective.

THE MAN IS THE ELECT SON †38 v.35

Luke quite simply has it “my Son the beloved”. The *Chester Beattie Papyrus 47* and *Bodmer papyri 75* (late & early 3rd century) along with *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus* have “the self elect” – in that Christ by purpose and vow undertook the “Exodus” by death as His people’s Passover. This of course enshrined Him in the father’s bosom as deeply loved. They were told to obey the Son by the Father. At the moment of the voice the prophets were gone – this rebuke and command was for their ears only. As they came down the mountain Jesus gave separate commands *διαστελλω* to each disciple that they should not speak of this till after his resurrection – in itself it was not to be the gospel – it was part of their transformation in mind and heart. What the law and prophets could not do – to transform a sinner – only the cross and Holy Spirit could! Only a love as strong as death! Transformation means the development of love. The voice of the Father that Jesus heard daily rendered the mountain –top experience a secret event until that coming Exodus. **THEY WERE TO OBEY EVERY WORD OF THE SON OF MAN MORE FERVENTLY.** In *Mark 9.9* & *Matt 17.9* Jesus emphasised this vision was private – they kept silent or secret on it. The sequel to the voice that owned Jesus as “beloved Son” was a “discovery of Jesus” **forsaken** – the deeply serious mysterious ambience was more striking than the whole vision. The presence of the Shekinah if feared by the disciples was natural and special to Jesus – for a moment He was as always He had been. Obedience is a hallmark of transformation.

THE MAN AND ANOTHER ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON †39 37-50

The day in *Luke 9.37* may be called “next” but *επαυριον* is the usual Greek for “next”. So this is the “Exodus” day. Here is another son – called like Jesus “only begotten”. The devil wanted this child to commit suicide. Vigilance had spared him

death by fire and water. Then as now youth in despair should find the vigilance of parents and the salvation of Christ their hope. The widow of Nain and Jairus also had “only-begotten” children. This man appealed to Jesus for investigation (“*look at him*”). *Aristotle* used the word *επιβλεπω* in this sense. The first problem was “absence of faith” – the second was “twisting aside” from God. This child was a lesson in the effects of such serious turning aside. The third problem was demon-possession – manifested in epileptic symptoms and being “knocked out” *ρηγνυμι*. The Lord rebuked the devil gave the child to his father and all were overpowered or overjoyed at the majesty of God.

Jesus followed it by announcing His forthcoming death which seemed far away just now – but **hear they must** – The disciples fell into an unprofitable dialogue on greatness – Christ took a child and taught that greatness begins by being interested in a little child. Humility accompanies transformation. **THIS WAS THE SORT OF CHARACTER THE SON OF MAN MANIFESTED.**

CHRIST PURSUES HIS AIMS SWIFT AS A FLINT TIPPED ARROW †40 51-56

The day of Christ’s “taking back” to heaven approached. His face set was “fundamental” as the base of a new house, as straight as an arrow, as full of grace as a rainbow. *Matthew Henry* says “He found a formidable task desirable”. The disciples in fear wished for “fire throwing” powers. The march into the cities and villages went on apace. At the beginning of *Chapter 8* 70 were chosen who went two by two covering thus 35 cities and villages. Here the great march comes near a conclusion with “another country village” touched in v56 – it was a Samaritan village to boot v52. Compassion for others emerges to push transformation into the area of the exclusive mindset of the disciples.

THE MAN ANSWERS A WOULD BE DISCIPLE †41 57-62

Jesus was still marching among the 35 cities & villages and the cross. A proposition is put by a certain man – Matthew in his account calls him *a scribe*. Did he imagine a great bible school emerging and himself a teacher? Jesus spoke about the foraging foxes and the nesting birds – intent on family matters. Grace lives by faith, law lives by its rights. Another proposition came from a man who desired to wait till his parental duties were completed. Christ was on mission and on message and He challenged this man to come and join even in the thorough completion of the evangel to Israel now in hand v61. A third proposition was “to set in order” his house – maybe to delegate – maybe to sort out for himself some income. He was reminded of Elisha. His word to Christ was “**Be a trustee of my needs**”. Jesus said “That is not well-placed fitted – that is not fitting”.

The fitness we require is to feel our need of Him and trust him without guarantees.

All my hope on God is founded, He doth still my trust renew,
Me through change and chance He guideth – only good and only true.
God unknown, He alone calls my heart to be His own.

Family parents and estate do not take precedence – they must bow to the cross if we are to serve the king. The transformed man has a single eye – beware anything else ***In all the above ways we see the vital nature of this biblical teaching – so well reflected by Paul in Romans 12- every element there is here – every element here is there. This is Dr.Luke’s version of the Life and teaching of Christ by the Holy***

Spirits inspiration and Paul's great letter is not his philosophy-it is Christ's teaching.

CHAPTER 10

This chapter tells of the mission of the seventy – a working Sanhedrin on the model of Exodus 24.1 At his point the 3rd phase of the gospel kicks in. The first records John's ministry & the second (5.27 with 6.13) records the extended ministry with the twelve. This marks a further extension to the 70 and enables the evangelising of 35 cities & districts. The parable of the Good Samaritan & the question of "eternal life" & the discipleship story of Mary links to this ministry

THE DEDICATION OF THE SEVENTY 1

The Lord "named" "dedicated" and "lifted to public view" 70 men.

(*αναδεικνυμι*) Reference to the original 70 of Moses reminds us that "they ate and drank" in the presence of the Lord (Ex 24.11). These ancients received the manna and the water from the rock. The 70 here acknowledge the Messianic Christ they herald. Christ was seeking a harvest of souls ... *Where harvests ripen Thou art there!*

*For the Lord our God shall come and shall take His harvest home
From His field shall in that day all offences purge away
Give His angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast;
But the fruitful ears to store in His garner evermore.*

New Testament commentator Dean Henry Alford

On the model of "one man went to mow" the multiplication would do the obvious-quickened the task. It is arguable that the cross was about 6 months in the future. Christ was ready *μελλω* in the sense of being committed to a breath-taking purpose for the destiny of all mankind – inside which He set Himself the task of communicating the message of the kingdom in all Jewish cities and districts.

GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS 2-11

First – pray and beg for others to be soul-winners who will call others to the Father's house and give them vision of *the true heavenly city of God* which has foundations.

Go under yoke as oxen to plough – alongside one another and Christ.

Go as lambs *αρνας* – very small lambs – in utter dependence.

Go without leather purse for cash or leather bag for food or leather sandals on your feet – stoop lowly to reach the lowly.

Do not embrace anyone en route – or allow any affection to detain or defer your commission.

Bid "peace be to this house" – the message is not hidden – it is first given at the very knocker with the greeting of "Peace". Where there is appreciation of such peace and "the heir of peace" abides this message will "revive" him and rest upon him from above *επαναπαυω*.

Stay in that house. (*Jewish hospitality granted 3 days lodging to pilgrims*) The worker is worthy of his hire. *This is a proper precedent from our Lord's lips for the support of voluntary Christian workers.* "Heal those too weak for labour and tell them – **The kingdom of God has come near to you**" This "heralding" had both spiritual and also practical benefit. Where they were not received they were to go to the authorities at the gates and say "This dust of your city that sticks to us we shake off against you".

THE WOE OF JUDGMENT

Disciples took Jesus warning about Sodom Capernaum & Chorazin 12-20

It would be better for Sodom or Tyre and Sidon than for those who refused the message. To “know” in theory that the Kingdom came so near and to reject it is to be in a “woeful” state – the word “woe” *ουαι* was developed in *Alexandrian Greek* times circa 336BC and is associated with “anger” and “suffering”

Ancient peoples would have repented of their sins in black goats hair bags and they would have sat in ashes which is “spent fire” as a sign of repenting.

Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Amos and Zechariah issued woes. Capernaum (city of Nahum) and Chorazin (winnowed) were cities given a taste of heaven but Christ predicted that their citizens would be found in Hell. Christ gave leave for this warning statement to be relayed by His disciples and he added “He who listens to you listens to me”. Thus the cities that rejected the ambassadors – rejected Christ – and God the Father.

JESUS REJOICES OVER NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN †42 21-24

(a) People have to know more than that they are bad hosts – they have to realise the implications of Christ rejection.

(b) People must realise increasing light brings increased privilege and danger – as was the case with Capernaum’s privileged people.

(c) People must know it is more important that one’s name is written in the book of life and to be a soul-winner than to be a miracle worker– cf. *Exodus 32.32* those so written are “forgiven”

Christ rejoiced “confessing to God His Father” and the growth of the family of God & sees the continual fall of Satan – which demanded the new powers. The Lord’s exulting *γαλλιαω* is the joy of “offering” – of NT revelation – the Spirit at work and New Birth.

THE QUESTION OF THE NEW BIRTH 25-29

A lawyer who approaches the Lord is on the “What must I do?” bandwagon not the “what has God done” pathway. Jesus asked him what the law directed. He answered precisely and well “To love the Lord with heart soul strength and mind” and the second “orthodox” command the lawyer again quoted precisely “and loves your neighbour as yourself”. The principle lies far back in scripture in *Lev. 19.18*, *Deut. 10.12*, *Joshua 22.5*. The Lord bade him do this. Clearly this bothered him or could it be he felt Jesus was too wide in His sympathy toward out-siders? His follow through is to ask blandly “Who is my neighbour?”

LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN 30-37

In response to the lawyer the Lord tells another story which may well have circulated widely enough or may have been in the repertoire of Christ.

1. Man is fallen – going down to his Jericho – naked humiliated alone – dead in sins
2. Man might hope in priest and Levite – but this direction offers nothing
3. Man needs the Samaritan – the Christ who binds him up pours in oil and wine – gets him to the inn – and undertakes all else in mercy.

Who was the neighbour? The lawyer recognised the need for mercy – and was told to go and show mercy. An old Christian gentleman once reminded me with tears and a drawn white handkerchief that “*Mercy is for the rebel – grace for the saint*”.

NURTURE 38-42

MARY AND MARTHA WELCOME JESUS –MARTHA PREPARED FOOD

†43

Within the Bethany interior Martha was busy but Mary was at Jesus feet listening to His word. Martha was irritated and asked the Lord to get her working.

“One thing is needful” said Jesus as to nurture – it is vital. RSV (margin) “Few things are material or needful”

1. Position – ALONGSIDE Jesus feet – we need to appreciate our kinsman-redeemer
2. Prophecy – The word of God is essential – she listened to that word
3. Problem-work *διακονεια* needs done – but Martha was “topsy turvy” *τυρβεω* and anxious in caring *μεριμνας*
4. Predilection of heart – Mary’s share was in Christ. It is vital to spend time with Christ. Bethany was a village often visited by Jesus; it was a place where believers were nurtured and disciples hosted. It is not far from the Inn of the Good Samaritan.

CHAPTER 11

This chapter takes us through a pause in Christ’s prayer life similar to the pause in His teaching (Luke 5.4) and demonstrates the nature of prayer is deep commitment derived from that of Christ interceding. Second we have Christ demonstrating the finger of God (cf Exodus 8.19) creating. Third we have the source of blessing enunciated-centred again in Christ-teaching

THE MAN WHO INTERCEDES FOR US TEACHES PRAYER† 44 1-13

“Lord, teach us to pray like John taught his disciples” said Jesus followers. If ever there was a prayer that showed how intimately Jesus understood the Father this is that prayer. It is outstanding among all the prayers of all ages – it declared the Trinity form within. The word used for praying in v1 means **“yielding oneself in a vow” (middle voice)** This feature of yielding one’s all to God should not be missed as we look at the Lord’s prayer.

- a. The commitment of a child in our relationship to God as Father balanced with worship of His name – Jehovah. (Petition 1)
 - b. The commitment of a subject to the Kingdom and its growth in us and in the world this day. (Petition 2)
 - c. The commitment to Gods will in our lives. “Thy will not ours” – even in Gethsemane. (Petition 3)
 - d. The commitment to live by sufficient (*επιουσιον*) – enough for life in one day – thus not in extravagance. (Petition 4)
 - e. The commitment to forgive (Petition 5)
 - f. The commitment to follow God’s leading (Petition 6)
 - g. The commitment to loyalty in service – daily stated unwillingness for seduction!
- All this is accompanied by Gods commitment to care as a Father – to rule in our lives – to bring heaven’s joys to us, to provide food, to forgive us, to protect us from Satan Christ added that “petitions” of an urgent kind would be heard – for “Our Father in heaven is like our very best friend” Gods family elsewhere in no way precludes the answer to our need. Christ assures that there are no bad answers from God – no snakes or scorpions for fish and eggs. “Fish for a main meal” and “an egg and to bed” (*M. Henry*) Further the Holy Spirit would mightily increase the disciples’ understanding of the heart of God.

EXCURSUS 2 – THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

Oswald Chambers cites the *Gen 16-17* experience of Abraham showing that the patriarch lost 13 years through taking his own way until he came into covenant as the Lord said “walk before me and be thou perfect”.

Campbell Morgan “Oh could I tell you surely would believe it, Oh could I only say what I have seen How should I tell or how can you receive it, how till He bringeth you where I have been”.

Augustine “The house of my soul is too narrow – make room!”

Mathieson “In life’s labyrinth ask not ‘where would I like to go but where would God have you go”

Clement of Alexandria NEVER prayed for Himself.

Spurgeon Jesus place *τοπος* is the mercy seat.

THE MAN -CREATOR AND SAVIOUR † 45 14-26

The case of the casting out of the demon and the “creation” of speech *λαλια* maybe even “song” bring us to see the wonderfully creative Lord we have. Here as Jannes and Jambres discovered in *Exodus 8.19* is “the finger of God” – a delightful reference Christ makes to discomfit the Pharisees’ jibe that He used Beelzebul – the “god of flies”. The Lord’s second statement showed “divine strength superior to Satan’s” – and showed that man is not strong if “self-armed” *καθωπλισμενος*. The victory of Christ has an objective – “to write His name on the spoils and dedicate them to Himself” (*meaning of σκυλα*). Christ teaches that He releases men to dedicate themselves by vow to God. Again He urges that He is not acting to promote the “self-life” or “indulgence”. The way of the world in many lives is to replace Satan by “good times and fair weather friends”. Too many go through places “where they find no water – i.e. the “water of the word” – their LODEBARS – 2 Samuel 9.4. From there Mephibosheth did “continually” feast with the king (vv7, 10, 13). The converted Paul could say “I continue” Acts 26.22-3).

THE MAN – THE STANDARDS OF CHRISTIANITY † 46 27-28

The remarks of a lady who believed the mother of Christ was “blessed were the paps” that nurturing Him. Christ responded that this “blessing” could be hers if she received His word and obeyed it.

By now the crowds had gathered thick “as birds gathering and darting here and there”. They sought a “battle signal, a **standard**, a watchword, a war cry or a flag to sail by” *σημειον*. **Jesus gave them all these. No man ever gave greater sign of his work than Jesus.**

1 REPENTANCE 29-32 † 47

Jesus quotes the story of the Nubian queen who heard Solomon once and made lasting changes in her life and kingdom – and the Ninevites who heard Jonah once and repented – believing his *κηρυγμα* (*the word speaks of the nature of sacrifice that the herald-ambassador declares God /another king will accept*).

2 GOSPEL LIGHT 33-36

Jesus said 4 things about the way men “find the light or see the light” literally – “the lustre” *φεγγος*.

a. It must be placed centrally in His house

- b. The eye or instructed conscience must be single – literally “not navigable in other directions”
- c The light should be transmitted by the whole body *φωτεινος*
- d The light must have power (Holy Spirit) to reveal Christ

3 COMPASSION 37-41

No religion can exist without it. The lesson of *El Quaida* is that hate is no religion. Here a Pharisee asks “How would it be most pleasant to dine?” Jesus didn’t say by washing hands. He showed that our lives are vessels and we should give not be greedy. Pure hearts are generous hearts!

3 LOVE FOR GOD 42-52

Christ spoke with deep distaste for the Pharisees superficial holiness

1. Godly living is not Tithing (*Lev27.30*) lets not “wander past” the judgment and agape of God – which demand the very best.
2. Godly living is not cathedral seats at worship and embraces in the markets – special favours
3. Godly living is not fastidious care of burial places – indeed others don’t realise Pharisees are unmarked graves – lead to sin
4. Godly living is helping others with burdens
5. Godly living is not building monuments to the great and good – Down to Zechariah who was slain after sacrificing standing above the people (*2Chron 24.20*)
6. Godly living is not having the key of knowledge – but obeying Christ “the wisdom of God” (*v49*) and directing men to the atoning sacrifice of the lamb.

FIERCE REACTION 53-54

The Pharisees became as terrible lizards (*Dinosaurs*) seeking to devour Him – they would not let Him open his mouth. They sought to hunt every word that he spoke for a condemnation. Thus they showed themselves proper targets for his words of condemnation.

CHAPTER 12

This chapter and the next present our King and High priest as a teacher still outlining the substance and highlights of his teaching programme. This section of the gospel between 11.29 and 13.35 is like a sub-section where the emphasis is on teaching that prepares disciples for action. It could be used as a church study under the title “a flag to sail by”

EXCURSUS 4- ON VIGILANCE – CHURCHILL’S SLEEPLESS NIGHT

It was February 20 1938 – “sleep deserted me” “I lay from midnight to dawn consumed by emotions of terror & fear” There seemed one strong young figure standing up against the tides of drift and surrender... now he was gone.” (*Words spoken anent the resignation of Sir Anthony Eden from Chamberlain’s administration*). In the context of hypocrisy and fear of the times Christ was the one rallying point – the “centre of gathering” of the nation – and is absolutely the **Shiloh** of the church in all ages. He had the message – **“the word of God” –the key of eternal life.**

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS TEACHES THE VALUE OF THE SOUL 1-1221 “In these circumstances- a tonic for disciples was needed”

The meal that polarised legal experts and the Lord led to His detractors beginning to act like *Dinosaurs* that devour. But the amazing interest generated by Christ’s

nationwide ministry of word miracle led to thousands arriving and literally trampling on one another. The Lord gave a word of **encouragement** to those who had counted the cost.

1. Hypocrisy grows easily – people want “to be seen” but lack sincerity. The truth even hidden in parables and spoken in secret will come abroad – bringing with it danger of persecution as the leaven of corruption is at work. The Lord reminded his disciples of the fall of Satan and the “casting into Hell”. That power is delegated by the Father to Christ. When it comes to crisis the omnipotence of Jesus and His mighty love must be our stronghold. Love numbers our hairs and knows their tally daily and counts us dearer in our sacrifice than a host of sparrow sacrifices – not one of our lives is discounted as when a “luck-penny sparrow” is given away.

2. The confessor will be acknowledged and awarded in heaven – the ascribing the miracles or work of Christ to Satan is a denial of His power and such denial cannot accompany salvation

Thus just when the disciples trembled at what *Campbell Morgan* calls “The eyes of the Pharisees gleam with the evil light of murder” the disciples has the **tonic** they needed.

THE MAN TEACHES “THE HEREAFTER” (RICHES THAT LAST) 13-21

Five historic statements about being “rich toward God”

1. A man from the crowd addressed Jesus classically as “teacher”

2. Teacher make a classic statement that my brother share the inheritance

3. Jesus spoke classically (in the vein of Moses) ‘who set me up as a judge or arbiter over you?’

4. He said classically “Watch and be on your guard against claiming more than your share for life is not the abundance of possessions that you begin or end up with. NB “Babies enter life grasping!” *Paul Getty* queried about retirement – “a billion doesn’t go far” *Tolstoy* in “Man & Dame” writes ‘You’ll get all you plough in a day’ and the man ploughed 18square feet and had a heart attack.

5. Jesus told a classic parable of a rich man whose land produced easily. Here are eight “I’s” and four “My’s” – this man was grossly self-centred. He said to himself “Eat, drink-let life here be pleasant” “replace the barns – you have many years!”

6. **God says classically “Fool – this night your soul will be demanded before the courts– to whom will the things you ready belong? So is the one not extremely rich toward God”** – i.e. that one is unfruitful. There is one “free flow saying” i.e.” I will say to my soul-you have much for many years.” He had what *Homer* called *φρην* and not *ψυλη* i.e. “here and now” but not “hereafter”.

THE MAN TEACHES THAT WORRY IS VALUELESS 22-30

Terence said “Concerns of the heart tear the mind in pieces” *Norman Vincent Peale* said “You are not what you think you are – what you “think you are”.

Christ taught “No anxious concern about sustaining our being or “soul” the soul is more than food – the body than clothes.

Observe and learn from the raven and the lilies. *Job38.41* “Who prepares venison for the ravens when they cry to God for Yeshua or salvation” What a stroke – here “Jesus feeds the black carrion birds!” Learn from the lilies! “Don’t be buoyed up with false hopes – airy fairy style (literally in “mid air”) *μετεωπιζω* *Lk.12.31* “**Seek the kingdom and all these will be placed with you”**

THE MAN TEACHES FAITH

“Fear not little flock” 32-34

The kingdom is a gift – Sell and give shared mercies – provide purses *Βαλαντια* that hold for ever So Don’t worry...pray...trust...seek the kingdom...have purses for eternity. “All the water in the world however hard it tried could never, never sink a ship unless it got inside. All the hardship in the world might wear you pretty thin, but they won’t hurt you one least bit unless you let them in.” Worry like the rocking chair gets you going – but also gets you nowhere – worry is “little-faith”.

THE MAN TEACHES HE IS COMING BACK (AFTER DEATH) 58

Augustine once wittily said “Not he who says ‘it is near’ or he who says ‘it is far away’ but he who “is secure in faith and firm in hope and warm in love *is most expectant*”

(1) **Secure in faith** Ours ought to be a ministry in the Holy Spirit (*marked by oil in our gospel lamps*) –we are to have our “loins girded” like Israel-Elijah-Gehazi-Job-who was commanded twice in this regard – i.e. to suffer what we must in our time and go on faithful. *Oswald Smith* emphasised what Peter said “God did visit the Gentiles to “take out a people” for Himself (*Ac.15 14-16*).Then after the watches of the night would come “**the building of the tabernacle of David**”

(2) **Firm in hope** v39 THE HOUSEHOLDER was robbed – This pictures the formal Laodicean church failing in content of food, in fined down food –i.e. “well understood” and in “seasonable” food-needed to strengthen & prepare for Christ’s coming. Also in 1Peter 5.4 we have the “SPIRITUAL DESPOT”.

The church age

(i) 540-604 *Augustine* “the angles angels”

(ii) 1015-1085 *Hildebrand* gave Henry 4 absolution – crossed Alps

Church above the state

(iii) The French pope fought Wycliffe 1200s – *Council of Trent* versus *Luther’s* “Here I stand I can no other”.

(3) Warm in love 41-59

The STEWARD smites **the servants**. It means “to hurt” – and while “drunken” *μεθυσκομαι*. Christ points in vv49-53 to the cross and the coming of the Spirit. He predicted these would bring **DIVISION**.

THE MAN TEACHES ABOUT TIMES LONG AHEAD 54-59

The fire would fall-The hold Spirit was Christ’s passion – v49

Christ now challenges them to discern the moment *καιρος* when He as Mediator appears – lest they face Him as Judge and fall into the hands of the officers or angels. Christ would pay for our redemption – but every 128th part of a day’s failure will come into view. One day Christ will host us – let us serve Him well in church care-economy government doctrine preaching redemption and awaiting.

CHAPTER 13

This chapter has a long –winged prophetic theme-namely the “tree” Jesus planted in his garden (13.19)-emblem of the long-developing kingdom under which for

centuries the migrants from other cultures would live for a time-but which in accordance with Ezekiel's prophecy would flourish like Assyria in the latter day.

THE FIRST THRUST OF THE ROMAN SWORD 1-8

The clandestine assassination of Galileans at the feast was considered a rank injustice. A like episode is recorded in Josephus 2.9.4.

This was the first taste of the sharp end of Roman force of arms – and a warning of far worse to come should the nation fail to repent.

Twice the Lord asked the question “Are the Galileans becoming worse sinners than the builders of the Siloam tower or the Jews dwelling near the temple?” Twice he affirmed “No!” and twice emphasised the need for “change of mind or repentance”.

Then in what might be deemed a disguised reference to His own ministry of planting a fig tree in His vineyard (*symbol of good rule and a holy kingdom*). He spoke of the 3 fruitless years in terms of the growth of this tree. The fourth year spans the work of the apostles – who dug and fertilised.

The reference to the “whetted sword” of Psa.7.12 depicts the inevitability of divine judgment which forms the background here. The symbolic cursing of the fig tree at the end of Jesus “three year” ministry is recorded in Matthew 21.19.

THE CASE OF THE CRIPPLED WOMAN 10-17

cf Psalm 146.8 on the compassions of our King of kings

A person can remain in a dread condition

1. Because nobody cares to tell
2. Because somebody fails to help or
3. Because time runs out.

The crippled lady to whom Jesus next ministered healing had 18 years of pain and spirit oppression. Jesus was cantering his ministry in “one of the synagogues”. Her condition was so severe it would interfere with her capacity to have a family – which was a terrible blot on a wife in those days.

This is the plainest significance of “she could not lift herself to consummate her union”. *παντελες*

Many a woman today for other reasons seeks Gods relief in this matter. You can take it that the Lord cares about such things.

He called her – He commissioned her – with His hands (*that was a work of grace – in other eyes “of sin”*) and “immediately” *παραχρημα* (*upon a transaction between the Lord and her*) the woman was made straight.

The opposition of Jesus’ critic, the ruler of that synagogue, who publicly berated Him – was challenged head-on. Jesus said “You play actor – each of you looses his ox or ass from the stall and leads him to the water. Why not loose this daughter of faithful Abraham after 18 years of bondage?” All who opposed “grew in strength of support” and rejoiced over the notable, noble and widely recognized glorious things He did.

The word *ενδοξα* contrasts with *παραδοξα* of 5.26. This acts and defence of compassion set Jesus as teacher in the affections of many. This teaching centre or synagogue ministry had fulfilled its objective.

THE MAN AND THE MUSTARD SEED †48 18-21

“The man (Jesus Christ) plants the kingdom seed”

To understand this section one should read wider in the Ole Testament background of *Ezekiel 17.23, 31.6 and Dan 4 .12, 21*. The ancient Assyrian empire Nebuchadnezzar likened to a Cedar – Ezekiel spoke of the kingdom of God (Ch17) as such a tree –

“All the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree and have dried the green tree and made the dry tree flourish” The “green tree” relates to Christ’s first coming and the dry to His second. The “birds” over which theologians rather tend to debate speak of emissaries of other peoples who during the long interim nest under the growing church of Christ – seeming to have a life of their own like smaller powers under Assyria. The second parable tells of the woman’s **three measures of wheat** (*about 40 litres*) and a handful of yeast. Such an amount of barley bread would only be required for a great festival – so the event in question is the joyous advent of the King and the growth of his kingdom of broken lives made whole by His work.

ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED? 22-30

The answer is “agonise” – make this the struggle of your life. Don’t miss being saved yourself! Then follows the story of the “Master of the house” *οικοδεσποτης* (*cf. Lk12.39 – different master & house*) Here is the tragedy of recognizing Jesus too late – as the one who “ate and drank and taught among them” – the one they refused. In a sense even in the church it is happening today with communion and preaching finding an audience but not resulting in conversion. Such would be the plight of the Jews of this period in a measure – while the kingdom would be replenished with people from east west north and south. (*Psalm 107.3*)

PHARISEES GIVE WARNING – JESUS GIVES HIS RESPONSE 31-35

“Change tack” was the advice. “Go somewhere else!” Jesus recognised Herod’s had in mind his death. He invited the Pharisees to go to the king and tell him Jesus was continuing his plans “to cast out demons and to complete healings which He desired to do and this on **two days** and **the third day** His ministry would be completed. He was speaking of His “atoning sacrifice.” To look at the broader economy the saying may also bear on the Jewish, Gentile and then Kingdom aspects of Jesus larger mission. At this point the Lord proclaimed his great love for Jerusalem. “How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chickens but you would not” He then predicted “*Jerusalem deserta*” – quoting the 118th psalm” The stone the builders rejected is head of the corner – this is the day the Lord has made – we will rejoice and be glad in it – Save now Lord – blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord – bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar”. This psalm speaks of “enduring mercy” 5 times this mercy is spoken of. How very great is mercy to go on in spite of opposition and warning – in love for the sick in wrestling men from Satan-in dying for you and me – in longing for Jerusalem to repent. This faithful Lord is worthy of all our praise!

CHAPTER 14

In this chapter Jesus we have instructive “table-talk” We learn important lessons on caring for others from the Pharisee’s bread lunch and lessons on responding to the kindness of others from the banquet of excuses, then a series of “trail teachings”-which featured in Jesus’ training.

THE MAN IN THE PHARISEE’S HOUSE †49 1-17

(1) In 14.2 we read that close to Jesus – it may be on His triclinion there was a man whose condition the Pharisees could not cure. Jesus was moved by the “dropsical arm” – there were two sorts – (a) where water just under the skin caused great swelling and (b) where a stomach condition of a peritonitis sort was present. We are told here that Christ “**laid claim to the man as property**”. Shame on the Pharisees if

this was a servant at the banquet and shame on them if they were seeking to gain grounds for judging the Lord on the vexed subject of Sabbath healing. The Lord asked if anyone was prepared to loose an ox or ass by deferring the most strenuous efforts to pull it from a pit on the Sabbath. The Lord posed an unanswerable dilemma – in the relationship with Christ grace is exalted above legalism. In 14.6 we read that “the Pharisees were not strong enough to make reply on these topics”.

(2) Before the host arrived the guest jockeyed for seats. It appears that the position Jesus took was lowly – perhaps close to the man with the swollen body at whose table few would dare to sit—so then when the host came he “shouted”

κεκληκως-κλαζω v10 out for order and even for some re-arrangements that gave rise to the second lesson – this time on humility. The event of the healing would seem to have preceded the coming of the host.

(3) Finally in the new position Jesus spoke to the host himself. He who cried out for Him to “come up higher” was to be taught something very innovative in hosting banquets. Christ said it would be very welcome in the sphere of good hospitality were those who cannot repay an invite to be called instead of rich friends and relatives. In this last case He undertook to reward those who cared for the poor crippled and lame—the Mephiboseths of this world – for surely the story of David’s kindness to that man of the house of Saul is behind this lesson. His advice here is to be seen as a challenge to altruism in ethics which will be recognized and rewarded **at the resurrection**. This doctrine got to the root of religion – the demonstration of grace –so superior to law and pride.

(4) v15 A guest now speaks up – one who had listened to the things spoken to the host. He may have wished to change the topic of conversation – but how little is it possible to deflect the Lord from the great office of teaching divine grace can now be viewed.

How happy those called to banquet in heaven! – said the guest

The Lord launched into a now familiar and quite humorous story of three responses to “evening dinner”.

THE RANGE OF EXCUSES AND THE ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY 18-23

a. I have bought a field and I must go and see it – this in the hour of evening dinner – after dark! – a necessity so absurd in time

b. I have bought five yoke of oxen and I need to go and try how well they plough together – who would plough so late before electricity was invented – a march that was so self-defeating!

c. I have married a wife and I am not able to come. I have another banquet which has a prior claim on my time

These excuses enraged the householder and He directed a series of last minute invites to fill the house: –

(A) Go to the streets and squares of the city – inviting the poor crippled blind and lame

(B) Go to the roads and lanes in the country and use the **compulsion** to invite those who are **journeying or lying in wait on the highway** and **those manning the fortifications** or it could mean **use blood ties** to invite those on the roads and those in the hedges or countryside.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP 25-34

(cf Hezekiah's men Proverbs 25 6-7)

Here we have another aspect of "personal and family relationships". Christ had advised against inviting "brethren" to our festivities. Now He sets the standard of discipleship very high – above **love** for parents, wife and children and one's own soul. Three challenges follow:-

1. Can I face carrying the cross daily?
2. Can I finish what I have begun – build the house I have founded?
3. Can I win with 1000 men against the captain of 10,000? Or shall I negotiate terms?
4. Can I detach all the soldiers I have hired? Can I detach myself from all I possess-material human and in terms of authority? This "same way" as the soldier disengages is vital – it means I have no longer to battle alone against a foe – I take Jesus as the captain of my salvation fully recognising the power of my enemy-Satan!

So the cost of discipleship is to be balanced against the cost of losing the battle of righteousness.

Salt is spoken of in the context of Christ's followers being the "salt of the earth". If it should have become insipid how it can be rendered by any culinary art into a savouring formula?

The cautions to discipleship were put to the crowds marching with Christ. The big considerations are *continuance* and *victory* and *the grace* that has a mighty influence. This matter of **grace** occupied the Lord at table and in the roadside dialogue.

CHAPTER 15

This chapter records three of the best known stories of Jesus-those of the lost sheep coin and prodigal Son. The effect of the stories is to highlight the attitude of joy and to contrast it with the moralist Phariseeism that fails to recognise what our nature is like or how relationships suffer with one link lost-like on command broken, or how love must move sacrificially to bear burdens

THE SHEEP THAT WERE NEAR THE SHEPHERD 1-7

It is to be noted that Luke states first that the Publicans and sinners were "nearer Jesus". This fulfils a truism "nearer the shepherd safer from danger". Luke tells us that there were Pharisees and scribes who could not get close to Christ – so they complained about that when nothing else could be said. They grumbled that the tax-collectors continually kept near and that they often ate with the master. Not those who claim to be righteous but those who acknowledge sin and repent are safe. This principle is not far beneath the surface in all the stories of this chapter. The heavenly joy over a repentant person is on account of need impressed by the Holy Spirit and felt – as opposed to those *οἰτινες* ("who" here is used in the inflated sense – "those who think they are something") who have no felt need of repentance. This parable begins "a certain man from among you" has one hundred sheep – so the Lord puts these quasi-religious hearts in a pastoral dilemma. He knows its absence is telltale. *Ezekiel 34.11 & 16* show the Lord as one seeking the lost – one binding the broken and strengthening the sick.

THE WOMAN WHO LOST A COIN (FROM HER 10 COIN STRING) 8-10

Or which wife would not seek that every sign of her relationship is in place. So our obedience to Christ and that of Israel is focused. The coins number equivalent to the commandments. Again "friends and neighbours feature here" – they share the "joy" of this woman whose diligence to seek for the coin that put her relationship to her

husband in danger of the charge of carelessness. To break one of the commandments as *James 2.10* shows has like consequence with breaking all. See her “touch” the light that reveals the dark places of her house-she needs the light like we all need scripture. See her sweep the house – we all need the garnishing work of the Holy Spirit.

THE MAN TEACHES LOVE THROUGH A FATHER AND A PRODIGAL †50 11-31

(a) The Son’s view of the Servants

A powerful famine arose when the son who spent his portion of his fathers very “life” (*ουσια*) came into distressful circumstances abroad. His life was as one piece with a citizen of his adopted country. He was in want (*υστερειω* – *he had nothing for the first time in his life*) – he had no food no clothes to speak of – even his shoes broke or were gone (v22). In his heat words came freely “Dear old dad and those happy servants of his – every one like a king – “I’m going home”. I have sinned against heaven (*my God and my dear father*) – I’m no son – I can make no future demands on you Dad – make me like a servant. All this was sin – his wasting of his “true being” and scattering everything like arrows to the wind; then “cemented a link with the stranger – really so foolish; and his impoverished mission to feed pigs; and his passionate *longing* for carob pods. As to his careless extravagance *the parable shows how fully the Son of man comprehends the prodigal heart.*

(b) The Father’s view of the prodigal

The Father was watching with a longing love. Those kisses (*καταφιλεω*) showed his joy. Those actions – the stole of peace was first his own. The ring he used as his personal authority He gave the son– the sandals which signify battle or readiness with the good news These belong to the redeemed – our peace is in Him – our authority to in prayer is from Him – and our mission to be involved with the good news is His design for those who have come home.

(c) A child’s view of the calf

Child explained to the “elder brother” that his brother had returned and that the Father had killed the fatted calf because he had received him *απολαμβανω* (*from another – the stranger in the foreign land*). The word *σιτευτης* like *σιτευτον* means the “feeder “of the “well fed calf”. Perhaps the child loved the calf and even fed the calf. He wasn’t in the least concerned about the “authority” or the “Peace” or the “shoes”. To understand the children’s view (cf. v 26 *παιδων*) of the calf is to get a notion of the importance of the sacrifice and its relevance to renewed relationships. The Elder brother wanted nothing of the feast and his whole debate was on the subject of sacrifice – of the kid which he would supposedly like to have shared with his friends.

(d) The Elder Brother’s view of the joy of homecoming fellowship and reconciliation. The whole chapter speaks about “friends and neighbours being called – here the “servants sit down to eat – something largely missed –while the brother is absent. The deep compassion and love of the Father is here – the joy of the servants too – but the elder brother can only condemn his brother for a sin declared in *Proverbs 29.3* “He that keeps company with harlots spends his substance – he had been “profligate – a debauchee. The last word is “It is essential – it is a must – it is wanting and there is need of two things *ευφραινεω & χαιρω*.

To enjoy life be pleasant rejoice at seeing others and gladden the
To rejoice in good news, express pleasure & welcome warmly.

The Prodigal Son like David acknowledged the heavenward thrust of his sin. Sin also has a heavenly solution in repentance.

In *Proverbs 29* the profligate man is called a “wanderer” – the Hebrew word ABAD is used of a “wandering sheep”. The peril of a wandering sheep is something we must take seriously. It will not long survive the predators of the desert.

The son who is “wise in matters practical” causes his Father to shine with joy... It is the Godlike endowment of discernment which enables judging what is right.

CHAPTER 16

This chapter gives the vital perspective of Jesus Christ on money – it differs little from that of John Wesley who used little on personal needs and gave largely to the kingdom. The parable of the prudent and pragmatic steward, Jesus’ perspective on the central human relationship of marriage – an absolute not relative ethic! Finally a perspective on poverty & pain

THE BUSINESS WORLD FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETERNITY 1-15

(1) The steward of injustice (whether devising against an unjust system or unjust in business practice)

The “man of extreme wealth” whose steward was slandered or reproached for extravagance with resources called his steward to produce an account and put him on notice to quit. He in turn considered his future. He had not the strength to “dig trenches or cultivate land” and he was ashamed “to ask more” help like those who had already borrowed from his master.

He called each debtor individually. The first he advised to cut his debt by half from 100 measures of oil to 50 – the second to cut his debt of 100 baths of wheat to 80 – a cut of a fifth. The olive harvest in July-August would have disguised the change – supposedly enabling a repayment – as might the May wheat harvest. The first was to take your account document and sit down quickly and write 50 – the other was asked simply to write 80. The rates of interest reflect the capacity of the product to be adulterated. The very fact that the debtors could be offered private documents was bad business practice. The Lord of the steward commended the steward who was unjust in action for his act of prudence. He may have acted within the margins of extortion and usury to reduce the debts from unfair margins of usury. Men of the world are more prudent than sons of light in their family.

Jesus teaches “make yourselves friends of the unrighteous mammon so that when it fails [eclectic texts] or “you fail” or “die” (εκλειπω) [the received text] “They may receive us into everlasting tabernacles.” (SHOPS, BANQUETS maybe but HEAVEN IS FOR “disciples and their friends”...Note –mammon will be eclipsed and so will our short lives!

Note: If you do not become faithful in the unrighteous mammon (i.e. that which deals in usury not grace – take not give) who will trust you with the genuine – that which is agreeable to truth – and if you do not become faithful in the things of another who will give you things for yourself. No household servant can serve two masters. He will love one and hate the other cling to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon. The principle of Christ is utter faithfulness or Mammon with its evident temporary disappointing nature.

(2) MARRIAGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETERNITY 16-18

The Pharisees react (*sneering because they believed the riches of the rich showed that God blessed them and the O.T. has many rich men like Abraham and Lot*) but as *Matthew Henry* says the “poor” who believed are now blessed

THAT MAN said “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for a one little ‘horn of beauty’ to pass from the Torah.”

The Pharisees – themselves lovers of silver – were present listening to all these things. They sneered at Him. He said “You are those who make yourselves righteous before men. But God knows your hearts. That which is the boast of men is blasphemy before God.”

The law and the prophets were proclaimed till John – now the kingdom of God is the good news – and everyone is storming it. It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one “horn” to pass from the law. Everyone who loses his wife and marries commits adultery. And everyone who marries her who is loosed from a husband commits adultery. This is an absolute statement without recourse to circumstantial considerations.

(2) PAIN AND PLEASURE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETERNITY

THAT MAN KNOWS HELL !51 19-31

Lazarus sat daily at the gate of a very rich man who was endued in “purple” from the shell found in the depths of the sea – and in Byssos – which was found attached to reefs beneath the sea. Such clothing was very rare. He enjoyed himself – or rejoiced at seeing himself so splendid day by day. A terribly poor man *Lazarus (God is my helper)* was thrown at the gate – his whole body ulcerated – desiring crumbs from the table of the rich man. The dogs came and licked over his sores.

It happened that the poor man died. He was carried away by the angels into the bosom of Abraham. Here Christ declares his Care for the poor. *Rieneker* takes “bosom” to indicate “a place of honour at a banquet”. Heaven holds a banquet for this poor man. The rich man lifted his eyes after his death & burial – he was in hell and his torments were beginning.

He saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his “bosoms” and he prayed three prayers: –

PRAYER No 1

No1 The rich man prays “Father Abraham send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and refresh my tongue for I am pained in this flame. “Son – **remember** in life you have your good things and Lazarus bad things. Now this very man is called alongside but you are in pain. Besides **a great chasm** stands between us so that those who wish to come from there to us cannot nor those who would go thence to you cannot.

PRAYER No 2

“I ask you Father to send to my Father’s house for I have **5 brothers** – that he may thoroughly **witness** to them lest they come to this place of trial.” Abraham replied “They have Moses and the prophets – they must listen to them”.

PRAYER No 3

He said “Not so Father Abraham but if one march from the dead to them they will **repent**. Abraham said, “If they don’t obey Moses & the prophets neither will they be persuaded though “a certain one” should rise from the dead.

CHAPTER 17

This chapter begins with a batch of classic sayings that should be learned by every disciple. Then we read of the “ten lepers” and the vital note of thankfulness-precious to the Lord. Finally we are taught four lessons on the coming of the kingdom of God and are left with a verse from Job39.30 “In the house of the pierced or mortally wounded are there is he (the eagle)”

SCANDAL FORGIVENESS FAITH SERVICE 1-10

“**Scandals**” are beyond the acceptable. In other words Christ is not willing to receive those who set traps for others. This is pure evil and after the school of Satan who set a trap for Eve and has been a murderer ever since as Christ said (*John8.44*). The strong word Woe *ουαι* is reserved for their perpetrator(s). It would be profitable for that person wear a nether millstone placed around his neck and be drowned at sea – terrible punishment for child scandal. So watch how you go like a boat landing.

“**Forgiveness**” On the other hand if your brother sin against you –object – censure or “raise the price of friendship” – if he repent forgive him. If seven times in a day he sins against you and seven times turns like a ship with a new tact in repentance forgive him.

“**Faith**” The apostles (*whom Jesus sent out*) said “Give us more faith” Jesus said “If you (*unitedly*) have faith as a kernel of mustard seed you would be saying to this sycamine (fig) tree [*the commonest tree in Israel then*] “Be rooted up and be planted in the sea – and it would obey you.”

“**Service**” ‘The ploughman or pastoral servant comes to the master’s house – he is not asked to come and rest – but rather told “prepare what I may have for supper” – so he girds to serve and afterwards eats & drinks. Is the servant thanked if he does what is commanded him in order. I think not! So you when you do all that is directed say – we are unprofitable (*like wounded soldiers*) – for we have done what we are indebted to do.’

THAT MAN HEALS 10 LEPERS †52 11-19

cf *Lev13.46 & 14.2-3*

The Lord is moving south to Jerusalem and goes along the northern borders of Samaria – near the present day Jenin. In a village 10 lepers met him and raised a **mighty call**. They shouted only once “Jesus Master have mercy on us” Their word for “Master” *επιστατα* is one which acknowledges his absolute authority. Jesus says “When you have marched (*to Jerusalem*) show yourselves to the priests.”

This was another great signal to the establishment concerning Messiah. (*cf. Chapter5*)

THE SAMARITAN GLORIFIES JESUS AS GOD (later than John 4) †53

The glory of Christ – Nothing to save by many or by few

The Lord gave no specifics of instruction to the Samaritan who because of his sincerity was en route but could not resist gratitude and with a **great voice** glorified God and fell before His face and along his feet as a servant –as dead – one whose heart was conquered would. The Lord’s response was “Were not 10 cleansed? But where are the nine? None were found turned back (*with haste επιστρεφω*) to give glory to God unless this man of another people” And he said to him “Rise up – live as if raised from the dead – March (*as he had been doing*) your faith has saved you (*as from death*)”.

KINGDOM COMING 20-37

(1) WHEN WILL THE KINGDOM COME? (PHARISEES)

The Pharisees ask “When is the kingdom coming?” This enquiry *επερωταω* is cast in the style of a question to God or to His oracle (*the word of God*). Jesus first lesson is – **not with constant close observation παρατερεω** – as on a given day or month – the word being so used in *Galatians 4.10*. It is not a matter of augury – none are to lie in wait for its arrival – it is “within our lives” – where the King must first rule

(2) DAYS WHEN YOU WILL LONG TO SPEND A DAY WITH JESUS AS

LONG AGO v.22 (*suggesting that there are several*) Men will say “Look here, look there” “Don’t leave what you do or follow them –for as the lightning that lights from one side heaven to another so is the Son of Man in his day” i.e. there is a glorious day –a day of rapture –*Michelangelo* has it “the dead rise with clods clinging to them sheeting upwards” – hardly so for “we shall not precede”.

THAT MAN PREDICTS HE WILL BE GLORIFIED IN SUFFERING †54 v.25

(3) FIRST THE SON OF MAN MUST SUFFER & BE REJECTED

(*αποδοκιμαζω*) by this generation – and as it happened in the days of Noah so it will be in the days of the Son of Man – they were continuing to eat, drink, marry and indulge sexually until the days Noah entered the ark (*Genesis 6 & 7*) and the cataclysm came and destroyed them all – so an immediate sequel – a day of destruction. This Matter is more precisely understood in the attendance of God who shut Noah in – then the immediate aftermath of the deluge destroyed everyone (*απαντας*)

THAT MAN PREDICTS PROSPERITY & NORMALITY WHEN HE COMES TO AWAKEN MAN TO HIS PERIL cf Sodom †55 v.28

As it happened in Lots days They were eating drinking selling purchasing planting building in the day Lot left Sodom – the fire of God rained from heaven and destroyed them all (*απαντας*) *Billy Graham* once said “*If God doesn’t Judge America he’ll have to apologise to Sodom & Gomorrah*”.

In accordance with these things “it is in the day the Son of man discloses Himself – or reveals his design.

(4) THE DAY THE SON OF MAN WILL BE UNVEILED AGAIN v.30

“Let not a man come down from the roof (*praying?*) for his possessions in the house- let not a man run from the field (*of God’s work*) turn backwards. Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life will be made alive everlastingly. I tell you on this night two will be in bed – one will have been taken alongside of the other and the other will have been left apart – *notice Christ speaks as if it were done*. Two will be at the same mill – the one will have been taken alongside the other have been left apart.

(5) WHERE LORD? [The Lord’s hearers didn’t guess its worldwide significance]

Clearly the Lord had the whole earth in mind – speaking of night and day divisions right around the world. **So he responds with a word from the mysterious Job section where Job is asked concerning his**

knowledge. Do you know about the wild goats, the wild deer, the wild asses, the hippo or unicorn, the peacock, the war horses, the hawk and the eagle? With the last of these amid it is a scene of slaughter and war which Christ portrays.

So the consideration of the Kingdom's coming begins with reference to "observation" as of birds – and ends "there will the eagles be gathered. They are rather observers than observed. They suddenly swoop upon the body or prey. The swoop of the nations on Jerusalem in days following the rapture is the only hint of the consequences for re-gathered Israel. *Henry Alford* – premillennialist dean of Canterbury saw the Lord's instruction here as concerning his return for His people.

George MacDonald was asked "will we ken one another?" He replied "Its no that that bothers me – I'm feard I'll no ken mysel!"

CHAPTER 18

This chapter contains instruction on commitment which invariably begins with prayer for defence or mercy (ἰλασμος) – a parable is devoted to each. Commitment often begins early-hence another child narrative. Commitment must be reinforced by Christ's specific promises and based on His atonement; it is accompanied by personal transactional experience of Jesus.

PRAYER – A VITAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD 1-8

It is the real antidote to the faint heart. Luke records here the **tenth** parable enforcing the teaching of the master. It centres on an "unjust judge" whose life ran contrary to the basic principles of love for God and one's neighbour. The parable records obvious humour. The Lord shows how the judge thinks quite careless of God or man – unaffected by conscience or qualm – but bothered by a persistent client who might even set about him (*υπωπιαζω* – literally "give him a black eye"). God will act in the defence of his elect who call on Him to the echo. He will see His lawsuit out – our advocate will demonstrate "longsuffering" with a sinning world and yet quickly act for His people – except "Will the Son of Man find the faith on the earth?" *απα* here expects a negative answer. Faith concerning **the Son of Man** takes us back to Daniel and to his prophecies of 7.13 & 9.25-26 & 12. 7-11. The "power of the holy or elect people is to be broken" but as in Daniel's day there may be no *Daniels of Faith* in Jerusalem in those last days!

PROPITIATION IS VITAL TO RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD 9-14

This is an historic statement to those who were self-confident of their righteousness. It is parable No.11. It features **a Pharisee and a tax-collector**. He set "others" in the categories of thieves, wrong-doers, adulterers and publicans. He even condemned others in prayer. He told God of his 2 fasts and tithing according to *Gen 14.20*. The Tax farmer stood at a distance – smote his chest and said "O God you must have been propitiated for me the sinner. (*cf Psa 51*). This story must be fairly current for tax-farming was an up to date Roman practice – and some sacrifice other than an animal was spoken of. "That man" *εκεινος* is used of a well-known person. So we are to think of a well-known tax man who acknowledged that his propitiation was in the Lamb of God.

TRAINING UP CHILDREN IN FAITH IS VITAL 15-17

Here are "children in arms" *βρεφη* brought to Jesus. Let us carefully observe that he does not insist that they stay-but that the *παιδια* or teachable children come to him

with no barrier being allowed. The Master then adds that all must receive the kingdom as a child – one who comes simply because he wants to this is the force of *ερχομαι* - all must be willing to obey.

THAT MAN DECLARES HOW TO ENTER HEAVEN PENITENCE IS VITAL – QUITTING SIN 15-29 †55

The ruler's query about "doing" and "eternal life" was focused on the word "good" which was rightly applied to Jesus – but to none else but God. If Jesus was truly good He was truly God. The Lord quoted the commandments of Moses (2nd table) in this order: 7, 6, 8, 9, 4. He did not quote 10 but in "the one thing" this also was covered. The "sell all" of Christ searched to the depths of this very wealthy lawyer's heart. He deeply grieved Christ and was deeply grieved himself. The "eyes" of Jesus filled up as he left – what potential – what sadness to be careless of "treasure in heaven". Jesus spoke memorably "It is harder for a camel to get through a hole in a needle (*the play is between καμηλος and καμιλος i.e. camel and rope*) than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven".

Hearers asked "Who was able to be saved?" Christ replied "Things impossible alongside men are possible with God at your side." *παρα* becomes a vital word as the matter of commitment comes to its kernel.

Peter said "We have left everything!" Jesus said the "leaving" bit would be awarded in this life! The grace part would be a further "due" but its basis awaits disclosure in the next incident.

PASSOVER SUFFERING IS VITAL TO RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD 30-34

Christ took his disciples to his side *παρα* along the way up to the city. He explained the "completion" or the "complete payment".

Of which the prophets spoke. It was a vicarious sacrificial atonement. It would involve mockery spitting insult and flogging. The Lord spoke of His resurrection but not "crucifixion". The word hid itself from them (*in that the "Son of Man" reference and the third day idea were mysterious*) – and they did not know the things that spoke for themselves in scripture.

JESUS MINISTRY THROUGH THE SEVENTY ENDS †56 35-43

This ministry touched many (possibly all) cities – Jericho is one of the last.

Jesus approach to Jericho yielded a true conversion. The blind beggar called on Christ as Messiah (*Son of David*) and was commanded to "be quiet". The first time he howled out like the thunder of the waves and the second time he bawled aloud in a scream or shriek "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stopped and commanded him to be led to Him. When he was near He said "What do you want me to do for you?" "To look up into your face" Jesus said "Your faith has saved you!" He believed without seeing – but as he looked up there was a transaction. *παραχρημα* – it was in a moment – something was acquired-it was a deep personal interest in and love for Jesus because of mercy on a sinner. He followed Jesus like the paralysed man of Luke 5 "glorifying God".

As in that case the people all gave praise to God seeing a blind man healed. Theirs was a "contentedness" a "commendation" of Gods doing here. He knew – they did not know intimately "the person and work "of Christ.

ILLUSTRATIONS

“Prayer” A man in great need cried out to God, “I have not asked anything in 15 years, I won’t for the next 15 if you deliver me!”

Myconius to Luther on John 17 “Remain & pray”. The sequel *Luther* dreamed of thousands of sheep in the east and corn to the West and one harvest-time

“Children” A boy in prison – Mother said “Nothing I can do!” She “Prayed” *George Hamilton (N.J.)* saved.

Cowper Attempting suicide he hired a coach to jump from London Bridge but fog enshrouded the city – the cabby got lost and arrived back where he started. Cowper went indoors and felon a blade – it broke. He then tried hanging himself but someone heard him and he was cut down. As in Romans 8.28 God was at work for his good.

CHAPTER 19

This chapter records the popular story of Zacchaeus conversion – the 12th parable – that of the talents – and the triumphal entry into Jerusalem along with the second cleansing of the temple.

Sir Robert Anderson in “the coming prince” completed the complex mathematics of the pre-recorded timing of Messiah’s advent as it relates to the Julian calendar yielding the amazing fact that the day of the triumphal entry was exactly 173,880 days from the Edict to rebuild given by Artaxerxes 14 March BC445 (cf “The Coming Prince by Anderson, Page 128)

ZACCHAEUS WHO ALSO LEFT “UR” AT THE CALL OF GOD †57 1-10 The Shepherd Christ-our guarantee

When we observe the effectiveness of the Lord’s outreach wherever He went we need to remember that he had sent the 70 before him – He believed in preparing the ground – in giving all a fair opportunity to meet Him. It might be said of this working Sanhedrin that as *His heralds* “they brought good tidings to greatest as to least-they bade men hasten to join the great king’s feast”. Zacchaeus belonged among the very rich-*πλουσιος*. This is something of a theme – since in *Chapters 12 & 16* Jesus focuses on how wealth very often defines interest moulds character and determines destiny. The *sycamine fig is associated with the very poor* who like the dogs ate its fruit. *Amos the prophet with his knife cut the tops of such bushes to allow the insect that eats into its wood to escape from the top and promote fruit.* It has other associations – being called *the “life-giving tree” among the poor of Egypt*. So we have a rich man in a poor man’s tree seeking life in Jesus.

This man had the best remedy for the charge of being a sinner:

(1) He sought Jesus – a mighty Saviour – in a way any poor humble soul might do
(2) He received Jesus with joy – washing the Lord’s feet or supervising it – cf.

Abraham under the terebinth *Gen18 3-8*

(3) He gave away half of his wealth on the spot – as a sign of repentance

(4) He promised to restore 4-fold on any surcharge of tax (*Ex22.1*) No more a ‘sycophant’ another “fig tree” pun – for he was no longer to be an informer for the Romans (*like the Greek ones who when export of figs was illegal informed on infringements*).

A man who wants neither “thread nor shoelatchet” of this world’s golden store is termed “a son of Abram. When the Lord spoke of “salvation” coming to the house He spoke of that which was “guaranteed”. The twin “aorists” in Christ’s words show that this was Zacchaeus “one and only” opportunity of salvation and that wonderful day he

grasped it with both hands. Yet is this Christ declaring his “good shepherd plan” as in *Ezekiel 34.16*. And to comment on the theology of a chorus he came not so much “for tea” but to “overnight”. The word *καταλυω* reminds us of the “inns” of scripture.

TEN TALENTS (Parable No.13) †58 11-27

The ascending Christ gifts His people and is judge of all

This Jericho road incident and the fact that Jesus stayed nearby with a very great man whose life was utterly changed stirred an expectation now becoming quite fervent – as so many cities had been visited by “salvation” the conception of a great divine “transaction” – that maybe all-comers would fall in with this “grace deal”. The kingdom it was thought would blaze up and be declared – for that is the force of *αναφαινω*. Jesus told now a parable to counter that – reminiscent of the travel of Archelaus to Rome with claim under Herod’s will to be invested as King of Judea. In his absence a revolt erupted against the Romans – with encirclement of the city garrison and near success – except that Herod’s troops and others went over to the Romans. In this revolt many Jericho zealots fought. (*Antiquities of Josephus 17.10*) Now the “claim of right” of Christ and his “going to the Father” are vital elements of this parable. The watchword of Christ is “Trade till I come” – keep my business open! Widely in the gospel and often in Luke the idea of transaction surfaces under the term *παραχρημα*. *That the Son of man has a paramount interest in growth is very clear.*

(1) SYSTEMATIC CHRISTIANS

“You must continue trading (in life transactions) till I come”v13.

The delegation (*lit. “Elders” who from Stephen onwards harassed believers*) here referred to that which opposed Christ, namely persecutors. It parallels the shrewd presentations of Antipater in the earlier Jewish history of about the time of the birth of Christ. Despite opposition we are to “be absolutely busy trading – on a daily basis – seeking first the kingdom”.

The return of Christ is described in a unique word *επι-ανα-ερχομαι* “He came by His own volition with increased strength and wider and superior powers.

He called the first servant who said *your talent worked strenuously toward ten talents*

Texts on the faithful worker. cf. *Lk. 9.23, Ac.2.46, 16.5, 17.11, 1Cor.15.31 Heb.3.13 James 2.15* To this servant the king gave “administrative authority” *εξουσια* over 10 cities. This was not necessarily the greatest gift – for it is said to be the least”v17. Here is a gift men need – it is the systematic regular attention to the decent order of the things of God.

(2) CREATIVE CHRISTIANS

The second said-“*Your talent has created or inspired five talents*” The king responded “You use creative talent in 5 cities”. Here is the gift of “inspiration” – encompassing writing preaching evangelising etc – it is a grace gift.

(3) INACTIVE CHRISTIANS

This servant said “*I have kept your talent in reserve for I feared you are “rough and outspoken” αυστερος* – taking what you did not deposit and harvesting that you didn’t sow. The king’s response-“Why not give it to the *τραπεζον* or “banker” so I

would have had interest *τοκος* (another rendering is “sons” – for Christ is chiefly interested in “sons for glory” – indeed that is what talents are for!)

(4) SOLDIERING CHRISTIANS

The third talent is redistributed to the “daily faithful plodding Christian”. There is an outcry from the “bystanders” or *παρεστωσιν*

Those who were “surrendered, intimate and defenders of His name” The query of the other 7 talents now appears-these latter – the “remainder” when Christ goes to Glory – who gain the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit need not argue. **Further-or exceptionally** those who will not have Christ king “once for all” *βασιλευσαι* – are enemies – they become as “sacrificial offerings” The Lord who saves is the Lord who judges.

TRIUMPHAL ENTRY He whose very words are life-giving! †59 28-44

Christ as He taught was on the Jericho road which His ‘second’ parable featured – after He appointed the 70. Here are names of fruits in the land of Israel “the house of figs” “the House of Dates/date palms” and “the self-styling mount of Olives”. So Christ’s ministry among the tribes bears fruit in victory, pre-figures rejection of the Lord with its curse and tells of His return in days of judgment. As ever “The Lord marches on”. Jesus was amazing in his zest for life and indefatigable attention to mission. His perspectives for the development of loving-kindness were inexhaustible. “Go up into the country village” (Bethphage). **This may be no disjointed testimony –this might well have been the very latest place where the seventy witnessed** – to the king of Israel – a place that knew and respected the Master. The ass bound and unbroken was found. Queries were to be fielded with the reply “The master has need of him!” The “lords” of the colt asked “Why?” The men replied “The Lord has need of him”. That was enough. The *οτι* speaks of the use of *ipsissima verba*. The best witness to Christ is His very words – so perfect. The word Lord is ADONAI in Hebrew – so this is a call to pronounce his divine right to our acquaintance and service. So off go the “togas of peace” – the outer garments and on to the animal and the road – as in 800BC. Then the kings of the hour – Jehoram and Ahaziah spoke peace but lived after the style of Ahab.

TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Now the disciples began to sing the 118th psalm “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of JEHOVAH” – applying this psalm to the Saviour as Messianic Son of David on account of the miracles (*Luke 18.38*) and (*19.37*) This was a clear confession of the seventy and others – reflecting the mighty acts and work of Christ that has birthed such faith. To the purists of Jewry it was blasphemy. To Jesus it was the best music of His ministry. “If these should go silent the rocks are ringing to an echo” Which rocks? – “the marble of the temple!” In *Matthew 21.9* the sequel is “children’s voices echoing in the temple. So it is a reference to this becoming a nation’s song taken up by children of the city.

Now to Jerusalem where in 22.8 Peter and John make the last great witness but first the “tears over His city” of our compassionate Lord and the “if you had known” of Moses added to the “dashing of children “ of the Babylonian oracle (*Psa.137*) added to the “den of thieves “ of Jeremiah. But Christ expelled those who sold at extortionate rates and at knock-down prices. The people “hung upon” His words-not just “depending on them” but “devoted to them” His “very words” were life and power!

CHAPTER 20

This chapter records parable 14-the one Christ began to tell-its completion runs into church history and His second coming. Here are 5 great questions which established Christ as the “teacher” in Israel –though once Nicodemus was revered Christ was awesome. His O.T. command was absolute. The 3 queries Christ confronted present from the recurrent standpoint of the Devil the world and the flesh. The chapter presents Christ as the essence of the gospel.

(1)TEACHING AND EVANGELISM †60 1-8

“The God- man presented Himself as the heart of good news!”

The longer one lives the clearer it becomes – we evangelise as we teach. The word Jesus used was *ευαγγελιζομενου* which really means “He taught that good news centred on Himself” and “He taught like an archer – **His message travelled to the heart** and very rapidly (*the effect of ιζω verbs*)” The fact that He was at the heart of the message of God and the scriptures prompted the obvious.

Query 1 In what delegated authority do you do these things and who gave it to you?

Jesus replied “I will ask you one oracle; you tell me ‘The baptism of John was it from heaven or of men?’ They said “There is no knowing whence!” Jesus said “Neither do I intend to tell you in what circle of authority I do these things” Christ’s *gospel makes Him the mediator and Lord of the baptised community.*

Parable 14 THE VINEYARD 9-19

This parable “began” – it has roots in 2Chron 36 15-16 – the nation’s opposition to prophecy – the Babylonian captivity and God’s wrath on account of evils perpetrated on the prophets. Christ predicts an untying of the people and the land and its re-peopled future state. They say “Never”. Then He looked right into them and spoke about the ‘rejected stone’.

Query 2 (FROM JESUS) WHY IS IT WRITTEN-THE REJECTED STONE IS THE CORNER STONE And everyone who falls (aorist) on that renowned stone will have been shattered and any on whom it should fall will be blown away like chaff” (*Psa 118 22*). This psalm is the “Hosanna” psalm – predicting the presentation of the Son of God to Israel – that is the answer that Christ hinted – and His exaltation to the right hand is the other part – with their concomitants – the fall and renewed captivity of national Israel and her scattering worldwide.

(2) CHRIST’S GOSPEL HAS A BOUND SACRIFICE (Psa.118) AS MESSIAH

Query 3 IS IT LAWFUL TO PAY TAX TO CAESAR?

The men hired were “plants” privy to methods of presenting a case to the governor. This ploy failed. It was a new line – principally political.

“Teacher we know your speech and teaching is orthodox. You are not preferential. You teach God’s way openly. ‘Is it lawful for us to pay tax to Caesar or not?’”

Christ recognised here “the testing of God” which neither demon nor man is able to do.

The “penny” reply based on the image and inscription on the coin yielded the reply “**render to Caesar the things of Caesar and to God the things of God**”. There was no comeback or closing the argument amid “Wonder” or failure to worship – but compulsion to recognise superiority – they were silenced.

(3) CHRIST MAKES HIMSELF A PROPER OBJECT OF WORSHIP

Query 4 WHOSE SHALL SHE BE IN ETERNITY?

Based on *Genesis 38.8* Judah's request to Onan – and *Deut.25.5* this query about the woman who was without issue though united to 7 successive brothers centred on the question “Which of the seven would be her husband in eternity?”

A double reply speaks

- (a) Of Gods will for one-man one wife lifetime unions
- (b) Of an age where the institution of marriage does not exist as a state nor is there such ceremony renewed.

γὰρ –for death no longer affects them – in other words the population of heaven is stable and settled.

γὰρ –for they are ever in a present tense life equal to the angels and sons of God, existing as sons of the resurrection – in this sense Peter grasped “having the divine nature”

We should stay with this mighty thought where “time is no more” “where past greatness and future glory mean nothing” – where “love and joy and peace are unending”.

(4) CHRIST'S GOSPEL MAKES HIM THE SOURCE OF RESURRECTION LIFE

Moses memorandum recorded in Ex3.2&6

God gave His name to Moses as the “I am” and associated the patriarchs with him in the present tense though they had died in different generations-all were alive in His presence. God is not God of the dead but those living “spring like lives” –and living with them. Scribes of the law replied “Teacher you have spoken historically and beautifully” for they were not bold enough to still query Him

Query No.5 “HOW IS CHRIST THE SON OF DAVID?” (Based on Psalm 110-quoted 25 times in N.T) “The Lord said to my Lord ‘sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool”

The question of Christ is “How can Christ be both David's Lord and David's heir?” The Lord rounded off the encounters by warning disciples that the scribes were not truly men of scripture but men with a very secular and insincere life-style.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Wanted to walk around in robes of peace | 4. Loved primary places at feast |
| 2. Loved embraces in the markets | 5 Devoured the profits from widow's homes |
| 3. Loved prominent seats in synagogues | 6. Pretended to pray at length |
| | 7. They will receive judgment beyond what is common – extraordinary |

Christ's gospel presents Him in glorified humanity living and ruling for ever.

CHAPTER 21

This chapter contains calls to God-fearing persons in the light of the end of the age. The first is to that commitment that “gives all”; the second is to the “Lordship of Christ” in the light of latter-day deceits of doctrine, and the third is to the specifics of “obedience” especial to going through the judgement of AD70 though not exclusive to that period; the fourth to the aspects of “obedience” integral to being “counted worthy to escape” in the latter-day of redemption of the people of God.

THE CALL TO COMMITMENT 1-4

The Lord stood over against the brazen trumpets observing people giving. He still does. He had but days to stay here then and was set to give everything for man's redemption. He saw persons of extreme riches give and one widow who was very poor (*πτωχη*) give two mites to the "royal treasury". She had nothing left – she gave her "life" or "substance" – all she had to live on – her whole remaining means. (*υστερηματος*).

THE CALL TO THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS 5-9

There were costly stones and gifts in the temple edifice – but they would be torn down. Christ moved from debate on the "stones" to the first command – "watch lest you are deceived". Many will come claiming in precise words "I am" or masquerading as "deity" and saying "The moment is very near" The second command here is "Do not join in this march and warfare" – "when you hear of wars and unsettled or unstable times" do not allow vehement emotion to cause you to be in a flutter. (*πτοεω*) So the wars attendant to the end of the O.T. period and for that matter connected to the N.T. re-establishment of Israel were not signals of the end.

THE CALL TO FAITH 10-14

A series of things would follow the Roman world's dominance. Initially nation states would break away and engage in battles. There would be great earthquakes and famines and deadly infections in places not marked out i.e. indefinite. There will also be great and "fearful" signs from heaven – these signs will be "scarecrow" signs. Before "all these" they will be physically hostile to you and persecute you, handing you over to synagogues and prisons, leading you before kings and governors for my name. This will issue in you being a witness. Here the call is not to prepare or plan a prelude of having a reasoned case for how you live. The salient warning of the Lord is that persecution of a most grave nature would break out in the end-times. Christ promised "mouth" and wisdom" (*Luke 21.15*) so "will not be able to speak classically against you nor to have any complete or final stand against you" (*perfect of the verb*).

THE CALL TO PURCHASE YOUR SOULS 15-19

Gain or possess your souls by holding out under these stresses. So the promises are: - you will be given words, you will stand your ground, some will die as martyrs, many will hate you-the hair of your head will not perish. The Jewish war with Rome was to leave Christianity comparatively unscathed and a great number of souls were to come to faith through the sufferings of the believers being borne patiently. The prize of souls is the battle to which Christ is committed – and not the battle of nation versus nation. (*κταομαι* can be taken in the context of war or in that of buying spiritually into the times to secure souls for eternity).

SIGNS OF IMMANENT DESOLATION 20

When Jerusalem is encircled with foot soldiers (*στρατοπεδων* is a Greek name for army squadrons) then her desolation has come nigh. (*i.e. she will be close to being laid in ruins or flattened.*)

THE AVENGING (ONE) 21-24

Let the inhabitants of Judea flee to the mountains or borders – they went to Jamnia over Jordan. Those in the midst or temple area were to evacuate – for there was greatest danger – those in the surrounding country were advised against entry – for that meant certain death. These are the days of the lawsuit or vengeance.

(*εκδικησις* takes us back to the parable of avenging the elect in *Luke 18*)

These are the days of the having fulfilled once for all what has been written. Woe to those with child and to those who nurture babies in those notable days for there will be great distress over the earth and wrath in the midst of this nation. And they will fall by the sword and be carried captive into all nations.” Jerusalem will be the patio of nations – until the times of the gentiles are fulfilled.”

SIGNS OF IMMANENT REDEMPTION

THE AVENGING (TWO) 25-28

- 1 There will also be signals in the sun moon and stars
- 2 On earth a ‘tightening of the belt of nations’ in a time of falling trade or provisions.
3. **The sea and the waves roaring** – or an echo of this distress in the sea or Mediterranean area and its shipping (*θαλασσα* is the Mediterranean *Ωκεανος* the outer seas) *The original warrants “undersea upheaval and surface waves” (Tsunami)*
4. Men expiring from fear of what they expect will come suddenly in the world-now as one household
5. For the dynamics of the heavens will shake like a ship moving at anchor.
6. And they will see the Son of Man coming in the midst of a multitude with great power and glory.

THE CALL TO BELIEVERS OF THE LATTER DAY

1. When the war-signals in the stars (*including star-wars?*) and “*tightening of the belt*” begin to prevail (*αρχομαι*–middle sense) “**Lift your heads as if coming from a dive**” and “lift your heads up” because you are going to be saved or taken from the slave market of the world (*ανακυψω* Greek writers of “swimmers coming up so” – get ready for new medium and “look up” as *Acts 1.11* at end of church age!)

2. “Behold the fig tree and all the trees” 29-33

i.e. Israel and the nations – “when they propose a venture”(*προβαλλω*) or “shoot forth” you know that the harvest is near – so when you see these things know that the Kingdom of God is near. This generation – i.e. the Jewish people shall not leave the scene (*παρερξομαι* speaks of “going away as by ship”). So the Jewish nation amid its troubles will remain until Christ comes to Olives (*Zechariah 13.6*) Heaven and earth will pass away weakened or exhausted but my words **shall not pass unnoticed** “like a ship in the night” as we would say (*παερχομαι*).

3. Turn your attention to one another (*προσεχω*) 34-35

As when “bringing a ship to land” – give great devotion and care to one another. Let not your heart become heavy by sensuality or profligate living. Or hard by drunkenness or heavy by minding things useful to this life **so that day will not come upon you suddenly**(*αιφνιδιος* – an epithet of the north wind) For as a snare it will be released or untied over all who settle or appoint a tyrant in the whole earth.

4. Watch then – always praying v.36

That you may be counted worthy to flee when all these things begin to happen & stand before the Son of Man. Holy living is the fourth great demand – characterised as it is by steady praying and being absolutely intent *αγρυπνω* (sleepless).

CHAPTER 22

This chapter records events surrounding the Last supper of Jesus; His arrest and the cursory trial before Herod. It has been correctly said that prophecy bulks large at this final stage of the Lord's ministry. In this chapter there are 7 prophecies worth the musing. There are four lessons here under "Steps in the Study of the Saviour" 'His reclining'; 'His appreciation'; 'His agony', and 'His confession'

THE DAY OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

The word "near" has occurred repeatedly in *Chapter 21* – speaking of the "immanent appearing of Christ" (21.9); the "immanent desolation" (21.20); the "immanent ransom from the world" (21.28); the "immanent harvest of judgement" (21.30) and the "immanent kingdom" (21.31). What is really "immanent" Luke now urges is the historic "atonement of Christ" set within the festival when no leaven was permitted – yet in love for his disciples Jesus sat down with hearts mixed with the leaven of sin. This was the last great city on the campaign of the Lord's mission – and its embassy – Peter and John go to establish within its walls the great testimony of the Last Supper. The "leaven" of Judas sin of betrayal – his "hidden" heart of betrayal – shows that he agreed "how" to betray – with a "Kiss". The nature of Judas' betrayal was 'a full promise/confession' alongside an agreement for money (30 pieces) to be paid either just prior to or immediately after the event – thus ensuring speed. It was cemented by a joyful parting from Caiaphas and Annas and the temple guard – who were the other parties. The word *απερ* (v6) is used alongside "clandestine" by *Hesiod and the Tragedians* shows that the 5 day run up to this feast – marred as it was by sin – presented few chances of secret betrayal – and the one at the last supper – may have been an *ad hoc* arrangement.. It is of Note that both Judas and the Zealot had names they treasured viz. (a) "The man from Kerioth – approximating to Hebron – the patriarchal base and (b) "the zealot".

The "notable" inn-keeper who was carrying the earthenware mini-pitcher would naturally meet and walk ahead – he would be the answer to – "Where will we hold Passover?" (*The query of Peter & John*) Such little vessels were made for fine wine or fish but this one is a water vessel. Some have made an association with the Essene scroll pottery – supported by a male water-carrier. The Lord promised he would show a large upper room with dinner couches set out for disciples.

THE ACTION OF THE LAMB †61

Christ often refers to the "hour" in the gospel of John. Here Christ "fell back" – the act symbolises the "death of the lamb". This introductory word expresses his readiness for death. He further adds that He will not eat it again until the great feast of the Kingdom of God. He took both cup and bread [*after the main meal means "after He had supped"*] (*δειπνησαι*–1 Cor 11.25) and distributed them among the disciples. The Lord used three middle voice participles – "given" "poured out" and "horizoned/determined"-which all speak of His deep desire of Love to give Himself – to pour Himself out – Himself to lead the campaign march towards and beyond the horizon to a new day of redemption.

OT REFERENCES IN THE CHAPTER

Ex 6.6 The four Passover cups – probably each contributing to the “bitter cup”. “Bring out” “redeem” “take for mine” “Bring or come in”. The “new covenant” is referred to in *Jeremiah 31.311 & 32.40*. The prophecy of Judas is in *Psalms 41.9* –there called “the man of my peace”. Amos 9.9 shows that sifting “lose no grain!” *Isaiah 53.12* contains the “things that “have been written of or by me” Finally *Psalms 110.1* is quoted where the Lord shows Himself as **judge of all** and coming again with the clouds of heaven.

THE END OF STRIFE †62 24-38

“Friendly strife” *φιλονεκια* broke out at this critical moment as to who would be greater – this would not be unnatural where 12 men were to be seated and no places were allocated – only this strife – perhaps latent – developed during the meal. The Lord referred to the way of Kings which is to be lordly and absolutist-and their way with those under them is to give authority to “benefactors” who have something to offer the public – by wealth or in war. Christ then said that the greatest disciple is as “the youngest”(cf. *Joseph*); he who leads as “the ministering one”. Christ then stated that whoever sits and is waited upon is greater than the table attendant-then Christ departed from custom and took a towel and washed their feet. John 13. 4-5...this would appear to be the very moment “after supper” and so springs to life again the “Joseph or Shepherd king” idea – “The Jesus who poured Himself out” – “The servant King”. Depths of love and service confront us from this table that must have drawn tears – depths nowhere else seen in Passovers ever – only in the *Genesis 45* feast . “You shared my trials – you will share my table in heaven and my throne.” “And Peter – Satan desired one last time to shake you – but “you have been bound” or “covenanted” or “I (*myself*)”asked for you” (*since this verb is passive in form but middle in sense thus showing that the bonds within the Trinity work like “a seal in heaven of what is wrought in earth” under Christ’s words*). So Father and Son will ensure an unfailing faith and the power to “prop up” the disciples. Peter possibly spotted the Joseph connection when he said “I will go to prison – even death with you”. Jesus says “You will absolutely distance yourself” (cf the 3 denial). The Lord then said “When I sent you without bread or money or sandals – did you lack anything?” “Nothing” they said. Now the Lord says “Take all you can of what is left in your bread script” “He that has a purse take money” and he that has not let him sell the toga of peace and buy a sword in “(*tomorrow’s*) market” – “the things written (re Judas and of His capture in *Isa53*. “Still have a completion that is in me alone”(i.e. *such acts cannot alter them*) “Here are 2 swords” said uncomprehending Peter. Jesus said epically “It is enough – when only one had been lifted!”

THE PASSION OF CHRIST †63 39-65

Most exceptional “man of sorrows” as Christ was He did sweat a circumstance associated with heart failure – and it was as if clots of blood falling to the ground. They had marched as by custom in those days to Olives to a place where He asked they pray lest they enter testing or satanic worldly and fleshly trial. He “was torn from them” – as through “a thrust of a missile”. Not just a mark of distance maybe – but a mark of moving towards an adversary. Placing his knees he made a vow. “**Father if you are inclined or have chosen thus *Βουλη* share this cup in consequence of me having to bear it**” (*απο is used of an equal or lesser agent*). So precisely understood the sensitivity and heart of heaven is sought in this vow. “Nevertheless not my will

θελημα (purpose and wish) but Yours be done.” This is not for the avoidance of the cross – that must have an end – v37...it is that upward look when the outward look is bleak. **The answer was instantaneous – An angel appeared “to Him alone” from heaven strengthening Him.** Being in an agony He stretched Himself in a vow – while clots like blood rained from his body to the earth. It was a mighty sign of cleansing. Rising from the vow he came to the disciples who were resting themselves from exhaustion. He said “Why are you sleeping – stand up and make your vow – that you may not enter trial.” The kiss of Judas drew from the Lord the comment “Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss”.

Then *one disciple* struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. The expression “You were hindered till this” means “this is a breach and a sad infringement of teaching”. The ear was miraculously healed. The crowd of soldiers was told “Have you come out as against a thief with staves and swords. I was daily in the temple and no one laid hands on me. But this is your hour – and the authority that of darkness”. Next the story of Peter’s denial is related. It is a “tragedy of errors – the sword at supper – the sword in play to wound Malchus, and the triple denial in the courtyard. He denied he was with Christ, that he was one of Christ’s, that he even knew Christ. It was one hour into the proceedings and the Lord turned and “looked into Peter” and Peter remembered the precise words of Christ – as the cockerel crowed. He went out and “wept bitterly” *πικρως* as his sorrow came to a head.

THE MAN JESUS IS CONFESSED AS THE SON OF GOD †64 66-71

It was early morning – as the elders and high-priests and scribes led Jesus into the Sanhedrin – before it was constituted they were saying “If you are the Christ tell us” This was informal but serious conversation. Jesus replied “If I speak classically to you, you will not believe. “But if I asked you a question you would not reply or release me. From this present the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God”. They all said “**You are therefore the Son of God?**” But he said to them “You say that I am” “What need have we of witness-for you have heard from His own mouth!”

Jesus last expression was not a question – it was a fact “you are precisely saying “That I am that I am.”

CHAPTER 23

This chapter contains incisive summary accounts of the trials of Christ – Events in the passage to crucifixion and at least 10 reactions to the cross-all of which have modern equivalents. The relationship of Father-Son iron clad and irrefragable reflected in - “Father forgive them” and “Today you will be with me in paradise” and “Father into your hands I commend my spirit” – The significance of 3 hours on the first Good Friday for the world.

BEFORE PILATE AND HEROD 1-25

The whole host rose and led Jesus to Pilate. They began to accuse Him by alluding to two acts of which Jesus was not guilty – stirring the people and preventing tribute to Caesar through claiming Messiah-ship.

Pilate – with good legal sense asked the right question “Are you the king of the Jews?” Luke gives Jesus’ reply, “You are saying it!” – Which best understood approximates to “You are reciting it” “You are reckoning it out” but is best translated “You are speaking the plain fact”. John tells us Jesus had explored the nature of Spiritual kingship and replied “You say precisely “I am-king”. Each of the other

accounts has the two-word reply that might be paraphrased “correctly spoken” – because the verb for “being” is associated with “kingship” in a way that renders it “everlasting king”.

Pilate had grasped it with scepticism – adulterated by his wife’s dream maybe – that Jesus laid claim to a higher sovereignty. *John 19.12* shows Pilate had feared to act against Christ but more greatly feared when the Jews blasphemed their law and said “We have no monarch – office of king or ruler *Βασιλευς* but Caesar. The vehemence of the high priests etc in speaking of “stirring” and “Galilee” in one breath meant Jesus was passed over to Herod’s jurisdiction. Herod’s joy was short lived for the “sign” he wanted was not done. He asked him in sufficient words. Priests and scribes increased the pitch of the accusation. Herod and his soldiers played the game of kings and endued Jesus with the robe of a claimant king – and Herod despatched Jesus back to Pilate –so they became filial.

Pilate’s defence of Jesus innocence included a dismissal of the charge of “dissuading the crowd politically or religiously, in confirmation of which the returned Jewish delegation were told that Jesus was cleared of purposing or successfully effecting anything worthy of capital sentence.

The plan to “teach a lesson” by flogging alone was thwarted by the shrieking of the whole host v18 “Take Him – give us Barabbas”

The second call of Pilate – who was willing to release Jesus – was drowned by the cry “Crucify once for all – once for all”

The third attempt of Pilate now challenging “For what evil?” and “I will teach Him”. To this their response “He should have been crucified” and their “prevailing voices” beyond pacification led him to buckle and grant their demand-handing Jesus over to their will.

REACTIONS TO THE CROSS

THE MAN WHO IS THE WORLD’S LIGHT †65 26-43

1. Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear the “lighter end” as *Samuel Rutherford* sagely observes.
2. The Jerusalem wives who lined the way were smiting their breasts and wailing His approaching death *θρηνω*. The Lord turned to say “Weep not for me but your children for days come when they will say ‘blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breast that never nurtured. Then they will begin to say to the mountains ‘fall on us’ and to the hills ‘hide us’. If they do this in the green stick what will happen in the dry timber?” This speaks of the period of the growth of a tree accurately enough 40 year on!
3. The people in stony reaction stood watching the scene being played out *θεωρω*
4. The leaders were sneering-using the nose to express ridicule, saying “He saved others let Him save Himself if he is the Christ the elect of God.
5. The soldiers were making fun bringing Him sour wine and saying, “If you are the king of the Jews save yourself” – for the charge was written in Greek Latin & Hebrew, “This is the king of the Jews”
6. One of the criminals who was “hanging” (or “depending” though unawares [on Him!]) blasphemed saying, “If you are the Christ save yourself and us”-He hoped for extended life.
7. The other malefactor honoured Him saying “Don’t you fear God for you are in the same condemnation, and we justly receiving the due reward of what we perpetrated. But this man has done nothing out of place” And he said to Jesus “Lord, remember

me when you come into your kingdom” Jesus replied “Today you will be with me in Paradise”.

8. The darkness continued from the sixth to the ninth hour at which time the centurion confessed “This man continues to live and was a just man.

9. All those who came along together to this sight seeing the events smote their breasts and turned to run.

10. All those who knew him stood at a distance and also the women from Galilee who followed together kept it in sight with care.

THE THREE HOUR DARKNESS 44-49

It is described as **σκοτος** gloom that could be felt. It appears to have been earth wide **ολος** “the universal earth” as in “the full moon”. The sun itself had been darkened – “faint/dying”. The temple veil was torn in the midst – so the way into the holiest was opened. Jesus said “Father – into thy hands I commend my spirit” – and the centurion believed He was yet alive!

Though sun may not shine and religion flounders **Christ is surely living** and **forgiveness is a grand reality** and **a place better than Eden awaits believers**. These three realities come from the passion scene of Good Friday-Life and peace and joy are ours in Him!

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA 50-56

This leading counsellor “expected the kingdom of God”. In effect this is *Homer’s* use-though the first use is “received its message favourably/ agreed with the argument / submitted to it” This man’s request for the body of Jesus brings us to Psalm 16.10-and as the body did not corrupt it would have continued supple. Some if not all of the signs of the “wounded servant” (*Isa.53*); the “cry of dereliction” (*Psa.22*); “the vinegar prophecy” (*Psa. 69.21*); “the rent veil” (*Ex 26 31ff &36.35*); “the 3-hour darkness” (*Amos 8.9*) would have impacted a biblical leader of the Jews. Joseph wound the Lord’s body in Sindian cloth and put it in a newly chiselled tomb-as yet unused. It was Friday and the Sabbath light was dawning. This speaks of the sacrifice being slain “between the evenings” – because the last light of Friday 6pm and the first of Saturday as the sun’s final rays withdrew and candles were lighted.

The vigil of the women was unrelenting – they watched where the body was laid and saw the tomb-and returned to prepare aromatic spices and myrrh.

CHAPTER 24

This chapter brings the glorious news of resurrection. Here the last 6 steps(of 72) in the account of the perfect or “proper” man are recorded: Christ in morning dawn confessed by men raised again; Christ drawing nigh marching with us; Christ powerful in word & deed; Christ raised the third day; Christ for whom our hearts burn with love; Christ takes His station in glory.

Christ of the deep dawn Step 66. Perplexed with the river of death we view Christ as the firstborn from the dead with His first fruits †66 1-12

The line of the sunrise measured by the altitude of the sun focuses on that point in the early morning when the sun is fully risen. They were carrying “herbal perfumes” **αρωματα** created by a heating process. The fact that Luke says “they found the tomb” is not emphatic of the “discovery” aspect of **ευρον** but its “scent” aspect, that is, the mellifluous myrrh of Joseph wafted out to meet them though their own jars of spice were sealed. Equally there was neither sight nor “smell” of the dead body of

Christ.(v3). The question “Who rolled away the stone?” has a peculiar relevance because Matthew tells us that “as the day began to shine brightly there was an earthquake and an angel rolled it away and the guards became as dead men”. The earlier reference here together with those of Mark and John speaks of the stone “rolled away of itself”, that is, by an act of God. Its repositioning by the soldiers would have been immediate apart from their being disabled for some considerable time – and it was rolled further back by the angel and guarded against further movement by an angel from heaven. Matthew who speaks of the sovereign kingship of Jesus emphasises this matter. As they were in doubt, perplexed, raising a difficulty (*like people with a river in their path*) **διαπορευω** two men (*raised ones*) asked why they sought the living Lord among the “dead” (*a reference to the gasping corpses or corpse-like figures lying about*). **νεκροι** is used by *Homer* for example in this way. The women reported to the eleven – Mary Magdalene Joanna and Mary of James and others – a big group. Their words were counted as **ληροι** (our “delirious”) or “trifling” and were not believed. Nonetheless Peter ran to survey the scene within the tomb and found the grave clothes “lying where placed” or “lying unattended”.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST ENDS PEEVISH SULLEN WAYS †67 13-20

The 60 stadia walk to Emmaus begins in poor spirits as two people “come to close discussion” or in the vernacular “battle it out” **ομιλεω** concerning all these things. In this engagement of two minds and *their nicety of enquiry* Jesus drew near (*aorist*) and the power of the verb may be understood to mean “never again to walk? Were they discussing the perceived reality that Jesus would never walk or teach any more? Luke observes “Their eyes were being “mastered or seized in battle” so they did not “Know Him again or see His friendly face” (*Sophocles’ usage of one’s own mother*). Here is the fascination and power of Christ and His love besides. David believed God had this power – Psa.119.37. Christ was gradually drawing their souls-and the perceptions of the soul to Himself – challenging angry looks and melancholy.

JESUS PROPHET DYNAMIC IN DEED AND WORD–†68 18-21

The N.T. dawning of world redemption

Cleophas said to Jesus “Are you a unique stranger or alien and don’t know the things that took place in these days? “What things” said Jesus? They said “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth – a man mighty in deed and word-handed over by high-priests & rulers to be condemned to death”. We hoped that He is the one ready to ransom Israel (*from Rome.*) with a prophetic ministry as Israel’s hope the one to bring in the kingdom of God.

JESUS AUTHOR OF NEW LIFE – RISEN AS HE PROMISED †69 22-27

This is the third day drawing out since these things. But certain of our wives rising early abandoned us “*coming into a new state of being*” at the tomb-although they didn’t find the body they came saying they had seen a vision of messengers who said He was alive. Certain of those with us went and found it as the women said. Him they saw not. O foolish and slow in heart to believe all that the prophets have written. Was it not essential that Christ suffer & enter His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he interpreted for them in the writings the things circling around Him (cf. v19)

THE GOD-MAN OPENS THEIR EYES †70 28-31

“In thy light we see light”

And he made as if he would have gone further as they neared the village. They pressed Him saying “*Remain* with us for it is toward evening – and the day is declining.” He went in to *stay* with them. And it happened when He had reclined with them, taking the bread He gave the blessing and breaking it He gave it to them. At that moment they saw his wounded arms †68 18-21 the work of Calvary and their eyes were fully opened. They knew Him again. Why had they not known Him through the washing of the feet? *Luke 24.39!* The reality of the Lord’s plan to go further meant He need not have performed the usual foot-washing.

JESUS THE LIFE-GIVER OF PAST DAYS AND FUTURE TIME †71 32-

The hearts of these men burned with love *καιομενη* as Jesus talked with them. The “interpretation” of the law and the prophets and indeed the writings was clearly choice-Jesus was the messenger of God – but He had been putting the references in the “third” person – cf. v26 “The Christ”. What so deeply intrigued was (a) Jesus “chatting” *λαλεω* this is a word used by *Aristotle* and others in the context of “things personal” where considerable animation and personal involvement exists. The use of *διαανοιγω* in the Greek classics in the clinical connection of “opening a dead body” is of further interest. Christ could show the unseen purpose behind the whole bible-it was more than a “post-mortem” on the scriptures – it was followed by an entire revival of scripture and of preaching – and it gave testimony to the necessity of the sacrifice of Jesus and his subsequent resurrection. A “post-mortem” on scripture led to the immediate revival of interest in it and preaching from the Old Testament as a volume with Christ as its centre. The resurrected Christ revived the Ancient scriptures. They rose in what must have been the 12th hour v33 and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven discontented murmuring or shouting aloud. The word *θροεω* stems from a cognate used generally of women expressing high emotion. The “shouts” or “shrieks” of the occasion were because the Lord had appeared *φαινομαι* was associated with the stars appearing. So we understand that with the first sign of evening Jesus had in that last hour shown his faithfulness to Peter in accordance with the scriptures. The two men from Emmaus both spoke (*the chief notice of their being men*) “exegeting” the things in the way – and how He was made known to them in the “breaking” of the bread.

JESUS “THE MAN AT THE CORE OF HISTORY” †72 36-53

Christ at this very moment chose to enter and take his disciples further – into the New Testament as it were. He stood in their midst speaking quite factually “Peace to you” – because they “were gaping at each other or fluttered *πτοηθεω* thinking they were seeing a Spirit. He then spoke heroically “Why are you a disordered army?” “What are arguments arising in your hearts – i.e. as to whether the accounts of these last two and that of Peter etc. balance?” Obviously they could not put together the facts – maybe even the time was humanly beyond the normal as to distance and travel – but not to the Lord!

This time the hands were shown and of course the Lord had not been received as a guest and traveller – so He showed his feet. He further showed his hands and invited “touch of the finest sort” *ψηλαφεω* that He might prove Himself still absolutely man with flesh and bone.

He demonstrated as in theatre v39

(a) By hands and feet

(b) By demonstrating His sense of smell and obvious continued love of fish – when they hesitated to believe for joy and wonder. “What meat have you to eat?” The use of *βρωσιμος* means **He did not wish a drink but something to demonstrate the use of teeth and his particular relish for fish (cf. the beach breakfast) and they added the “favour” of a honeycomb. He ate them before them. It seems clear that neither here or at the beach breakfast was there grace. The Lord was present in His unquestioned deity.**

(1) Now He says heroically and epically “These same words I spoke to you while I was still with you – precisely “It is essential that all things that have been written in the Law of Moses and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning me have been fulfilled.” Christ here emphasised *ελαλησα οτι* the tense in which He previously spoke.

(2) He further emphasised heroically and classically that it is **so exactly οτι** written in the scriptures that the Christ “must have been raised “and repentance and forgiveness **must have been preached”** in His name and beginning from Jerusalem”

(3) As the one who so precisely fulfilled everything He promised the Holy Spirit to them as witnesses – i.e. ones who remembered His precision in previous briefs and saw it accurately fulfilled. They must await enduement. Thus he led them to Bethany and blessed them – and in that very act He took his station parting after fighting alongside them and bore Himself into the heavens. They worshipped Him here once – for all (*aorist*) and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were daily in the temple praising God in the psalms and giving thanks to God – they never missed a day – praying with gratitude for the death and resurrection of Christ who said “destroy this temple and I will raise it up in three days” So Luke ends by showing us a man in the glory with all the prerogatives of God – and to this he adds his own “Amen”

FINIS

Bob Coffey

L'shuvkha Marya

(To the glory of the Lord)

Aramaic & Greek Bible Companion