

promising that those who believe would ordinarily receive the authority to work signs. Their reception of such authority is assumed in the text. He does not specify that only the special group of Christ-sent apostles would be given the authority to work signs. In fact, the nature of the promise of Joel 2:28 that "all flesh" would receive the "good things" of the Spirit is in contrast to a select group receiving the Spirit as in the Old Testament period. He does not say that there would be restrictions or qualifications for them to receive the Spirit other than "believing" and "obeying" the gospel. He simply states that all those who believe and are baptized would receive the authority to work signs.

Another important point to remember is that the receiving of the authority to work miraculous signs was not given to those who had not believed and obeyed. It was for those who had already believed and obeyed by baptism. In other words, the working of signs was not a condition for salvation, neither was it a signal of salvation. It was a blessing for the purpose of confirming the preached word of God. Those who went forth had already believed and obeyed the gospel by baptism. Those who have not believed and obeyed the gospel, therefore, have no promise of a reception of the Holy Spirit in any manner or through any means. There is no teaching in the entire New Testament that affirms that the giving of the Holy Spirit in any manner was for the purpose of saving individuals (See comments At 10,11).

Consider also that Jesus does not state that the signs would necessarily follow every believer. He indicates that the signs would follow the believers as a group. "Those who believe" indicates that the corporate body of believers (the church) would be followed by the signs wherever they were or wherever they went. Not everyone of the group of believers would be able to work the signs. However, there would be those in every group of believers who could. The signs would follow the believers as long as they were a part of the church group. Again, the book of Acts historically interprets what Jesus meant in this context. Only those on whom the apostles laid their hands could work signs as the apostles (See comments At 8:18). The historical event of what actually happened in the book of Acts explains what Jesus is here mentioning in a brief promise.

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Christ-sent apostles in Acts 2, the apostles then went forth to preach. In verses 19,20 of this context the pronoun "them" finds it antecedent in verse 14. The "them" was the group of the Christ-apostles – Matthias was later

added to their number (At 1:26). The going forth of the apostles took place many days after the commission of verses 15-18 because they waited in Jerusalem until the coming of the Spirit (Lk 24:49). There are fifty days between Passover – when Jesus was crucified – and Pentecost. After being in the tomb for three days, Jesus appeared to them during forty of the fifty days before Pentecost (At 1:3). Therefore, they waited in Jerusalem for about seven days before the Spirit came. **And preached everywhere:** When the apostles went forth from Jerusalem they preached everywhere. It was several years after the events of Acts 2 before the apostles personally went forth from Jerusalem to preach in other areas. The apostles stayed in Jerusalem from ten to fifteen years after Pentecost in order to evangelize those Jews who came to Jerusalem every from all over the world for the annual Passover/Pentecost feasts. Those who were converted during these feasts went to all the world. In this manner the apostles first accomplished their work of this commission to go into all the world.

The Lord working: The Lord is given credit for working the miraculous signs through the medium of those who went forth. This indicates that their work and word originated from God, not man (See Jn 3:2; Hb 2:3,4). As the apostles went forth, they laid hands on "those who believed" in order that they receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (See comments At 8:18; 19:1-6; Rm 1:11). Therefore, "those who believe" were able to work miracles only if they had had hands laid on them by the apostles. This is the historical commentary of what actually happened. Therefore, when the apostles died, there was no one to lay hands on those who believed in order that they carry on with the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. When the last Christ-sent apostle died, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit among those who believed ceased to be passed on to other disciples (See comments 1 Co 13:8-10). When the last person died on whom the last apostle had laid hands, the age for the open manifestation of the work of God through miracles ceased, though God continued to work behind the scenes of natural law in the lives of the disciples, which work continues even to this day. The word of God had been firmly confirmed by miracles. There was no more the need to confirm the word of God in such a manner for those who already believe. God does not have to reconfirm His word today. It is sufficient within itself to produce that faith which is acceptable to Him (Rm 10:17; Hb 11:6). It is for this reason that the word of God is able to supply one unto every good work (2 Tm 3:16,17).

Luke's Historical Defense Of The Christ Luke

Author

The inspired writer of this New Testament document is Luke, the beloved physician (Cl 4:14). He is a Gentile, but was not an eyewitness to the life and death of Jesus. Luke's authorship is established because of the close relationship in writing style and vocabulary between the documents of Luke and Acts. Both books were written to Theophilus. Lk 1:1-4 and At 1:1 are similar in expressing the purpose of writing, and thus, indicate that there was a common writer for both documents. This relationship between the two documents is especially indicated in At 1:1 when the writer of Acts refers to the "former treatise." The former treatise is undoubtedly a reference to the document of Luke.

Another important evidence that establishes the relationship between Luke and Acts is the fact that both books have a common literary structure in the Greek language. The vocabulary and writing

style of both books are similar, and thus, offer strong evidence that both came from the pen of the same writer. In reference to the style and grammar, both are written with a scholarly structure of the Greek language which would only be natural from the hand of a physician.

In order to establish the author of Acts, biblical students identify one of the close companions of Paul on his missionary journeys. This is determined by identifying who is included in the pronouns "we" of what is commonly called the "we sections" of the document of Acts (See At 16:10ff; 20:6; 21:1-18; 27:1ff; see 2 Tm 4:11; Pl 24). These sections identify the author to be with Paul at particular times during his travels. Luke accompanied Paul on many of his journeys. At one time Luke stayed in Philippi in At 16:12,40, and then rejoined Paul in At 20:3-31. He was probably left by Paul to establish the newly converted disciples in Philippi. This may account for the spiritual strength of the Philippian church that is evident in the Philippian letter. Luke is assumed to be this companion of Paul, and thus, this companion and author of Acts is also identified as the author of Luke.

Date

The book was written at approximately the same time as the book of Acts. The document was probably written as a defense document on behalf of Paul who was in Rome to defend himself against false accusations. The first imprisonment of Paul was around A.D. 61-62. When Paul was in Caesarea, Porcius Festus kept Paul in prison for two years. However, Paul had been informed by God that he must bear witness in Rome (At 23:11). In knowing that God wanted him to testify concerning the truth of Christianity before the Roman court, Paul appealed to be tried before Caesar when he was before Festus (At 25:11,12). During the two years Paul and Luke were in Caesarea, and in knowledge that God wanted Christianity to be put on trial before the Roman court in Rome, Luke certainly took the opportunity to do his research in order to pen a document "*to compile an account of those things that have been believed among us*" (1:1). Therefore, during Paul's custody in Palestine, as well as the time before the trial in Rome, the documents of Luke and Acts were in preparation for the trial before Caesar's court. The document of Luke, therefore, was probably written in A.D. 60 or 61.

Theme

Acts was written for the purpose of manifesting the effect of what people believed concerning the man Jesus. Luke precedes the book of Acts by writing a document concerning what caused the effect of the growth of the early church. The document of Luke talks about the Christ of the church, whereas, Acts discusses the effect of the Christ on the lives of men. Luke thus writes with the theme that is expressed in 2:11, "*For to you a Savior is born this day in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.*" Because men believed this about Jesus, the church grew throughout the Roman Empire and the world.

Purpose

Luke's purpose for writing is expressed in 1:3,4. "*... it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you might know the certainty of those things you have been taught.*" Luke writes in order to give an accurate historical account of the teachings and events in the life of Jesus. The underlying reason for this purpose of writing is to affirm the very foundation upon which Christianity is founded. That foundation is that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of God. Since such is true, then those who believed and behaved accordingly, cannot be accused of acting as insurrectionists against Rome. Particularly, the case in point would be that the apostle Paul so behaved because he was driven by the fact that he experienced this Jesus who was more than man. The behavior of Paul, as well as all Christians, can be explained only in the fact that Jesus was the Son of God and was raised from the dead (See introduction to Acts).

To Whom Written

The document was addressed to the "most excellent Theophilus" (1:3; see At 1:1). Luke refers to this Gentile with the complimentary title of "most excellent." Theophilus was no common individual, but one who was evidently a government official. He may have been connected in some way with the defense of Paul in Rome, possibly being even Paul's converted defense advocate who would stand for him before the Roman court. Or, he could have possibly been the representative of the Roman court. Neither possibility is verifiable by the study of either Luke or Acts. We simply speculate such because of the events that were occurring in the lives of Luke and Paul at this time in the history of the church. Whatever the case, Theophilus in some way played a significant role in the lives of both Luke and Paul. For some reason, the Holy Spirit thought it urgent that two inspired New Testament documents be written to this individual. For this reason, it is our contention that Theophilus had some direct bearing on the future of Paul's life since the document of Acts concentrates so heavily on the

activities of Paul and why he behaved as he did. The document of Acts leaves Paul in Rome to stand before Caesar, and thus, both the documents of Luke and Acts as companion volumes, are presented to Theophilus on behalf of Paul.

Literary Style

One of the interesting characteristics of the books of both Luke and Acts is the fact that the writer uses a proficient quality of literary style of writing in the use of the Greek language. For Greek students, these two documents are the most challenging to study in the original language. But what else could we expect from a physician?

In writing to a Gentile, Luke does not quote much from the Old Testament. His emphasis is on the life and teachings of Jesus in order to show that Jesus was not just another Rabbi of Palestine. He was not promoting another invented religion of the many thousands of the Roman Empire. The document is thus written in a literary style that would be presentable to a Roman official as a document to prove that Jesus was the actual Son of God.

Chapter 1

1 ¶ Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of those things that have been believed among us,
2 just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses

and ministers of the word,
3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,
4 that you might know the certainty of those

FORMAL INTRODUCTION

1 **Many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative:** This would not be a reference to the inspired documents of Matthew, Mark or John, though the book of John was probably not written at this time. Luke's reference here is to uninspired records of Jesus' activities and teachings that had been verbally circulated. These records had some inaccuracies concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Some of these accounts had come to the ears of Theophilus, and thus, gave a corrupted account of Jesus' life and teachings. Luke's purpose is to write an inspired record, and thus, accurate account of the life and teachings of Jesus in order to give Theophilus a correct understanding of who Jesus was and what He taught. Luke thus assumes inspiration here by calling on Theophilus to accept what he writes as accurate. The circulation of corrupted stories of Jesus necessitated that the Holy Spirit, through the inspired pen of Luke, write an accurate narrative "of all that Jesus began both to do and teach" (At 1:1). **Most surely believed among us:** One could translate this phrase, "Fully established among us." These are the things that were established among Christians as true concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Therefore, by the time Luke writes this document around A.D. 60, all truth that established the foundation of Christianity had been revealed (See comments Jd 3). Luke's argument here is that Christianity was not a developed religion as myths, fables and legends. The beliefs of Christians exploded out of the life of Jesus in a period of only four to five years. Three of these years were the ministry of Jesus. In another one or two, the gospel of Jesus was going into all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:16; At 6:7; 8:4). Luke's argument is that one can explain this rapid growth of Christianity only in the fact that such was initiated and nurtured by God. **2 Eyewitnesses and ministers of the word:** Luke was not a personal eyewitness of the life and death of Jesus. However, he

had spoken to those who were. These eyewitnesses were possibly Mary, the mother of Jesus who would possibly have been in her 80s at this time. The eyewitnesses here would have been the apostles who were to bear witness of Jesus before the world (At 1:2). **3 Perfect understanding of all things from the very first:** Luke traced the life and work of Jesus from the beginning of Jesus' ministry to the expansion and growth of the church throughout the Roman Empire. Luke here uses the past tense, thus indicating that he had completed all his research by the time he wrote this document. He may have had his research notes in hand and was either in Caesarea, on his way to Rome, or actually in Rome when the Holy Spirit directed him to write an accurate account of all that Jesus began both to do and teach (See 2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:20,21). **Write to you an orderly account:** Reference here is not to a strict chronological order, for in some cases Luke does not seek to be strictly chronological in reference to the life and teachings of Jesus. What is meant is that he is setting forth the events of the life and teachings of Jesus in an accurate form. He wants Theophilus to understand the correct historical account of what actually happened concerning the particular events that took place in Jesus' life, as well as, the correct nature of His teachings. Luke is correcting all the word-of-mouth information that has come to the ears of Theophilus concerning what Jesus did and taught (At 1:1). **Most excellent Theophilus:** See At 1:1. The term "excellent" was often used in Roman society as a respectful address to government officials, and thus, Theophilus was probably a government official (See At 23:26). Add to this the fact that the name "Theophilus" contains the Greek word for "God." Names that included the word for God were given in society to those of social or official standing. The name means, "one who loves God." Theophilus evidently came from a very religious family to receive such a name. **4 You may know the certainty:** Luke

things you have been taught.

5 ¶ There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.

7 And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren. And they were both advanced in years.

8 ¶ Now it came to pass while he was performing the priestly service before God in the order of his division,

9 according to the custom of the priest's office, his turn was to burn incense when he

went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the time of incense.

11 Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not fear, Zacharias, for your prayer has been heard. And your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will call his name John.

14 "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and will drink neither wine nor strong drink. And he will be filled with the Holy

could only affirm this confidence in his writing if he knew that he was writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To say such by writing on his own would only manifest an attitude of arrogance, for he would have been exalting his writing against that of others who would also not have been writing by inspiration. But because this document is an inspired document, Luke affirms inspiration on the basis of the Holy Spirit, not his personal ability to give an accurate account of that which he did not personally experience. **Instructed:** The Greek word here refers to being instructed by word of mouth. The same word is used in Acts 18:25 and Romans 2:18. Theophilus had no other written document concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Luke thus assumes the insufficiency of word-of-mouth communication to give an accurate account of the life and teachings of Jesus. For this reason, the Holy Spirit has inspired the records of the life and teachings of Jesus to be written for all time. The beliefs of Christians, therefore, must be based on the written word of God and not primarily on the proclamations of those who preach the word. Any religion, therefore, that does not focus on a study of the word of God in order to confirm belief, is a religion that will be led astray after the proclamations of those who do not know the Bible (See comments 2 Tm 4:1ff). For this reason, one's belief must be based on the Bible and not on either traditions or feelings. The very fact that the Holy Spirit inspires this document to be written, as well as the rest of the New Testament, is evidence that God intended that the church be based upon the truth of the written word of God (See 2 Tm 3:16,17; 1 Pt 4:11).

THE BIRTH OF JOHN

Luke is unique with reference to the contents of this chapter. He is the only recorder of the life and ministry of Jesus who gives the details of this chapter. **5 Herod:** This is Herod the Great, the son of Antipater. Herod reigned from 40 B.C. to 4 B.C. He was appointed procurator of Judea in 47 B.C. by Julius Caesar. Herod died April 1, 4 B.C. according to our calendar today. Jesus was born sometime within the two years before the death of Herod. Since Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry, and His ministry was

approximately three and a half years in length, He would have been crucified in A.D. 30. According to our calendar today, therefore, the church would have been established in A.D. 30. **The division of Abijah:** This was the eighth group of the twenty-four groups of priests that King David had designated to minister in the tabernacle (2 Ch 24:1-10; 2 Ch 8:14). **Daughters of Aaron:** Elizabeth was a descendant of the Old Testament priestly tribe of Levi. This tribe originated from Levi the son of Jacob through Leah (Gn 29:34). Aaron was of this tribe, and thus, was the father of the Levites whom God separated to be the priestly tribe of Israel (See Nm 36:7,8). Elizabeth was possibly the cousin of Mary who was the mother of Jesus (vs 36). **6** Both Zacharias and Elizabeth were obedient to the commandments of God. **Blameless:** They were such in reference to their duties before God, but not in reference to being without sin (See Rm 3:9,10,23). **7** Zacharias and Elizabeth were old in age. As a Jewish woman, she had suffered one of the greatest embarrassments of the Jewish wife. She could have no children (See vs 25). **8,9 To burn incense:** See Ex 30:6-8. **The temple of the Lord:** Reference here is to the sanctuary of the temple. Twice a day the priests would perform the duty of burning incense in the sanctuary of the temple. **10 The hour of incense:** This was around 3:00 in the afternoon. **11 An angel of the Lord:** Gabriel (vs 19). **Altar of incense:** This was an article of furniture in the temple and was located near the veil which separated the Holy place from the Most Holy place in the temple. **12,13 Fear fell upon him:** Zacharias was a righteous man. He realized that he was in the presence of a heavenly being, and thus, responded with fear because Gabriel was a representative of God (Lk 2:9; compare Jg 13:6,21,22; Dn 10:12,19; Rv 1:17). **Call his name John:** See Lk 1:57,60,63. **14 Many will rejoice:** The emphasis of the Greek text here is that many will leap for joy at this birth. They would do such because of the miraculous events that surrounded John's birth, which events signified that the hope of Israel was about to be realized (Mt 3:1; Lk 1:58). **15 Great in the sight of the Lord:** John would be the greatest of all prophets because He would be the forerunner of the Messiah and Son of God

Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

16 "And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

17 "And he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

18 Then Zacharias said to the angel, "How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years."

19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God. And I have been sent to speak to you and to show you these glad tidings.

20 "And behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words that will be fulfilled in their proper time."

21 ¶ Now the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak to them. And they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

23 ¶ Now it came to pass as soon as the days of his service were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived. And she hid herself five months, saying,

25 "Thus the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked on me, to take away my disgrace among men."

26 ¶ And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name

(Mt 11:11). **Shall drink neither wine nor strong drink:**

John would come in the life-style of a Nazarite, and thus, would conform to the Nazarite laws (Nm 6:1-21). He would refrain from strong drink as a commitment to the sanctity of his calling (Compare Ep 5:18). **Fill with the Holy Spirit:** Though he would work no miraculous wonders throughout his ministry, John would have a miraculous relationship with God from the time of his conception (vs 41). He was the prophet of God to the people for the purpose of preparing the way for the Son of God.

16 John's mission in preparing the way for the Lord would be to call people to repentance (Mt 3:1-12). He would call people to accept the coming of the Lord who would come after him. **17 The spirit and power of Elijah:** John would be the fulfillment of Mt 4:5,6 (Mt 3:2; 17:9-13). He would manifest in his ministry the same zeal and enthusiasm for the Lord as the prophet Elijah. He would emulate the power of righteousness and commitment that God would expect of one totally dedicated to His service. **Turn the hearts of the fathers:** See Mt 4:5,6. John would cause fathers to consider their children and disobedient people to listen to the wisdom of righteous people. He would do this in order to prepare the hearts of people for the coming Son of God. **18** Being in the presence of Gabriel did not seem to be proof enough of what the angel said. Unlike Mary, to whom the angel later appeared, Zacharias sought for verification. As a result, the sign the angel gave was a punishment for Zacharias' doubt in what Gabriel said. **19** Gabriel's first proof was that he was the divine messenger from God. Such should have been proof enough. **Gabriel:** This name means "man of God" Such was this angel for he was a revealer of God's message. **20,21** **You shall be mute:** Verse 62 indicates that Zacharias was either deaf already from old age, or lost his hearing with his speech when Gabriel pronounced this punishment for his lack of faith. Zacharias was evidently greatly shaken by the vision for he tarried a long time in the sanctuary. Those who were waiting for him outside be-

gan to worry because he stayed far beyond the time that was necessary to perform the required duties in the sanctuary. **22 Perceived that he had seen a vision:** It was probably obvious that Zacharias had experienced something in the temple. His appearance and lack of speech indicated that something had occurred. The first indications that something had happened was confirmed when Zacharias had to use hand signs in order to communicate with them because he could neither hear nor speak. Zacharias remained in such a condition until the birth of John. **23 The days of His service:** When Zacharias completed his priestly service according to the time allotted to the division of the priests of Abijah, he and Elizabeth returned home. **24,25 Elizabeth conceived:** Her womb was opened by God in her old age and she was thus able to conceive (See Gn 18:11-15). **Hid herself five months:** She possibly wanted to conceal herself for purposes in order to thank the Lord for what He had done for her in her old age. In her pregnancy, God had taken away that embarrassment that she could not have children (See Gn 30:23).

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

(Mt 1:18 - 2:12)

26 Sixth month: This is the sixth month after Elizabeth conceived (vs 36). **Gabriel:** See verse 19. **Nazareth:** Because Luke is writing to a Gentile, Theophilus, he has to name this city, for it was unknown to his reader. **27 A virgin:** Mary was a young woman who had never had sexual intercourse with a man. She was a virgin in order to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 where Isaiah prophesied that a virgin shall conceive to bring forth the Messiah (See Gn 3:15; Mt 1:23). **Betrothed:** Betrothal was not binding as marriage but was more binding than engagement. Betrothal took place about one year before the couple actually lived together in marriage. It was a binding relationship that was established before the marriage vows were made and the union consummated. **The house of David:** Such is

was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

28 Now the angel came to her, and said, "Hail, *you who are* highly favored. The Lord is with you."

29 And she was troubled at his saying, and pondered in her mind what manner of greeting this was.

30 And the angel said to her, "Do not fear, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son. And you will call His name JESUS.

32 "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David.

33 "And He will reign over the house of

Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

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

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy One who will be born of you will be called the Son of God.

36 "And behold, your cousin Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age. And this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.

37 "For with God nothing will be impossible."

38 And Mary said, "Behold the bondservant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your

stated by Luke to reaffirm that prophecy is here being fulfilled. Both Joseph and Mary (vs 69; 3:23ff) were descendants of King David of Israel. **28,29 Blessed are you among women:** Gabriel announced that Mary was favored among all women because she was chosen by God to bring forth the Son of God into the world (vs 30). At this time, however, Mary did not understand all that was happening, nor did she understand that she was selected by God to bring the Messiah and Son of God into the world. **30 You have found favor with God:** Mary was chosen by God to be the earthly mother of Jesus. She was chosen not because of any special holiness or good works on her part. There were many young women of her time who had the same spiritual qualities. It was only by the grace of God that she was chosen. She did not earn the right to be chosen for this unique work of God to bring the Redeemer into the world. **31 Jesus:** This Jewish name means "salvation." The Greek word is a form of the Old Testament Hebrew name "Joshua." Matthew records the reason for the name in Mt 1:21. **32 Son of the Highest:** That is, He would be the "Son of the Most High" God (See vss 35,76; 2:14; 6:35; 8:28; 19:38; Mk 5:7). Jesus was the Son of God in the sense that He originated from God (Jn 20:30,31). **Throne of His father David:** Jesus was to fulfill the prophecy that was given to David that One would sit on his throne (2 Sm 7:12,13). Such would not be a reign on earth, for the authority of the throne of David is in heaven. Therefore, when Jesus ascended to the throne of God in heaven He would reign from heaven at the right hand of the Father (Ep 1:20-22; Hb 8:1). **33 He will reign:** After the ascension of Jesus, He began His reign (Rm 5:17; Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:8-10). He is now reigning and will reign at the right hand of God until He comes again (1 Co 15:24-28). Reference here is not to a physical reign of Jesus on this earth. Gabriel is speaking of a spiritual reign in the hearts of men, for the kingdom of Jesus is not of this world (Jn 18:36-38). The kingdom is within our hearts as we submit to the reign of Jesus (See comments Mt 6:9,10; Lk 17:20,21). **House of Jacob:** This is the house of Israel, the spiritual Israel of God (Gl 3:7; 6:16). This is the same as the house of

God that was prophesied by Isaiah (Is 2:2,3). The house of God is the church (1 Tm 3:15). Therefore, among all things over which Jesus now reigns, He reigns over the church. **Forever:** See the prophecies of Ps 89:36,37; Dn 2:44; 7:13,14. Jesus would reign "forever" in the sense that His reign would last throughout its intended time of existence. Because the reign was of God, it would certainly come to pass (Mt 19:28; Mk 9:1) and would extend until the time that kingdom reign would be returned to God (1 Co 15:28). **34 Since I do not know a man:** Mary here reaffirms that she is a virgin who has never had sexual intercourse with a man (vs 27; Mt 1:23). Therefore, the conception of Jesus was the miraculous work of God. Jesus would be the "only begotten" Son of God (Jn 1:14-16). One cannot accept Jesus without accepting this fact concerning His conception and birth. **35** Since Jesus was to be the Son of God, then we would expect no other type of conception and birth. If He were just another good teacher of Palestine, then any normal birth would do. However, such was not the case with the conception and birth of the One who was specifically sent into the world. Therefore, any theology of man that does not accept the miraculous conception of Jesus cannot be based on this most fundamental teaching of the New Testament. One cannot accept Jesus as the Son of God without accepting His miraculous conception. **36 Elizabeth ... has also conceived:** God miraculously opened the womb of Elizabeth in order that she conceive through the impregnation of the seed of Zacharias, her husband. However, the Holy Spirit miraculously made it possible for Mary to conceive by the power of God. At the time this announcement is made to Mary, Elizabeth is six months pregnant with John. **37,38 Nothing will be impossible:** The omnipotent power of God in reference to the impotent power of man is here manifested (See Jr 32:17). What man cannot do, God can. And in reference to the happenings of this context, all is outside the control and power of man. It is thus God's working in order to bring into the world the Savior of humanity. **Let it be:** Contrary to the response of Zacharias, Mary exercised great faith in accepting the words of the angel as truth.

word.” And the angel departed from her.

39 ¶ Then Mary arose in those days and went in a hurry into the hill country, into a city of Judah.

40 And she entered into the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

41 Now it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

42 And she spoke out with a loud voice, and said, “Blessed *are* you among women and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb.

43 “And why *has* this *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 “For behold, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 “And blessed *is* she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things that were told her from the Lord.”

46 ¶ Then Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 “and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

48 “For He has regarded the low estate of

His bondservant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed.

49 “For He who is mighty has done to me great things. Holy *is* His name.

50 “And His mercy *is* on those who fear Him from generation to generation.

51 “He has shown strength with His arm. He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 “He has put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 “He has filled the hungry with good things. And the rich, He has sent away empty.

54 “He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of *His* mercy,

55 “as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.”

56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 ¶ Now Elizabeth’s full time came to give birth, and she gave birth to a son.

58 And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy to her. And they rejoiced with her.

59 ¶ Now it came to pass on the eighth day, they came to circumcise the child. And they

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

39,40 Mary left to visit Elizabeth immediately after Gabriel appeared to her. From where she lived in Nazareth (2:4), it was a long journey to the city where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived. The city was probably Juttah (Ja 15:55). Mary remained with Elizabeth approximately three months (vs 56). **41 Leaped:** The Greek word used here was commonly used to refer to the leaping in play as young animals. There was a leaping of the unborn infant which was not like the natural movements of unborn babies. This leaping was meant to signal divine intervention, and thus, the presence of God in the pregnancy. **Fill with the Holy Spirit:** The result of Elizabeth’s being filled with the Holy Spirit resulted in her miraculous declarations of verses 42-45. This being filled by the Holy Spirit in this context refers to being inspired by the Holy Spirit to make declarations concerning the work of God (See At 6:3). **42 Blessed are you:** Verse 28 (Compare Jg 5:24). Mary was especially blessed by God for being chosen to be the woman who would give birth to the Son of God. **43-45 Mother of my Lord:** Mary was the mother of the Lord only in the sense of being the earthly mother through whom Jesus would be born. By inspiration, Elizabeth acknowledged Jesus as the Lord even before He was born. **Blessed is she who believed:** When the message of Gabriel came to Mary, she believed. She did not doubt the work of God in her life. **Told her from the Lord:** In verse 46, as well as here, the word “Lord” refers to God. In verse 43 the word refers to Jesus. Therefore, Jesus, as the manifestation of the Godhead on earth, is here

identified with the one God (See Jn 1:1-4; 10:30). **46-56** In this context, Mary is also filled with the Holy Spirit in order to declare by inspiration the word and work of God. She magnifies God for considering her lowly state. From the time of these events and onward, the world would call her blessed (Lk 11:27). She proclaims that God did not come to the proud of this world with the birth of the Son. He came to the lowly and common people. God has visited his people, Israel, in fulfilling the promise that was made to Abraham concerning his seed (Gn 12:1-3; 17:7,19). Through the One she would bear, God would fulfill what He promised to the fathers (See Gn 3:15; 49:10; Is 7:14; 9:6; Dn 7:13,14).

THE BIRTH OF JOHN

57,58 At the end of nine months after conception, Elizabeth gave birth to John. The neighbors and relatives rejoiced because she had brought forth a son in her old age (Compare Rm 12:15). It was a time of excitement and speculation concerning the hope of Israel. Though the ones who were directly connected with what was happening, they were certainly anxious about the miraculous events that were happening in their lives.

59 The eighth day: See Gn 17:12; Lv 12:3; Ph 3:5. **Circumcise:** Jewish male children were to be circumcised the eighth day after birth (See Gn 17:9-14; Rm 4:11). **By the name of his father:** It was customary in Jewish culture to name the son after the name of the father or an ancestor in the family. **60,61 He shall be called John:** This child would not be named after the father or an ancestor as was the custom of the Jews.

called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 But his mother answered and said, "No. He will be called John."

61 And they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name."

62 And they made signs to his father as to what he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." And they all marveled.

64 Then his mouth was opened immediately and his tongue loosed, and he spoke and praised God.

65 And fear came on all who dwelt around about them. And all these sayings were talked about throughout all the hill country of Judea.

66 And all those who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What manner of child will this be!" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 ¶ Then his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

68 "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people.

69 "And He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David,

70 "as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets who have been since the world began,

71 "that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us,

72 "to perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant,

73 "the oath that He swore to our father Abraham,

74 "to grant us that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear,

75 "in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

76 "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,

77 "to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins,

78 "through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,

79 "to give light to those who sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

80 ¶ And the child grew, and became strong in spirit. And he was in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

He would be named according to the God-given instructions through Gabriel (1:13,63). The name John means "Jehovah's gift." **62,63** *Made signs to his father:* Zacharias could neither speak nor hear because he did not first believe Gabriel concerning the announcement that Elizabeth would conceive (1:18-20). From the time of the announcement by Gabriel until the time of the naming of John on the eighth day after birth, Zacharias could not hear or speak. *His name is John:* Zacharias' faith was restored in what Gabriel had said because he followed the instructions of Gabriel concerning the naming of the child. **64-66** Zacharias' first words were words of praise to God for the great things He was accomplishing through him and Elizabeth. *Fear came on all:* The people responded with reverential awe concerning the miraculous events that surrounded the birth of John from the time Zacharias could not speak until the time when his tongue was loosed to praise God. Everyone recognized that something great was happening, though they did not fully understand. However, they did recognize that God was working in the birth of this child. *The hand of the Lord was with him:* See At 11:21. God providentially cared for John from the time of his conception and birth until it was time for him to be delivered into the hands of Herod for his death.

67-79 *Filled with the Holy Spirit:* The result of this filling with the Holy Spirit was the inspired preaching of Zacharias. These words included giving thanks-

giving to God for raising up One who fulfilled the promises made to the fathers. Included here also is a prophecy of John's relationship to Jesus and a statement of John's glory as the forerunner to the Christ (Mt 3:1). Verses 68,69 discuss Jesus as God's salvation to bring light to those who are walking in darkness. There are more than three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah that are now in the process of being fulfilled (See 1 Pt 1:10-12). *Holy covenant:* See Gn 12:1-3; 22:16; Hb 6:13-15. **80** *The child grew:* John grew spiritually, physically and mentally (See 2:40,52). *Was in the deserts:* John remained in the sparsely inhabited areas or wilderness until he began his public ministry. When God calls great men to lead great movements, He must spiritually and mentally prepare them for the task for which He calls them.

Chapter 2

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

(Mt 1:18 - 2:12)

1 *Caesar Augustus:* This was a name taken by Caesar Octavianus who reigned as Caesar of Rome from 43 B.C. to A.D. 14. Roman Caesars who followed him adopted the name "Caesar" as it embodied the concept of what the Roman head of state should be to promote unity and peace throughout the Roman Empire. Octavianus brought an era of peace to the Empire which

Chapter 2

1 ¶ And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that a census be taken of all the world.

2 This census was first made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

3 And all went to register for the census, every one to his own city.

4 ¶ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

5 to be registered with Mary who was engaged to him, who was with child.

6 ¶ And so it was, that while they were there

the days were completed for her to give birth.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes. And she laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 ¶ Now there were in the same country shepherds dwelling in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

9 Then the angel of the Lord came before them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

10 And the angel said to them, "Do not fear, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy that will be to all the people.

11 "For to you a Savior is born this day in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

established an environment in which Christianity could grow throughout the Roman controlled parts of the world.

All the world: Reference here is to all the territory that was under the domain of the Roman Empire (See Mt 24:14; At 11:28; 19:27; Rm 1:8). **Registered:** Archaeologists have recovered the actual documents of censuses that were taken by the Roman government every fourteen years from A.D. 20 to A.D. 270 (See At 5:37).

2 Quirinius was governing Syria: This enrollment of Roman inhabitants was taken while Quirinius was governor between 10 B.C. and 7 B.C. Archaeological inscriptions prove that Quirinius also ruled as governor again in A.D. 6. **3,4 His own city:** The Jews had to be enrolled at the city where their ancestral records were kept. For Joseph and Mary, this meant the city of Bethlehem which was referred to as the city of David (Gn 35:16-20; Jg 17:9; 19:1; 1 Sm 16:1; 17:12). Both Joseph and Mary were of the lineage of David, and thus, both had to be enrolled. The long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, while Mary was pregnant, does manifest their submission to the law of the government. **5 Betrothed wife:** The relationship between Mary and Joseph is still at this time not a fully consummated marriage under Jewish law. Jewish law considered the betrothal a legal binding to the point that the woman was considered a wife, but it was not a marriage that had been fully consummated. Therefore, Mary is considered to be Joseph's wife though they had not been formally married according to Jewish law. **6 Days were completed for her to be delivered:** Her nine month pregnancy had come to an end while they were in Bethlehem. Such means that she made the journey of over one hundred kilometers from Nazareth to Bethlehem while she was probably in her eighth month of pregnancy. **7 Her firstborn son:** Luke's record of Jesus being her firstborn proves that there were other children to be born to Mary and Joseph (See Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). If Mary had no other children, then Luke would have used the Greek word *monogene* which means "only son." **Swaddling cloths:** These were the customary strips of cloth that were wrapped around newly born babies. Luke gives us these details in order to affirm that there were eyewitnesses to the birth who gave these details. **Manger:** Jesus was laid on the straw of a man-

ger where the animals fed. In thirty years, the world would be eating from His teaching that would preserve society for centuries to come (See Jn 6:47-51). **No room in the inn:** It was not that they could not afford a room in the inn. Because of the masses of people coming to the small village of Bethlehem to be enrolled, there was simply no room left. Unfortunately, today there is still no room in some people's hearts for Jesus to be born.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

8,9 Shepherds living out in the fields: There were shepherds in the area near Bethlehem who lived in the countryside in order to watch their flocks. When the angel appeared to them, they were overcome with great fear because of the glory of the Lord (See Ex 20:19; 24:16; 33:20; Nm 14:10; Jg 13:22; Mt 17:5). **10 Good tidings of great joy:** No greater announcement has been made in the history of the world. The angel is here announcing to the shepherds that which would be proclaimed to the world. The coming of the Savior of the world would be good tidings of great joy to all those who realize that they are captives of sin. They realize that they are in sin because they know that all have sinned (Rm 6:9,10,23). They realize that man cannot so live according to law in order to live without sin. They realize that there is no atonement in good works. The manifestation of the grace of God through Jesus, therefore, was the salvation for which men had been waiting since the sin of Adam. **11 A savior who is Christ the Lord:** See Is 9:6; Jn 1:29. The Christ (Hebrew, "Messiah") is the anointed One of God who has come to fulfill the eternal purpose of God. That purpose was to make it possible for men to come into an eternal covenant relationship with God (See Ps 2:2; Dn 9:24,25; Jn 1:41; 4:25). He would be Lord of heaven and earth. All things would be brought under His control (See At 2:36,37; 11:16; 12:11,17; Ep 1:20-22; 1 Pt 3:22). **12 The sign:** The sign was how they found the baby Jesus. They found Him wrapped in birth clothes and lying in a manger in Bethlehem according to what they had been told. **13,14** The angels came from heaven and appeared before the shepherds (Compare Ps 103:21; Dn 7:10). This fantastic sight of heavenly angels singing praises to God was certainly an astonishing sight. The birth of the Son was

12 “And this *will be* a sign to you: You will find the babe wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger.”

13 Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace toward men of good will!”

15 And it came to pass when the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass that the Lord has made known to us.”

16 ¶ So they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 Now when they had seen *this*, they made known abroad the saying that was told them concerning this child.

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

19 But Mary kept all these things, pondering *them* in her heart.

20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told to them.

21 ¶ Now when eight days were completed for His circumcision, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

22 ¶ And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord

23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “*Every male that opens the womb will be called holy to the Lord*”),

24 and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, “*A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*”

25 ¶ And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon. And this man

God's good will to man, for Jesus was the manifestation of the grace of God to all men (Ti 2:11). **15 Let us now go to Bethlehem:** In leaving their flocks, the shepherds made haste to go to Bethlehem to see the newly born infant. **16,17 Made widely known:** After witnessing Jesus in the manger as the angels had revealed, the shepherds went forth and proclaimed to all they met what they had seen. These were the first evangelists of God going forth to proclaim the good news of the coming of the Son of God. **18** As a result of the shepherds' proclamations, the people wondered at the events that surrounded the birth of Jesus. They were certainly puzzled that the Messiah would be born in such a humble environment. Jesus came to minister to the common people of the world, and thus, had a birth that was less than that of common people. **19,20 Mary ... pondered them:** Mary did not understand all that was happening. She, as well as others who had experienced all the miraculous events surrounding the birth of Jesus, did not understand that the events surrounding Jesus' birth were events that pointed to Him as the Messiah (See comments 1 Pt 1:10-12). The mystery of God's plan for man's sins through Jesus had not yet been made known. Luke here records that later Mary put these things together, possibly during the ministry of Jesus thirty years from this time of His birth. It would be then that she would deduct that truly she had given birth to the Savior of the world. **They had heard:** The shepherds had heard the angels. However, they were probably informed by Mary and Joseph concerning all the miraculous events that surrounded the conception of both John and Jesus. Christianity is built upon the foundation of the sonship of Jesus. Luke's evidence for the sonship of Jesus begins with the events that surrounded the conception and birth of both Jesus and John. He testifies to the fact that their conceptions and births were not obscure events that took place without public notice. Neither did Jesus

or John just arise out of society as good teachers and invent another religion of the Roman Empire. Miraculous events surrounded both the conception and birth of both men. Miraculous events surrounded their ministries. Such events were witnessed by thousands of people. As a result of their work, thousands would believe. This is Luke's apologetical evidence that the beginning of Christianity was not as those religions of men that develop out of myths, fables, and legends. The beginning of Christianity occurred within the ministry of one person for a period of three years. **21 Eight days were completed:** The Jews circumcised all male babies on the eighth day after birth (Lv 12:3). This was the day for the formal naming of children, though Jesus had been named at the time of conception (1:31; Mt 1:21).

PRESENTATION AT THE TEMPLE

22 Days of her purification: A mother that had given birth was unclean for forty days after the birth of a son and eighty days after the birth of a daughter (See Ex 13:2; Lv 12:2-8; Nm 8:16; 18:15). Mary and Joseph observed all legal requirements in reference to the Old Testament law. **Law of Moses:** Reference here is to the Old Testament law that is also referred to as the “law of the Lord” (See vs 23), or simply “the law” (Ne 8:1,3,7,8,14,18; Mk 7:10). **23,24 Every male:** Ex 13:2,13,15. **A pair of turtledoves:** The law required the offering of a lamb. However, in case of poverty, a pigeon or turtledove could be offered (Lv 12:2,8). What is implied in their offering, therefore, is that they were poor people.

25 Consolation of Israel: Simeon was looking for the Messiah who would come to deliver Israel (Mk 15:43). The Messiah was thus referred to as the “hope of Israel” (See At 13:32-34; 26:6-8; 28:20). **Holy Spirit was upon him:** This statement affirms that Simeon was miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit. **26** Through

was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him.

26 Now it was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 He then came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the law,

28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God, and said,

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your bondservant depart in peace, according to Your word.

30 "For my eyes have seen Your salvation

31 "that you have prepared before the face of all peoples,

32 a light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel."

33 ¶ Now His father and mother marveled at those things that were spoken about Him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that will be spoken against,

35 "so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will also pierce through your own soul."

36 ¶ Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age and had lived with a husband seven years from her marriage.

37 And she *was* a widow of about eighty-four years. She did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And coming in that instant she *began* giving thanks to God, and spoke of Him to all

the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God had promised Simeon that he would not die until he saw the Anointed One from God. Such was promised to him in order that others through him might know that the Consolation of Israel was near. **27** Simeon was directed by the Spirit to the temple on this particular occasion (Mt 4:1). **The parents:** The Holy Spirit had caused the conception of Jesus, but Joseph and Mary were the legal parents of Jesus. **28-32** The miraculous events surrounding the conception and birth of Jesus had been revealed to Simeon. **Your salvation:** It would be through Jesus that the redemption of Israel and all mankind would come. **Before the face of all peoples:** Jesus would not only be the salvation to Israel, but to all people (Mk 16:15,16). The Gentiles would be touched by the light of the revelation of God through Jesus (Is 9:2; 42:6; Jn 8:12). **33** Joseph and Mary were still at this time unaware of the significance of what the child will be. The words of Simeon were a revelation to them concerning what the baby Jesus would be to all men. **34 Fall and rising of many in Israel:** Because of what Jesus would preach, many would stumble because of pride and religious arrogance (See Is 8:14; Mt 21:42-43; At 4:11; Rm 9:33; 1 Co 1:23; 1 Pt 2:7,8). The pride of religious leaders would hinder them from believing in Jesus. They would cling to their religious positions and traditions instead of submitting to Jesus. On the other hand, others would humble themselves to the teaching of Jesus (Rm 6:4,9; Ep 2:6). They would humble themselves because they were not trapped in the religious pride of the religious leadership of Israel. **A sign:** The life and teachings of Jesus would be the opportunity for people to either obey or disobey God. Many religious people would speak against Him because He would not fit into their system of traditional religion (See comments Mk 7:1-9). **35 A sword will pierce:** Mary, the mother of Jesus, would witness the rejection of Jesus by many people. She would witness His crucifixion as the result of religious leaders who led people astray into deceptive religious thinking (Ps 42:10). **The thoughts of many**

hearts may be revealed: Jesus would be the occasion where people's willingness to follow Him would be manifested. Those who do not accept Jesus will have the hardness of their hearts revealed to all. Those who accept Him will have their humble hearts revealed. One's reaction for or against Jesus would thus be the judgment one brings on himself.

36 Anna ... of the tribe of Asher: Asher was one of the tribes of the northern ten tribes of Israel that were taken into Assyrian captivity in 721/722 B.C. (Ja 19:24). A remnant of these tribes returned from captivity when Cyrus released those captives who wanted to return to their homelands in 536 B.C. Therefore, a remnant of Asher, as well as a remnant of all twelve tribes of Israel, were now in Palestine for the establishment of the promised new covenant. It was the new covenant that God was about to make with the new Israel of God that would include all nations (See Jr 31:31-34). It was this remnant that was fasting and praying for the coming of the Messiah of Israel. **Lived with a husband:** Anna had married and lived with her husband for seven years before he died. At the time of the events recorded here, she was an older woman who had given herself to the ministry of the Lord in the temple. **37** Depending on the translation of this verse, Anna was either a widow unto her age of eighty-four, or she had been a widow for eighty-four years, thus making her at this time ninety-one years old. **Served God with fastings and prayers:** Anna had given herself to the ministry of the Lord. Her service to God was in fasting and prayer. Thus, fasting is a service to God, as well as, prayer (See Mt 4:1,2; 6:16-18; 9:14,15; 15:32; At 13:1-3). Older brothers and sisters who cannot give themselves to the physical demands of some ministries, can at least give themselves to the ministry of fasting and prayer. These are services that older brothers and sisters should be rendering on behalf of the saints. **38 Redemption in Jerusalem:** See vs 25; At 28:20. Faithful Jews came to Jerusalem every year for Passover and Pentecost. When they came there was much discussion concerning the com-

those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

39 ¶ Now when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

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

41 ¶ Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year for the Feast of the Passover.

42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

43 Now when they were returning after they had fulfilled the days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents did not know *it*.

44 But supposing Him to be in the company, they went a day's journey, and *began* looking for Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances.

45 And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

46 ¶ Now it came to pass after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions.

47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

48 Now when they saw Him, they were amazed. And His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, your father and I have anxiously sought You."

49 Then He said to them, "Why is it that you

ing of the Messiah. They came looking for the redemption of Israel. It was a common belief that God would bring forth the Messiah in Jerusalem since this city was the center of Jewish religion.

39,40 Immediately after performing all things that were required by the law, it may have been that Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem which is about ten kilometers south of Jerusalem. While in Bethlehem, they may have been visited by the Magi from the East (Mt 2:1-12). After the brief visit of the Magi, Joseph and Mary then fled into Egypt (Mt 2:13-18). After Herod the Great died in 4 B.C., they then returned to their home in Nazareth of Galilee (Mt 2:19-23). **Filled with wisdom:** The Greek text refers to Jesus becoming full of wisdom (See 1:80; 2:52). He grew up as the son of a carpenter. The favor of God was upon Him throughout His childhood. There is no inspired record of Jesus' childhood except for the mention of His trip to Jerusalem with His parents at the age of twelve in the following verses. Neither are there any records that He worked any miracles as a youth. The first miracle He worked was in Cana of Galilee at the beginning of His ministry (See comments Jn 2:1ff).

JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM

41,42 Feast of the Passover: All Jewish males over the age of twelve were required to attend the feast of Passover (See Ex 12:1-48; Dt 16:1,16). Jesus' earthly parents came every year to this feast. **When He was twelve years old:** This may have been the first time that Jesus went on this journey. **Custom of the feast:** See Ex 23:14,15. **43 Finished the days:** The Passover took one day and the feast of Unleavened Bread, which immediately followed, took seven days. The terms Passover and Unleavened Bread are often used interchangeably to refer to the events of both feasts as one (Ex 12:15,17; 23:15; Lv 23:4-8). Pentecost came fifty days later on the day after seven weeks from the Passover. **44,45 Supposing Him to have been in the company:** The extended family and close friends from a particular region usually made the long trip together to attend these feasts. There would have been a great multitude going from Nazareth. In such cultural envi-

ronments, all the families cared for the children of every individual family. In this situation, Joseph and Mary were supposing that someone had watched over their children. However, there was a miscommunication somewhere among the family members, and consequently, Jesus was left in Jerusalem. We must not assume that Joseph and Mary were delinquent in their parental duties. It was Jesus' plan to stay behind. He wanted to be about His Father's business. **46 After three days they found Him:** This would include the one day journey from Jerusalem, one day return to Jerusalem, and then, one day searching in the city for him. **Sitting in the midst of the teachers:** Jesus was where there would be discussion concerning the Bible. It was the work of the Rabbis (teachers) of Israel to expound on the Old Testament and to give their interpretations of the law. **Listening ... asking:** Such is the nature of those who are interested in religious matters. It is the nature of God's people to be in the presence of those who want to study the Bible. They listen and ask in order to learn from others concerning their understanding of God's word. **47 All who heard:** Jesus was not only listening and asking questions, He was also stating what was truth (See Mt 7:28; 13:54; 22:33). At the age of twelve, He was knowledgeable enough of the Old Testament to intelligently discuss it with the most educated scholars of Israel. **48 They were amazed:** What Jesus did on this occasion was completely out of character with His normal behavior as an obedient child. Mary could not understand why He had done such for she at this time did not know the extent of Jesus' purpose for coming into the world. **Why have you done this:** Their amazement is linked to the fact that Jesus willingly stayed behind in order to encounter the Rabbis after everyone had left Jerusalem following the feasts. It was His chance to have a private conversation with the Rabbis. The Greek text here emphasizes the fact that Mary gave Jesus a stern rebuke. **49** This brief statement manifests that Jesus knew in His youth that He must be about the work for which He came into the world. **Must be about My Father's business:** It was necessary that He do the work of the Father (Jn 9:4). This statement was made before the beginning of His official ministry

were looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

50 And they did not understand the saying that He spoke to them.

51 ¶ And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. But His mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 Now Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Chapter 3

1 ¶ Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being gover-

nor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country around the Jordan, preaching the immersion of repentance for the remission of sins,

4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying, "*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of*

which began when He was about thirty years old. In a generic sense, therefore, He, as well as all sons of God, must be about their Father's business. In this event Jesus was doing the Father's business. When He reached the age of thirty, He would do His business in reference to accomplishing the scheme of redemption through the cross. **50 They did not understand:** The mission and work of Jesus was not known to Joseph and Mary when He was a youth (Jn 7:15,46). They knew something was very unusual about Him, but they did not know that He was the One sent into the world for the redemption of mankind. For twelve years no unusual happenings had occurred in Jesus' life, and thus, the miraculous events that surrounded His birth may have lost their original impact on their minds (See 1:32,35; Mt 1:20). The time would come, however, when they would understand the significance of what happened on this occasion. **51,52 Subject to them:** The time would come when all would be made subject to Him (Ph 2:8-11; 1 Pt 3:22). But in His youth, Jesus was subject to His earthly parents in all things (See Ep 6:1,2). **Jesus increased in wisdom and stature:** It would be eighteen years before the beginning of His earthly ministry. During this time, He increased in wisdom and bodily stature. The fact that the Holy Spirit mentions the physical growth of Jesus emphasizes the fact that Jesus, as a carpenter's son, grew to be a physically stout person. We do not know the extent of Jesus' omniscience while He was in His youth. However, we would assume that His wisdom would guard His conduct in order to behave in a subjective manner as the son of Mary and Joseph.

Chapter 3

JOHN THE BAPTIST (Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8)

1 Tiberius Caesar: Tiberius was the stepson of Augustus Caesar. The provincial affairs of Rome were under Tiberius' control from A.D. 11, though he became Caesar of Rome only on September 17, A.D.14, and subsequently, ruled for the next 23 years. It was near this time that Jesus began His three year ministry toward the cross (vs 23). **Pontius Pilate:** Pilate became governor of Judea in A.D. 26 and continued until A.D. 36. **Herod:** Herod Antipas ruled from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D. His nephew denounced him to Caesar Gaius to have schemed a plot against Rome. He was subsequently deposed to exile. Herod Antipas was the younger son

of Herod the Great through Malthace and inherited the Galilean and Peraean portions of his father's kingdom (See 13:31,32; 23:7ff; Mk 6:14-28). **Philip:** He was the son of Herod the Great through Cleopatra of Jerusalem. **Lysanias:** It is not exactly known when Lysanias ruled in Abilene. **2 Annas:** He was appointed high priest by Quirinius around A.D. 6. However, he was deposed by Valerius in A.D. 15, though the Jews continued to recognize him as high priest. They continued to recognize him as such because he was probably the head of a family of priests. **Caiaphas:** He was named high priest around A.D. 18 but was deposed in A.D. 36. From these dates it is probable that Jesus was baptized and began His ministry in A.D. 26. Since He was about thirty years old when He began His ministry, this would mean that the crucifixion would have been during the Passover in April of A.D. 30 according to our calendar today. **John ... in the wilderness:** John was already in the wilderness when the word of God came to him to preach (1:13). **3 Immersion of repentance for the remission of sins:** According to the word of God, John preached repentance and baptism. By their immersion, repentant individuals were professing to John and others their submission to God. In doing such they were being prepared to receive the coming kingdom reign of Jesus (Jn 1:23,24). The Greek phrase here literally means, "immersion of repentance for remission of sins." The penitent believer was immersed in much water (Jn 3:23). John's immersion was a command of God (7:30; Mt 21:23-27), and thus, for remission of sins (1:76,77; Mk 1:4). The immersion in the name of Jesus today is also for remission of sins (At 2:38; 22:16). However, John's immersion was unto repentance, whereas, the immersion in the name of Jesus that was enacted on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was because of repentance. Repentance and immersion were the conditions upon which one would receive the remissions of sins (At 2:38). John's immersion was in preparation for the coming immersion in the name of Jesus in obedience to the gospel (See comments Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 15:1-5). **4-9** John came to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah of Israel. Multitudes went out from Jerusalem in order to hear his preaching. The religious leaders of Jerusalem also went out to John. It is here that John's direct approach to their hypocritical religiosity is proclaimed. It may be here that John is identifying the nature of these religious leaders for the sake of those who heard. He at least makes them see themselves in their

the Lord, make His paths straight.

5 *Every valley will be filled and every mountain and hill will be brought low. And the crooked will be made straight and the rough ways will be made smooth.*

6 *And all flesh will see the salvation of God.”*

7 ¶ Then he said to the multitude that came out to be immersed by him, “O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

8 “Therefore, bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

9 “And indeed the ax is now laid at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire.”

10 ¶ And the people asked him, saying, “What will we do then?”

11 He answered and said to them, “He who has two coats, let him give to him who has none. And he who has food, let him do likewise.”

12 Then the tax collectors came also to be immersed, and said to him, “Master, what will we do?”

13 And he said to them, “Collect no more than that which is appointed you.”

14 And the soldiers likewise asked of him, saying, “And what will we do?” And he said

to them, “Do not intimidate anyone, nor accuse *any* falsely. And be content with your wages.”

15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all men wondered in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ,

16 John answered, saying to them all, “I indeed immerse you with water. But One mightier than I is coming, the straps of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie. He will immerse you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

17 “His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean His threshing floor. And He will gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.”

18 And he preached many other things in his exhortation to the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him for Herodias his brother Philip’s wife, and for all the evils that Herod had done,

20 added also this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

21 ¶ Now when all the people were immersed, it came to pass that Jesus also was immersed. And while praying, the heaven was opened.

22 And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form like a dove upon Him. And a voice came from heaven, which said, “You are My beloved Son. In You I am well-pleased.”

23 ¶ Now when He began *His ministry*, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being

religion which they have created after their own desires (See comments Mt 3:1-10; compare Is 40:3-5; 52:10).

10,11 *What shall we do:* John’s call for fruit worthy of repentance was that people accept the life of sharing (See 2 Co 8:14; Is 58:7). When one shares, he accepts a community life-style that is considerate of others. Selfish people have a hard time accepting these conditions for becoming subjects of the kingdom. For this reason, the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, found it hard to accept the teachings of Jesus (See 16:14).

12,13 Publicans, or tax collectors in Palestine, were Jews that were commissioned by Rome to collect taxes (7:29). They were allowed a percentage of what they collected. John here calls on these tax collectors (publicans) to be just and fair in their dealings (19:8).

14 John commands soldiers not to leave their responsibilities to which they have been assigned. They were not to abuse their power as soldiers or extort money from people by imposing their position on others. The directions that John gives in verses 10-14 focuses on one being considerate of others by doing that which is good. John’s teachings which he received from God, as well as what Jesus later taught, encouraged those

behavioral practices that uplift society. God’s law promotes right social conduct on the basis that we love our neighbor as ourselves (See comments Mt 22:36-40; Gl 5:13,14,22,23). **15-18** See comments Mt 3:11,12. **19,20** The Jewish historian, Josephus, recorded that Herod imprisoned John because he was afraid that John would stir up the people in rebellion against his reign. Actually, the reason why Herod imprisoned John was because John said that it was not right for Herod to have Herodias as his wife (Mk 6:17). **21,22** See comments Mt 3:13-17.

BEGINNING OF JESUS’ MINISTRY

(Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11)

23 *As was supposed:* Luke wants us to know that those in the community of Galilee and Palestine who did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God considered Jesus simply to be the son of a carpenter. **24-38** Matthew gives the genealogy of Jesus according to Joseph’s lineage which goes back to David (See comments Mt 1:1-17). Luke’s account of the genealogy follows Mary’s lineage back to David, and then to Adam. One could suppose that the reason for giving Mary’s

as was supposed, the son of Joseph, *the son of Heli,*

24 *the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,*

25 *the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Hesli, the son of Naggai,*

26 *the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,*

27 *the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,*

28 *the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,*

29 *the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,*

30 *the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonan, the son of Eliakim,*

31 *the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,*

32 *the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,*

33 *the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,*

34 *the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,*

35 *the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son*

of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, 36 the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,

37 *the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan,*

38 *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

Chapter 4

1 ¶ And Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness

2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing. Now when they were ended, He was hungry.

3 Then the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, '*Man will not live by bread alone.*'"

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, "All this dominion I will give You and its glory; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I desire.

7 "Therefore, if You will worship me, all will be Yours."

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, '*You will worship the Lord your God, and Him only will you serve.*'"

9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said

lineage from the beginning of mankind is that we might conclude that Jesus was the fulfillment of the promise of the seed that was made in Genesis 3:15. The Seed was Jesus who would crush the head of Satan (See comments Gl 3:15-18). Satan was crushed when Jesus went to the cross, and three days later, was victorious over death by His resurrection. Thus, the spiritual death problem of people that results from sin and separation from God (Is 59:1,2; Rm 3:9,10,23; 6:23) was answered in the cross (Rm 5:12; 1 Co 15:3). The physical death problem that Adam introduced into the world was answered by the resurrection of Jesus. But as in Adam all will die, so in Christ will all be made alive (1 Co 15:4,20-22; Hb 2:14). The good news of Jesus (the gospel) is that He came to answer, not only our spiritual death problem, but also the problem that it is appointed unto all men that they should physically die (Hb 9:27).

Chapter 4

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

(Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12,13)

1-13 See comments Mt 4:1-11. It must be noted that neither Matthew nor Luke recorded the exact chronological order of the temptations. The emphasis of neither writer concerning the temptations is on the order, but on the fact and nature of the temptations. Jesus was tempted and He was tempted in all ways as we are tempted. He was tempted after the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and pride of life (1 Jn 2:15,16). It was Satan's purpose through all these temptations to turn Jesus from His destiny. **Until an opportune time:** Throughout His ministry, Jesus was tempted by Satan to leave the purpose for which He came into the world, that is, to accomplish the redemption of mankind (Hb

to Him, "If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down from here.

10 "For it is written, '*He will give His angels charge over You, to guard You,*'

11 "and, '*In their hands they will bear You up, lest at any time You dash Your foot against a stone.*'"

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, '*You will not tempt the Lord your God.*'"

13 ¶ Now when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. And His fame went throughout all the surrounding region.

15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

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

17 Then there was handed to Him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written,

18 "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed,*

19 *to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*"

20 Then He rolled up the scroll and gave it again to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all those who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

21 And He began to say to them, "This day this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

22 And all spoke well of Him and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's

4:15). He was later discouraged by Peter to go to Jerusalem. However, at that time Jesus knew that it was Satan working through Peter to turn Him again from His destiny of the cross (Mt 16:23). **14,15 Power of the Spirit:** See comments Mt 4:12-17. Jesus was now under the full power of the Holy Spirit to carry out His ministry. In His incarnation He had given up an equality with God (Ph 2:6-8). It was now the Spirit's working through Him to accomplish the miraculous works of His ministry in order to fulfill the purpose of His coming into the world. The need of the Spirit to work through Him explains the extent of the incarnation. Jesus truly became as man in order to identify with those whom He sought to deliver from the confines of humanity (See Ph 2:5-11).

REJECTION IN NAZARETH

16 This rejection of Jesus in Nazareth took place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The rejection of Matthew 13:54-58 took place at the close of His ministry. The residents of Nazareth had two chances to hear Jesus, but they would not listen on either occasion. **As His custom was:** As was the custom of the Jews, Jesus went to the synagogue for the reading of the Old Testament law. However, the Sabbath assembly in the synagogue was not a part of the Old Testament law. The synagogue came into existence in Palestine after the Jews' release from Babylonian captivity 536 B.C. Keep in mind also that not all Jews in a community meet in the synagogue simply because the synagogues were not large structures. The synagogue was a Jews cultural center where reading of the law could be heard. **Stood up to read:** The Jews' custom was that the Old Testament law be read only while the reader stood. **17-19 Opened the book:** This was not the format of books that we have today. It was a scroll or roll of paper or

parchment on which the law was written. Jesus unrolled the scroll and read from the law. **The prophet Isaiah:** This scroll was twenty-three feet long, which is determined by the length of the Isaiah Scroll that was discovered in the Dead Sea area in 1947. There are more prophecies concerning Christ in Isaiah than any other prophet (See in order Is 61:1,2; 49:8,9; 58:6). **20 Closed the book:** He rolled up the scroll. **Eyes of all ... were fixed on Him:** Everyone knew who Jesus was. He had grown up in the town of Nazareth. They had heard of the miraculous happenings that surrounded His conception and birth. They knew of Him as a wise and obedient child of Mary and Joseph. With intense interest, they are here expecting something of Him at this time because the age of thirty was the accepted age that one began any ministry among the Jews. They possibly expected Him to make some formal announcement of His intentions concerning His life. He did, but what they heard was not what they expected. He claimed to be the specific fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Messiah. **21 Scripture is fulfilled:** The Jews knew that the scripture from which Jesus quoted referred to the Messiah. When Jesus made this statement, they knew that He was making application of the Scripture to Himself. Therefore, this would be the announcement and beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry and work toward the cross in order to bring about what Isaiah had prophesied. **22** It was difficult for them to accept such words from the mouth of a carpenter's son (Jn 6:42). They could accept Him as a good teacher, but not as the Messiah of Israel. Jesus spoke in a manner that was appealing. The eloquence of His speech commanded attention. **23,24** They had heard of the healing of the nobleman's son that Jesus did in Capernaum a few days earlier (Mt 4:13; Jn 4:46-54). They asked Him for such a miracle in Nazareth in order

son?"

23 Then He said to them, "You will surely say to Me this proverb, 'Physician, heal Yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.'"

24 And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 "But I tell you a truth. Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when a great famine was throughout all the land.

26 "But to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, a city of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

27 "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet. And none of them was cleansed, except Naaman the Syrian."

28 Now all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath.

29 And they rose up and cast Him out of the city. And they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, so that they

might cast Him down the cliff.

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

31 ¶ Then He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He taught them on the Sabbath.

32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.

33 Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. And he cried out with a loud voice,

34 saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!"

35 Then Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold your peace and come out of him." And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, he came out of him and did not hurt him.

36 Now they were all amazed, and spoke among themselves, saying, "What word is this! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out."

that the hearsay concerning the other miracles of Jesus be confirmed in His own country. **No prophet is accepted in his own country:** Those of one's own home town are slow to accept the greatness of one who is from that town (See Mt 13:57; Jn 4:44). **25,26 Great famine:** See 1 Kg 17,18; Js 5:17. The widow of Zarephath was a Gentile, and it was to this woman alone that Elijah, the prophet of God, was sent. God sent Elijah to her because she accepted him. Jesus teaches that the messengers of God are sent to those who accept them. God's evangelists, therefore, should go to those who are receptive. **27 None ... cleansed except Naaman:** Naaman was a Gentile. It was by God's grace that he was cleansed while many Israelites at the time who were lepers remained unclean (2 Kg 5:1-14). His faith led him to Elisha, whereas those who took the prophet for granted did not seek him. Those who are accustomed to the prophets of God are often those who reject what they say. In this case, Jesus is saying that those who were accustomed to Him in Nazareth would reject Him, though others throughout the world would receive Him. **28-30 Filled with wrath:** These Jews of Jesus' home town were greatly prejudiced against the Gentiles. When Jesus said that the Gentiles would receive the prophets of God before the Jews would, such greatly angered the Jews. They could not accept the fact that others would be more righteous than they. Their religious prejudices were stirred to the point of an attempted murder of Jesus (See Jn 8:37; 10:31). **Passing through the midst of them:** The multitude may have become so confused in what they were about to do that Jesus simply went through them and on His way (Compare Jn 8:59; 10:39; 18:6). Whatever the case, Jesus simply passed through them on His way to more receptive people.

HEALING A DEMONIAIC

(Mk 1:21-28)

31,32 Luke explains to Theophilus, his Gentile reader, the location of Capernaum in reference to Nazareth because Theophilus is unfamiliar with the area of Palestine (See Mt 4:13; 11:23; Jn 4:46). **Astonished at His teaching:** The authority by which Jesus taught astonished the people because He did not teach as the Rabbis of Israel who resorted to the traditional interpretations of the fathers (See Mt 7:28,29). Jesus' emphasis was not on teaching the traditions of the fathers as did the Pharisees and scribes, but on the originality of the word that had been given directly to Him by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. **33 Spirit of an unclean demon:** See comments Mt 4:24 (Mk 1:23). **34,35 To destroy us:** Satan and all his angels know their destiny. It is destruction in a fiery hell (Mt 25:41). All those who would align themselves with the work of Satan, therefore, have assigned to themselves the same destiny. **The Holy One of God:** Even the demons knew who Jesus was. They asked for no mercy, nor did they seek to bargain with Him. They simply recognized that Jesus had been given authority over all things, including them and their destiny (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; 17:2; see 1 Pt 3:22). **Be quiet:** The Greek word here literally means "to be muzzled." Jesus controlled their speech and would not let them proclaim who He was. **Did not hurt him:** The demons convulsed the man, but they did not physically hurt him. **36,37 He commands the unclean spirits:** God allowed demons to possess people in the first century for this very reason. Such offered the opportunity to prove that Jesus had absolute authority over all the forces of darkness (See Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; 17:2). There was nothing outside the control of Jesus during His earthly ministry. He was of

37 And His fame went out into every place in the surrounding area.

38 ¶ Then He arose from the synagogue and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was sick with a great fever. And they asked Him concerning her.

39 Then He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and ministered to them.

40 ¶ Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any sick with various diseases brought them to Him. And He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

41 And demons also came out of many, crying out, and saying, "You are the Son of God!" And rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.

42 ¶ Now when it was day, He departed and went into a desert place. And the people sought Him, and came to Him. And they tried to keep Him from leaving them.

43 Then He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, because for this purpose I was sent."

44 And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

Chapter 5

1 ¶ Now it came to pass as the people crowded Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret

2 and saw two boats standing by the lake. But the fishermen were gone from them and were washing *their* nets.

3 And He entered into one of the boats that was Simon's, and asked him to launch out a little way from the land. And He sat down and taught the people out of the boat.

4 ¶ Now when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

5 And Simon answered and said to Him,

His own will controlling the environment of people who surrounded Him. He had such control in order to take Himself to the cross (Jn 10:17,18). In this and similar cases where Jesus confronted demons, the absolute authority of Jesus over demons is manifested. If God had never allowed demons to possess people in the first century, then we would never have known His absolute power over them. **The report ... went out:** Because many people knew of the demon possessed man, his healing thus spread throughout the whole region of Galilee.

JESUS' WORK OF HEALING

38,39 See comments Mt 8:14-17. This miracle was worked for the benefit of Peter in order that he remain focused on the ministry and work of Jesus (Mk 5:23). **Immediately she arose and served them:** The healing was instantaneous. Such is the nature of true miracles. She was effectively healed in order to be able to immediately serve those who were present. This is not as the false miracles that are worked by those who claim that they are doing the work of God. True miracles are undeniable and instantaneous. In defense of Christianity, Luke wants Theophilus to know that the miraculous works of Jesus were not as the trickery of men who claim to work miracles.

40,41 See comments Mt 4:23-25. The friends of the sick went out and brought their sick friends to Jesus in order that they be healed (See Mt 8:16,17). The sign of true friendship is to bring one's friend to Jesus. **Knew that He was the Christ:** Even the demons recognized that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel. However, Jesus would not allow them to speak such lest His messiahship be rejected because it came from the mouth of demons (See Mk 8:29). At this time in His ministry, Jesus needed no testimony by others concerning who He was.

42-44 **Sent into a deserted place:** Jesus had

been working hard with the people. His humanity is manifested in this departure to a solitary place where He could be alone and physically rest. **The crowd sought Him:** The multitudes did not care that Jesus was exhausted. They did not honor His desire to be alone for rest and prayer. Because of their desire to be with Him, they sought for Him. **Came to Him:** When they discovered where Jesus was, they selfishly came to Him, not considering His needs, but their own. **Tried to keep Him from leaving them:** They were as sheep without a shepherd. They wanted Jesus the teacher and healer to stay with them. They did not understand His mission, nor were they considerate of His personal needs. **I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also:** Such was the mission of Jesus (Lk 19:10). But the people are here more concerned about keeping the preacher to themselves than in allowing him to preach the good news to the lost. And so it is today. **He was preaching in ... Galilee:** Though the people do not understand the mission of the evangelist, he must continue regardless of their short sighted desires to keep him to themselves. When churches covet preachers, thousands of lost souls never have a chance to hear the gospel (Rm 10:14,15). Evangelists must never allow the church to steal them away from the lost (See Lk 19:10).

Chapter 5

THE MIRACLE OF THE FISH

1-3 See comments Mt 4:18-22. 4-7 **Launch out into the deep:** After instructing the multitudes from the boat, Jesus sought to manifest to the disciples the power and authority of the One who did the teaching. **At Your word:** Reluctantly, and because of their friendship with Jesus, Peter and the others went out into the deep water of the Sea of Galilee (See Ps 33:9). 8,9 The miracle

"Master, we have worked all night and have taken nothing. Nevertheless, at Your word I will let down the nets."

6 Now when they had done this, they caught a great multitude of fish. And their nets *be-gan* to break.

7 And they signaled to *their* partners who were in the other boat that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *this*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of the fish that they had taken,

10 and so *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear. From now on you will catch men."

11 Now when they had brought their boats to land, they left all and followed Him.

12 ¶ Now it came to pass when He was in a certain city, *there was* a man full of leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell on *his* face and asked Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

13 And He put out *His* hand and touched

him, saying, "I am willing. Be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 Then He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

15 ¶ But His fame was spreading even farther. And great multitudes came together to hear *Him* and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

16 Then He withdrew Himself into the wilderness and prayed.

17 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by who had come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal.

18 And behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed. And they tried to bring him in and to lay *him* before Him.

19 Now when they could not find how they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop and let him down through the tiling with *his* bed into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when He saw their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

of the catch was so evident that it had the impact described here on the minds of the beholders. And such is the nature of a true miracle. Since miracles were worked for the purpose of confirming the message and messengers of God (Mk 16:20), then the miracle must have such a strong manifestation that it has impact upon the minds of the beholders (See Mk 5:42; 10:24,26; At 4:14-16). The supposed miraculous works of those who would seek exaltation among the people cannot compare to the true miracles of God (See comments At 8:9-25). **10,11 You will catch men:** These are some of Jesus' first words to the disciples concerning the evangelistic nature of their work (See Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16). The nature of their work would be evangelistic. **They forsook all and followed Him:** And such is the sacrifice the evangelist must be willing to make in order to follow Jesus (See 14:25-35). With sacrifice comes the opportunity for spiritual growth as one is forced to depend on God. The disciples knew of Jesus and His teachings before they forsook all to follow Him. However, it was the impact of His power as manifested in the preceding miracle that convinced them that He was one to be followed. Once one truly understands who Jesus is, he has no difficulty in following Him. Those who do not follow actually do not believe that He is the Son of God. They do not believe that He will do what He said He would do to those who do not obey the gospel (Mt 24:41; 2 Th 1:7-9).

A LEPER IS HEALED

(Mt 8:1-17; Mk 1:40 - 2:12)

12-16 See comments Mt 8:2-4. **And He charged him to tell no one:** Luke is writing this document to Theophilus as a defense document for the cause (Christ) of Christianity (See introduction). His argument to prove that Jesus was not a religious fanatic who sought attention by magical tricks is manifested in commands as this that Jesus often issued to those He healed. If Jesus were as the sorcerers of the many religions of the Roman Empire, then He would have been working wonders in order to impress the people. **The report went around concerning Him all the more:** The testimony of Jesus' miraculous works did not come from a few obscure magical tricks He supposedly performed. The testimony came from hundreds who were affected by His healing hand. **Withdrew into the wilderness:** See comments 4:42-44; 9:10.

17-26 See comments Mt 9:1-8. The context of this miracle is to prove that Jesus is God on earth. The faith of the paralyzed man's friends moved them to take him to Jesus. Jesus presented the opportunity for the accusation to be made by the scribes and Pharisees by forgiving the man's sins. The scribes and Pharisees were correct to state that only God can forgive sins. Jesus was not speaking blasphemies because He was God in their midst. If He were speaking blasphemies, then He would have been blaspheming Himself. **But**

21 Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

23 "Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'?"

24 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins," – He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, and take up your bed and go to your house."

25 And immediately he rose up before them and took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God. And they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today."

27 ¶ Now after these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And He said to him, "Follow Me."

28 And he left all, rose up and followed Him.

29 Then Levi made Him a great feast in his own house. And there was a great company

of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

30 But the Pharisees and their scribes complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but those who are sick.

32 "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

33 ¶ And they said to Him, "The disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees. But Yours eat and drink."

34 Then He said to them, "Can you make the attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

35 "But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."

36 ¶ And He also spoke a parable to them: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old, otherwise, the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old.

that you may know: For this purpose Jesus forgave the man's sins first, and then, healed him. The One who had the power to heal, also had the authority to forgive. It is only God who can forgive sins, for sin is against God. In forgiving the man's sin, therefore, Jesus was affirming to be God against whom sin is committed.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW

(Mt 9:9-13; Mk 2:13-17)

27-32 See comments Mt 9:9-13. **Follow Me:** See Mk 10:28; Jn 12:26; 21:19,22. Matthew did not blindly follow Jesus. He was acquainted with Jesus' teachings and miracles before this call. The disciples did not follow Jesus because He was a popular personality. They followed Him because they were convinced that He was the Messiah and because of what He taught and did (See comments Jn 1:41-51). Those who follow people because they are popular personalities are often led astray by the one they follow. They are led astray because they have given their right to make decisions for themselves over to the personality they have committed themselves to follow.

TEACHING ON FASTING

(Mt 9:14,15; Mk 2:18-20)

33-35 **The disciples of John fast often:** It was a common religious practice of those in the first century to deny the lust of the flesh by fasting. The disciples of John carried on with this practice as did most Jews. **Then they will fast in those days:** Jesus, as the bride-

groom, is now gone into heaven. These are the days of fasting for His disciples. Thus the disciples of Jesus fast in this dispensation of time until the bridegroom comes (See comments 2:37; Mt 6:16-17; 9:14,15; At 13:1-3).

NEW WINESKINS

(Mt 9:16,17; Mk 2:21,22)

36-39 See comments Mt 9:16,17. These were days of change. Jesus did not come to put the new wine of His teachings into the old wineskins of the traditions of the Jewish religious leaders (See comments Mk 7:1-9). New teaching demanded new wineskins. Throughout His ministry, the old wineskins of the Pharisees and scribes finally broke, and then, they plotted and carried out their scheme to kill Jesus. And so it is today when the truth of the gospel is preached among those who are more concerned about keeping the traditions of the fathers than the truth of God's word. The point of Jesus' message concerning the wineskins is that His message must be accepted above all other teachings one may have received in the past that hinder one's obedience to God. No tradition or religious heritage should stop one from accepting Jesus and His word. "God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son ..." (Hb 1:1,2). Jesus is now the only way unto eternal life. Those who would seek to bypass Jesus have established a false religion, one that is created after the inventions of men who seek to serve themselves and not God.

37 “And no one puts new wine into old wine-skins, else the new wine will burst the skins and be spilled, and the skins will be ruined.

38 “But new wine must be put into new wine-skins.

39 “No one, having drunk old *wine* first, desires new, for he says, ‘The old is better.’”

Chapter 6

1 ¶ Now it came to pass on one Sabbath that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

2 Then some of the Pharisees said to them, “Why do you do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”

3 But Jesus answering them said, “Have you not even read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him,

4 “how he went into the house of God and took and ate the showbread that is not lawful to eat except for the priests alone, and he gave also to those who were with him?”

5 And He said to them, “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

6 ¶ Now it also came to pass on another Sabbath that He entered into the synagogue and taught. And there was a man there whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched Him, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against Him.

8 But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, “Rise up and stand forward.” And he arose and stood forward.

9 Then Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one thing. Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy *it*?”

10 And looking around at them all, He said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

11 Then they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

12 ¶ Now it came to pass in those days that He went out into a mountain to pray. And He continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, He called His disciples. And from them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles:

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

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of

Chapter 6

A SABBATH CONTROVERSY

(Mt 12:1-14; Mk 2:23 - 3:6)

1-11 See comments Mt 12:1-14. One accusation against Christianity by those who had no Jewish history was the accusation that Christianity was just another sect of Judaism. Luke includes in his defense of Christianity several confrontations as this Sabbath controversy in order to manifest to the world that there was conflict between what Jesus taught and the Judaism that was prevalent in Palestine at the time Jesus came into the world (See comments Mk 7:1-9; Gl 1:13,14). Simply because the Messiah arose out of Israel in fulfillment of promises made to Abraham (Gn 12:1-3), did not mean that Christianity was an appendage to the Judaism of Jesus' day.

COMMISSIONING THE TWELVE

(Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:13-19)

12-16 See comments Mk 3:13-19. **Continued all night in prayer to God:** Jesus' prayer all night was for a very specific purpose. On the next day after His night of prayer, He called twelve of His disciples to Him and designated them as “apostles.” The generic meaning of the word “apostle” means “one who is sent.” These twelve apostles were Christ-sent apostles, and thus, dif-

ferent from the church-sent apostles that would be specifically sent out by the early churches (See At 14:4,14; Gl 1:19). They were Christ-sent apostles because they were personally called and sent out by Jesus (See comments At 1:21,22).

SERMON ON THE PLAIN

This sermon probably took place at a different location and time than the one recorded in Matthew 5-7. This sermon is chronologically placed here after the naming of the twelve apostles, whereas the sermon of Matthew 5-7 came before this time. Also, Luke states that this sermon took place on a plain, whereas the sermon recorded by Matthew took place on a mount. The recording of similar content in these two sermons by Matthew and Luke indicates the independence the Holy Spirit allowed the writers in recording the teachings of Jesus that pertained to their themes. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, each writer chose that material or incident in the life and teaching of Jesus that harmonized closely with the Holy Spirit's desired theme of each particular book. Thus those teachings that Jesus repeated several times during His ministry were recorded by the gospel historians in accordance with the themes and purposes of their documents. Though the Holy Spirit used the writers to select different materials, we must assume that they were under the direction of the Holy

Alphaeus, and Simon called Zealot;

16 and Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, who also was the traitor.

17 ¶ Then He came down with them and stood in the plain. And *there was* a large crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases.

18 And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were healed.

19 Now the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out of Him and healed *them* all.

20 Then He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, "Blessed *are you who are poor*, for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 "Blessed *are you who hunger now*, for you will be filled. Blessed *are you who weep now*, for you will laugh.

22 "Blessed are you when men will hate you, and when they will exclude you and scorn *you*, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake.

23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward *is* great in heaven. For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your comfort.

25 "Woe to you who are full, for you will hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.

26 "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 ¶ "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

28 Bless those who curse you and pray for those who mistreat you.

29 "And to him who smites you on the *one* cheek, offer also the other. And whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold *your* tunic either.

30 "Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods, do not ask *them* back.

31 "Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 "For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

33 "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

34 "And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive *repayment*, what credit is *that* to you? For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great. You will *then* be the children of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and *to* the evil.

36 "Therefore, be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Spirit both in selection and inscription of the events of Jesus' life and His teachings. The writers could not and did not record everything that Jesus said or did throughout His earthly ministry. If they had, then the New Testament would be a volume far too large to either copy or print and distribute throughout the world (Jn 20:30,31; 21:25). The Holy Spirit inspired writers of the New Testament to write those things that would satisfy the spiritual thirst and hunger of those who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

17-19 Stood on a level place: The sermon of Matthew 5-7 took place on a mountain (Mt 5:1,2). This sermon took place on a level place. **A great multitude of people:** Jesus' healing of all those in this multitude set the stage for the principles of His teaching that He would deliver in the following verses. **20-23** Compare comments Mt 5:3-12.

24-26 Woe: Jesus here pronounces four woes on those who have materialistically satisfied themselves at the sake of others. These had consumed riches on themselves and forgotten the needs of their fellow man

(Jn 5:1-6). They had gluttonously lavished themselves in their world of materialistic living. They had rejoiced in the self-satisfaction of their own environment without any concern for the poor (Pv 14:13; Js 4:9). They had conformed to the status quo of the day in order to remain in the company of worldly politicians and religious leaders. However, Jesus said that their end was coming. Their artificial and unreal world was about to come apart. The ax was laid at the root of national Israel and its destruction was soon to come in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the Jewish State (See comments Mt 24). In this destruction, all those who had selfishly consumed the world on their own lust would lose their material wealth (See comments Js 5:1-6).

27-36 Compare comments Mt 5:39-48. In these verses Jesus contrasts the abundant life of love and mercy with the selfish life of those who lived without regard for others. He portrays the loving spirit of a good neighbor and citizen as God would have men live in harmony with one another on earth. If societies practiced these principles, there would be no need for police

37 “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

38 “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, it will be poured into your lap. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured to you again.”

39 ¶ And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?”

40 “A disciple is not above his teacher. But everyone who is fully trained will be as his teacher.”

41 “And why do you behold the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the plank that is in your own eye?”

42 “Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not behold the plank that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, remove first the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.”

43 ¶ “For a good tree does not bring forth

corrupt fruit, nor does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 “For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.”

45 “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good. And an evil man out of the evil brings forth that which is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

46 ¶ “And why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things that I say?”

47 “Whoever comes to Me and hears My words, and does them, I will show you whom he is like:

48 “He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on a rock. And when the flood arose, the torrent beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, because it was well built on a rock.”

49 “But he who hears and does nothing is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation, against which the torrent beat vehemently, and immediately it collapsed. And the ruin of that house was great.”

and jails (See comments Mt 22:37-40; Gl 5:13,14).

37-42 Compare comments Mt 7:1-6. **Forgive:** See comments Mt 18:21-35. **Give:** It is the nature of godly people to behave as God. God is a giver, and thus, godly people give (At 20:35). The love that is taught in verses 27-36 must be carried into action. Those who love their brothers do not stand in judgment over them.

With the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you: The thrust of what Jesus states here is that we will be dealt with in final judgment by God in the same manner by which we treat our fellow man (See Js 2:13). Therefore, when we measure mercy to others, God will in turn measure mercy to us. **Can the blind lead the blind:** Those who are not of the nature of the preceding verses cannot spiritually lead the people of God (See Mt 15:14; 23:16,19,24). Those who are spiritually dead cannot lead unto a spiritual life those who are also blind. **Like his teacher:** Those who disciple others will lead them to be like themselves. If the teacher is spiritually blind, so also will be the student (Compare Jn 13:16; 15:20).

First remove the plank from your own eye: The context of verses 39-42 is in reference to those who are religiously hypocritical in their judgment of others. In the context of the religious environment into which Jesus came, the religious leaders gave a pretense of religiosity through the outward performance of the regulations of Judaism, but inwardly they were spiritually dead (See comments Mt 23; Mk 7:1-9). They knew and obeyed all the traditions of religion but forsook the truth of God. Such is the nature of tradition. Tradition is established when social or religious companions conform to the accepted be-

havior of society or religion. When churches become traditional in their behavior, they often overlook the word of God in order to obey their traditions (Mk 7:1-9). It is not wrong to do things traditionally. However, when the traditional manner of doing something becomes the only way it can be done, then the tradition in religion becomes law, and thus, is wrong.

43-45 Compare comments Mt 7:18-27. **For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks:** One's heart is manifested by how he behaves. Christians have the responsibility to judge according to the fruit that one produces. However, our judgment cannot be a true judgment of the heart, for the outward performance of religious deeds can deceive those who observe such deeds. The outward performance of religion can be carried on without the dedication of one's heart. Nevertheless, those who work from the heart will do that which is good to all men (See comments Gl 5:13,14).

46-49 Lord, Lord: See comments Mt 7:21-23. **Foundation on the rock:** This is the one who hears the words of Jesus and does them. He is motivated to obedience by his love of Jesus and His word (Jn 14:15). One cannot claim to have Jesus as his Lord if he does not obey what Jesus says. But there will come an end to those who hear and do not obey. Jesus' point is that our religious beliefs and social behavior must be founded upon Him. Those who would reject Him, reject the foundation upon which eternal life is based. There is no other foundation upon which one can build for eternal life than Jesus. It is for this reason that all must be sacrificed if necessary to come to Jesus.

Chapter 7

1 ¶ Now when He had ended all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's bondservant who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent to Him the elders of the Jews, pleading with Him that He come and heal his bondservant.

4 Now when they came to Jesus, they asked Him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him,

5 for he loves our nation. It was he who built us a synagogue."

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.

7 "For this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You. But *just* say the word and my bondservant will be healed.

8 "For I also am a man placed under authority, having under me soldiers. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another,

'Come,' and he comes, and to my bondservant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*."

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the people who followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel."

10 And those who were sent, *when* returning to the house, found the bondservant in good health.

11 ¶ Then it came to pass the day after, that He went into a city called Nain. And many of His disciples went with Him, and many people.

12 Now when He came near to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother. Now she was a widow. And a large crowd of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said to her, "Do not weep."

14 Then He came and touched the coffin. And those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."

15 And he who was dead sat up and began to

Chapter 7

HEALING A CENTURION'S SERVANT

11-10 This healing is different than the one that is recorded in Matthew 8:5-13. Here the Greek text emphasizes that a bondservant was healed (vs 2). However, the Greek word that is translated "servant" in Matthew 8:6 is *pais*, or a young boy. The young boy in the Matthew 8 account could have been the centurion's slave. Consider also that the centurion of Matthew appears to be a Gentile who is not a believer in the God of Israel (Mt 8:8). The centurion in this account is a Jewish proselyte. The centurion in Matthew 8 personally went to Jesus, whereas this centurion sent the elders. It is important that Bible students not force similar events in the records of the gospel to be the same event. Many similar events occurred in the life of Jesus. The individual writers, as in this case, recorded similar but different events. There is thus no contradiction between Luke and Matthew in the record of these similar healings by Jesus. **He ... built us a synagogue:** In the ruins of ancient Capernaum, archaeologists have discovered a synagogue that was built during the time of the Herods. This is probably the very synagogue that was built by this centurion. **Great faith:** It was the faith of the centurion that resulted in the healing of his servant. The faith of the servant had nothing to do with the healing, and thus, was not a condition for his healing. It is an erroneous belief that faith was ever a condition upon which Jesus or the disciples healed anyone. If faith were such a condition, then the power of God to heal would be limited to the will of man. Those who place

emphasis on faith as a condition for healing are focusing their attention on the one being healed and not on the one who heals. Miracles were not given as a benevolent act of God for humanity. After all, Jesus did not heal everyone of Jerusalem and Palestine. Miracles were given for the purpose of confirming the message and messengers of God (Jn 3:2; Mk 16:17-20; Hb 2:2,3). Therefore, the primary focus of miracles was on God, His message and His messengers.

RAISING A WIDOW'S SON

Luke is the only recorder of the four gospel records to mention this miracle of Jesus. **11 A city called Nain:** There are many archaeological remains of this particular city. It was a large city of the area since it had a wall and gates. There is a small city in the Plain of Jezreel today that is a few kilometers south of Nazareth that some believe is the site of the same city that existed during Jesus' day. **12 A dead man was being carried out:** A funeral procession was in progress at the time Jesus arrived. This dead man was being carried outside the city in order to be buried at the local cemetery. **She was a widow:** Since the man was the only son of this widow, he would probably have been the only means of support for the woman. **13 He had compassion:** The compassion extended beyond the moment of sorrow because this son was the livelihood of the widow. **14,15 I say to you, arise:** The open coffin was an open pallet upon which the wrapped body of the dead was laid and carried. Without any formalities, Jesus simply commanded the dead to arise (Compare At 9:40). Such was not a performance, but simply the act of the

speak. And He delivered him to his mother.

16 Then fear came upon all. And they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us," and, "God has visited His people."

17 Then this report of Him went throughout all Judea and throughout all the surrounding region.

18 ¶ And the disciples of John reported to him about all these things.

19 Then calling two of his disciples to *him*, John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

20 When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'"

21 Now in that same hour He healed many of *their* infirmities and afflictions and evil spirits. And He gave sight to many *who were* blind.

22 And He answered and said to them, "Go your way and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind see, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *the* poor have the gospel preached to them.

23 "And blessed is *he* who is not offended because of Me."

24 ¶ Now when the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the people

concerning John. "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

25 "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are gorgeously clothed and live luxuriously are in kings' courts.

26 "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and much more than a prophet.

27 "This is *he* of whom it is written, '*Behold, I send My messenger before Your face who will prepare Your way before You.*'

28 "For I say to you, among those who are born of women there is none greater than John. But he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29 ¶ And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors declared the righteousness of God, having been immersed with the immersion of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not having been immersed by John.

31 "To what then will I liken the men of this generation? And to what are they like?

32 "They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling one to another, and saying, 'We have played to you and you have not danced. We have mourned to you and you

power of God through the word of the incarnate Son of God. **16,17** *He who was dead sat up*: This was certainly a spectacular occurrence in the lives of those who carried the dead man. This was done by Jesus in order to accomplish exactly what happened as a result of the miracle. The report of what had happened on this occasion concerning this resurrection and others like it was proclaimed throughout the region. **Fear came upon all**: All those who were present became fearful because they recognized the presence of the supernatural. They correctly deduced that it was God who had allowed the One in their presence to do such a miraculous work, for they identified Jesus as a prophet through whom God was visiting His people. (For a study of the three recorded cases where Jesus raised people from the dead, see Mt 9:18,19,23-26; Mk 5:22-24,35-43; Lk 7:11-17; 8:41,42,49-56; Jn 11:35-53).

THE MESSENGERS FROM JOHN

(Mt 11:1-19)

18-29 See comments Mt 11:1-15. **Messengers**: The Greek word here is *angelos*. This word is also applied to angels of God who are simply messengers from God. It is also used here in reference to messengers sent out by men. In the context here, these messengers were sent from John to Jesus in order to inquire if

Jesus were the expected Prophet of Israel (Zc 9:9). Jesus did not answer John with a direct statement that He was the Prophet. The Jews expected that the Prophet, or Messiah, would come in order to restore national Israel to its fame as in the days of David and Solomon (At 1:16). But Jesus would not be an earthly king. He would not proclaim Himself to be such on earth (See Jn 18:36-38). His evidence that He was the Messiah was based on two proofs. **Go tell John**: The first proof of His messiahship was the fact that He had authority over the supernatural environment of Deity, and thus, worked miracles among men (Is 35:5; Jn 3:2). Jesus' second proof was that the poor had the good news of His coming preached to them (4:18; Is 61:1). **Least in the kingdom**: Reference here is not to a kingdom reign that is yet to be established. John was in the kingdom of God. He was an obedient subject of the kingdom reign of the Father that was in existence at the time he and all mankind lived before and during the ministry of Jesus. Not all men were obedient subjects in the kingdom of God. However, all were under the kingship and headship of the Father (See 1 Ch 29:11,12). **Even the tax collectors declared the righteousness of God**: The work of Jesus among the poor specifically manifested the grace of God among men. God did not send either John or Jesus to live luxurious lives in the

have not wept.'

33 "For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'

34 "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

35 "But wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

36 ¶ Now one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went into the Pharisee's house and reclined to eat.

37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* reclined at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster vial of perfume.

38 And she stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping. Then she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing *them* with the perfume.

39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *it*, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of woman *this is* who touches Him, for she is a sinner."

40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he said, "Teacher, say it."

41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. The one owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty.

42 "Now when they had nothing to pay, he graciously forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?"

43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose that *he* to whom he forgave most." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."

44 Then He turned to the woman, and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house *and* you gave Me no water for My feet. But she has washed My feet with tears and wiped *them* with the hairs of her

cities of Palestine. They were sent to those whom society considered lower class citizens. Such clearly manifested to all that God's grace would go where the sophisticated of the cities would not go. His message would go to the receptive of the humble people who would gladly receive such.

30-35 See comments Mt 11:16-19. **But the Pharisees and lawyers:** Because of their presumptuous positions in the religious hierarchy of their self-made religious society, these religious leaders could not lower themselves to either John or Jesus whom they considered unworthy to be heard. They thus stumbled over their pride in accepting the One who could deliver them from the intimidation of a religious world that had been misguided by those who defend the institutional religion of Judaism (See comments Mk 7:1-9). **This generation:** This generation of religious leaders was like unconcerned children playing their games in the market places while people went about searching for food. They went about playing their religious games and politics and were unaware of people shopping here and there for spiritual food in order to feed their hungry souls. Instead of feeding the people with spiritual food, they were too busy playing their religious political games among themselves in the religious and political world of the cities. **Wisdom is justified by all her children:** The result of exercising wisdom proves the wisdom itself (Mt 11:19). Truth may be suppressed for a short time, but in the end it prevails over all enemies.

ANOINTING OF JESUS' FEET

We must not confuse this anointing of Jesus' feet with that which Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, did in Bethany immediately before Jesus' death (Jn 12:1-8). This particular anointing is recorded only by Luke for he wants to show to Theophilus the great admiration

and respect people at this time had for Jesus. **36 Pharisee's house ... sat down to eat:** This was not the only occasion when Jesus went in and ate at a Pharisee's house (11:37; 14:1). The invitation of the Pharisee indicates that not all the religious leaders of Israel fell under the rebuke of verses 30-35 and Matthew 23. Not all the religious leaders were of the evil heart of those who eventually sought to kill Jesus (See Jn 3:1,2; At 6:7). **37,38** This unidentified woman comes to Jesus while He is in the house of the Pharisee. Her remorse for her sinful state is manifested in this most humble gesture of anointing and washing of Jesus' feet. Her penitence is expressed by the flow of her emotion. **39** The host of Jesus thought to himself these words of judgment concerning Jesus. He was right in judging that a true prophet would know the character of the past life of the woman. However, he was wrong in assuming that Jesus did not know (See Lk 15:2). **40-42 Freely forgave them both:** God's grace is poured out on all who will receive such. Only God can forgive sins because it is against God that sin is committed. Therefore, in forgiving sins, Jesus is claiming to be God. **Which of them will love him more:** God's forgiveness through grace motivates a loving response. Herein is the key to Christian behavior. Christians love because God first loved them (1 Jn 4:19). The disciples of Jesus are motivated into action because of the loving action by which God moved toward them (See comments 1 Co 15:10). Love is the prime mover that moves one toward obedience of the commandments of God (Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 5:1-3). **43** Those who have come the longest way out of a life of sin in response to God's grace usually appreciate their salvation more than those who have lived by Christian principles before their obedience to the gospel by immersion into Christ. **44-48** Simon had failed to perform the customary duties of a host that

head.

45 “You gave Me no kiss. But this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in.

46 “You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with perfume.

47 “Therefore, I say to you, her sins, that are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loves little.”

48 And He said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 Then those who sat at the table with Him began to say within themselves, “Who is this who also forgives sins?”

50 And He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”

Chapter 8

1 ¶ Now it came to pass afterward that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve *were* with Him,

2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had gone seven demons,

3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who ministered to Him from their substance.

4 ¶ Now when many people had gathered together, and had come to Him out of every city, He spoke by a parable:

5 “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside. And it was trodden down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

6 “Then some fell upon rocky *soil*. And as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.

7 “Then some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.

8 “Then others fell on good ground, and sprang up, and produced a crop a hundred-fold.” And when He had said these things, He cried out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

9 ¶ And His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

10 And He said, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. But to the rest *it is given* in parables, so that ‘*seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.*’

11 ¶ “Now the parable is this: The seed is the

showed respect to a guest. The humble actions of the woman went far beyond what even a host would perform toward his guest. She did more for Jesus than those who considered themselves righteous in the eyes of God. She manifested her great love, and thus, she received forgiveness. When anyone responds to the grace of God as revealed on the cross (Ti 2:11), and thus, obeys the gospel by immersion in water, God forgives that person's sins (At 2:38; 22:16). **49,50** *Who is this who even forgives sins:* There were evidently other Pharisees who were guests at this particular meal. They thought it presumptuous of Jesus to forgive sins (See 5:21; Mt 9:6). *Your faith has saved you:* The woman's faith in who Jesus was moved her to submit to Jesus. She did not have a simple belief in Jesus. Her actions were the manifestation of her great faith (Mt 9:2,22).

Chapter 8

THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN

1-3 With the twelve, the ministry of Jesus expanded throughout all the region of Galilee because He delegated preaching responsibilities to the twelve in order to preach to the cities. *Certain women:* In the travels of His ministry, there were certain women who gave themselves to minister to the physical needs of Jesus

and the twelve. Mary of Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, was one of these women (Mk 16:9). Joanna and Susanna, who were evidently wealthy women, provided for much of the needs of Jesus and the disciples. These women would later become great witnesses to the life, teaching and resurrection of Jesus (See Mt 28:10 Mk 16:1).

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

(Mt 13:1-13; Mk 4:1-20)

4-8 See comments Mt 13:1-13. As explained in verses 11-15, this parable might be referred to as the parable of the soils. Jesus explains that the good news of the kingdom is received in different ways by different people. However, their life-style betrays what they feel in their hearts. Satan thus steals away the effect of the good news. But the heart that is searching, and is thus receptive to learning and growth, will produce much fruit. There will usually be no receptivity unless there is searching. The one who is searching realizes that there is something missing in his life. He realizes that he cannot fulfill that which is missing by either material things or the theologies and philosophies of men. **9,10** See comments Mt 13:10-23. As prophesied, Jesus spoke the mysteries of the kingdom in parables in order to reveal truth to those who were of an open heart and mind (Is 6:9). However, the truth was concealed by the

word of God.

12 “Those by the wayside are those who hear. Then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

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

14 “And the *seed* that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

15 “But the *seed* that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with an honest and good heart, keep *it* and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 ¶ “No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed. But he sets *it* on a lampstand so that those who enter in may see the light.

17 “For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light.

18 “Therefore, take heed how you hear, for

whoever has, to him will be given. And whoever does not have, from him will be taken even that which he thinks he has.”

19 ¶ Then *His* mother and *His* brothers came to Him. And they could not get to Him because of the crowd.

20 Then it was told Him *by some* who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.”

21 And He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

22 ¶ Now it came to pass on a certain day that He went into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake.” And they launched out.

23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. Now there descended on the lake a storm of wind. And they were filling *with water* and were in danger.

24 Then they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.

parables from those who were religiously prejudiced (Mt 13:3). **11-15** See comments Mt 13:18-23.

PURPOSE OF THE LAMP

16-18 It is the purpose and nature of the lamp to produce light for all who are in its presence. So it is with the gospel. It is the nature of the gospel to produce light, and because of this nature, it is the purpose of the gospel to provide the light of life to all the world (See Mt 5:14). **That will not be revealed:** The omniscient God who created all things was in their midst (See Cl 1:16). What Jesus was teaching would bring to light the hidden secrets of men. Their response to His teaching would reveal the nature of their hearts. Any negative reaction one would have to His teaching would judge one to be in heart of the nature of the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9, “*Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand*” (vs 10). One’s inability to understand is not because the message is difficult. It is because he is suffering difficulty in humbling himself to God (See comments Hb 5:11,12). **Whoever has, to him more will be given:** Those who humbly hunger and thirst after God’s righteousness will be filled (Mt 5:6). Those who search for truth will find truth. However, those self-righteous religious leaders who thought that they had a special relationship with God by their physical lineage from Abraham, would be rejected (See comments Mt 21:33-44). One is trusting in the wrong things if he believes he is religiously right before God either because of religious traditions or emotions. His trust in such things will hinder his thinking to discover the truth in the word

of God. They will also hinder him from trusting in God, rather than one’s own thinking or feelings.

JESUS’ PHYSICAL FAMILY

(Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35)

19-21 See comments Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35. On this occasion, Mary and the physical brothers of Jesus seek to see Him. This is reported to Jesus, and thus, an occasion arises to teach concerning the adding of spiritual relationships to one’s physical family relationships. **Who hear the word of God and do it:** Jesus is not showing disrespect to His mother and brothers. He is teaching that one’s spiritual relationship with those who have committed themselves to obey the word of God is greater than one’s physical relationship with family (See comments 14:25-35). Those who are obedient to the word of God are thus in fellowship with one another because of their common obedience to the gospel (Jd 3). One’s physical family is extended when he becomes a disciple.

CALMING A STORM AT SEA

(Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41)

22 See comments Mt 8:23-37. The omniscience of Jesus to know of the coming storm certainly allowed Him to see this opportunity to teach the disciples that they must depend on Him. Every storm of life should move one to depend on God. **23,24 He fell asleep:** Jesus fell asleep before the storm. However, He remained asleep while it was in progress. When the disciples finally relented to the fact that they were going to

25 And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid and amazed, saying one to another, "Who is this! For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him."

26 ¶ Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes that is opposite Galilee.

27 Now when He went out on the land, there met Him a certain man out of the city a who had demons. And for a long time he wore no clothes, nor stayed in a house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before Him. And with a loud voice he said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"

29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit

to come out of the man, for it had seized him many times. And he was kept bound with chains and in shackles, and yet he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many devils had entered into him.

31 Then they asked Him that He not command them to go out into the abyss.

32 Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain. And they begged Him that He would permit them to enter into them. And He permitted them.

33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine. And the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake and drowned.

perish, they awakened Jesus to the fact. **25 Where is your faith:** Their lack of faith was manifested in their fear of death. They knew that they were in the presence of One who had already commanded the elements and healed the sick. They needed to put their trust in Him, and in doing such, not be afraid of death or any crisis that life may bring. **They were afraid:** See 4:36; 5:26. The miracle manifested the extent to which Jesus had control over all things. Such a realization moves one to reverential awe and fear of the power of God.

HEALING A DEMONIAIC

(Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-20)

26 See comments Mt 8:28-34. Luke's record of this particular case of Jesus casting out demons is given in more detail than Matthew's account because of His purpose for writing (See Mt 8:28-34). In writing a defense of Christianity by explaining the divine power of Jesus, Luke explains how this demoniac, who was well-known in the country of the Gadarenes, was healed by the command of Jesus. He was well-known in the country because of the uncontrolled rage by which he terrified everyone. **27 He stepped out on the land:** There were two demon possessed men on this particular occasion, though one is the outspoken representative in reference to this confrontation with Jesus. **For a long time:** This man had been possessed for a great deal of time, and thus, was known throughout the region. His rampage of the community had led to his banishment to the graveyard. **Wore no clothes:** When Satan gets hold of one's character, he or she wants to take off his or her clothes. There is no shame in a devil-controlled life. **Live ... in the tombs:** When Satan has control of one's life, he lives in an unnatural environment. He is rejected by the community, and thus, lives alone only where the community does not live. **28 Jesus, Son of the Most High God:** This demon, as well as others, confessed more than most men confess today (4:41). The demon here begs for mercy from the omnipotent Son of God. He does not bargain in order to negotiate a deal with Jesus concerning his destiny of destruction

(Mt 8:29; 25:41). He knew that his destiny was sealed and could not be changed because God had determined that Satan and his angels would eventually suffer the punishment of hell (Mt 25:41; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6). **29 He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out:** As God on earth, Jesus had absolute authority and power over even the worst of Satan's work among men (Jn 13:3; 17:2). Satan has no indigenous or subjective power or authority over Jesus or anyone else. His power is by the willingness of men to be deceived. By such deception he has captured the minds of the masses of the world. In the cases of demon possession in the first century, the individuals who were possessed, voluntarily allowed themselves to be controlled by the demons. Once they were possessed, the demons took control. We must keep in mind that God has not given Satan the power to take control of one's life as he so chooses. **Kept under guard:** When Satan controlled the life of an individual in the first century through demon possession, society did not trust the person the demon controlled. **Broke the bonds:** It was not that he was given supernatural power to do such, but that the adrenaline was released into the body of a hysterical individual who was often out of control. **30 Legion:** A Roman legion was comprised of 4,000 to 6,000 men who were greatly feared by all. It was not that there were several thousand demons in this person. There were many. The many who controlled this individual thus caused terror in the community through the possessed man. **31 The abyss:** This is the place of torments and captivity to which Jesus would destine all demons by His victory of the cross and resurrection (See Rm 10:7; Ep 4:8; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6). **32,33** Spirits seek to be embodied. Here the demons choose the body of pigs over the abyss. **He permitted them:** It is interesting to note that the demons whom so many people feared, had to ask permission from the One (Jesus) they refuse to obey. And so it is today. People will refuse to submit to Jesus as Lord because they desire to submit to the wicked ways of Satan. They will refuse to submit to Jesus of whom the demons had to ask permission. They refuse to sub-

34 When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 ¶ Then they went out to see what happened. And they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

36 They also who saw *it* told them by what means he who was possessed of the devils had been healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

38 Now the man out of whom the demons had departed was begging Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 "Return to your own house and show what great things God has done for you." And he went his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

40 ¶ Now it came to pass that when Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him.

41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him that He come to his house,

42 for he had only one daughter about twelve years of age, and she lay dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing Him.

43 And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone,

44 came behind *Him* and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her hemorrhage of blood stopped.

45 Then Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the multitude is crowding and pressing against You."

46 But Jesus said, "Somebody has touched Me, for I perceived that power has gone out of Me."

47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling. And falling down before Him, she declared to Him before all the people the reason she had touched Him, and how she was immediately healed.

48 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

49 ¶ While He was still speaking, there came

mit to the Lord of all things by submitting to the will of Satan whom Jesus will cast into eternal destruction (Mt 25:41). **34-36 *Sitting at the feet of Jesus:*** When one is in his right mind he will be at the feet of Jesus (See 10:39; 17:16; Mt 28:9; Mk 7:25; Jn 11:32). He will seek to be led to correct his life and the evil influence he has had on others (See Jn 14:15; 15:14). ***They were afraid:*** They were afraid of that which they did not understand. But if they truly understood who was in their midst – the Son of God before whom all will be judged (At 17:30,31) – they would have been afraid to ask Jesus to leave. **37 *Asked Him to depart from them:*** If they truly knew who they asked to depart, surely they would not have done so. Nevertheless, the ignorant superstitious religious beliefs of thousands will hinder them from coming to the truth. On this occasion, the superstitious beliefs of the Gadarenes moved them in fear to ask the Son of God to depart from their region. And so it is in many places of the world today. Most people are more afraid of giving up their superstitious beliefs than fearing the One who can destroy soul and body in hell (Mt 10:28). **38,39 *Begged Him that he might be with Him:*** When the mercy of God is poured out on one who could not deliver himself by his own means, the natural response is to be close by the one who showed the mercy. Those who truly appreciate the loving mercy of God, want to be with God. One appreciates God's mercy when he understands how far God had to come in order to de-

liver us from our sinful situation. ***Tell what great things God has done for you:*** Jesus asked this healed demoniac to give witness to others concerning what God had done for him, for it was God who actually worked on this occasion. It is thus the work of God that motivates others to obey God (See 1 Co 15:10). The most powerful witness in any community is the converted life of those who previously wrecked the community by their ungodly living. God seeks to send converted people back to repair the lives of those who were ravaged by their wicked living.

40-48 See comments Mt 9:20-22. In the healing of both the woman with a hemorrhage of blood and Jairus' daughter, the touch of Jesus released power from God. The woman reached out to touch Jesus (vs 44) and Jesus reached out and took the hand of the dead daughter (vs 54). In cases as these two miracles, the result was the same. Power went out from Jesus to those who were touched by Him. ***Your faith has made you well:*** It was her faith that moved her to reach out and touch Jesus (7:50). It is active faith that produces results in the kingdom (Js 2:14-26). The faith was not a condition for her healing. Her faith was the motivation that put her in contact with the source of healing.

RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

(Mt 9:18,19,23-26; Mk 5:22-24,35-43)

49-56 See comments Mt 9:18,19,23-26. It was

one from *the house of* the ruler of the synagogue, saying to Him, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher anymore."

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, "Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be made well."

51 Now when He came into the house, He did not let anyone go in with Him except Peter, John and James, and the father and mother of the girl.

52 And all wept and lamented for her. But He said, "Do not weep. She is not dead, but is asleep."

53 And they laughed at Him, knowing that she was dead.

54 Then He took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise."

55 And her spirit returned, and she immediately rose up. And He ordered for *something* to be given her to eat.

56 And her parents were astonished. But He instructed them that they tell no one what had happened.

Chapter 9

1 ¶ Then He called His twelve disciples together. And He gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases.

2 Then He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staffs, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not *even* have two tunics apiece.

4 "And whatever house you enter, stay there until you depart.

5 "And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them."

6 Then they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him. And he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead,

8 and by some that Elijah had appeared, and

not Jesus' practice to go through ceremonial performances in order to stimulate the curiosity of people to view His miracles. In this case, only Peter, James and John, with the father and mother, were permitted to be in the presence of the miracle when the daughter was raised. When working the miraculous work of God, Jesus did not conduct Himself in the manner that is so common among those today who claim to work miracles in order to gain a following. True miracles were never worked in order to satisfy the idle curiosity of man. When reading the record of any miracle in the Bible, one must always keep in mind the purpose for which the veil of the natural world was set aside to reveal the supernatural realm of God. The purpose of the miracle was to signal to man, who is confined to the physical world, that there is a realm beyond the physical world. This would be the realm of God's dwelling. It is supernatural because it is above the natural laws of this world. Therefore, when Jairus' daughter was raised, the laws of the supernatural were allowed to touch the natural body of the young girl. She thus came to life as the supernatural laws of God's realm of existence superseded the laws of nature.

Chapter 9

LIMITED COMMISSION OF THE TWELVE

(Mt 10:5-15; Mk 6:7-13)

At this time in the document of Luke, Luke seems to change his emphasis to focus on the cross. In His change of emphasis he records teachings of Jesus that are found only in his writings. **1-6** See comments Mt 10:5-15. **He sent them to preach the kingdom:** Equipped with the authority over demons and the power to heal, the twelve are sent forth by Jesus to preach the

same message that He and John the Baptist preached. They were to preach the good news of the kingdom of God. **Take nothing for the journey:** This limited commission was to be a test of the disciples' faith. They were to put their trust in God and the benevolence of those to whom they went. At the same time, it would be a test of hospitality on the part of those who received them. Those who received the messengers of Jesus would be receiving Jesus. In sending forth the disciples in this manner, Jesus was laying the foundation on which the disciples would later go forth after the establishment of the church. These who are sent forth on this occasion would remember the receptive homes unto which they could go after the establishment of the church in Acts 2. **They ... went through the towns, preaching the gospel:** Jesus sent the disciples out on more than one preaching tour. There was much teaching to be accomplished throughout the time of His three to three and a half year ministry. More preaching and teaching were needed than what He could personally do. Therefore, He sent the disciples to prepare the hearts and minds of the people to accept Him as the Messiah. He also sent them out in order to prepare them for the ministry they would be given at the beginning of the church in Acts 2. The disciples had observed Jesus' preaching. It was time for them to begin preaching as He did.

HEROD AND JOHN

(Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29)

7-9 See comments Mt 14:1-12. Luke records the inquiry of the perplexed Herod in order to illustrate that even kings wondered concerning who Jesus was. In his document to prove that Jesus is the Son of God, Luke is bringing us to the same confession that Peter made in verse 20 that Jesus is the Christ of God.

by others that one of the old prophets had risen again.

9 And Herod said, "John I have beheaded. But who is this of whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him.

10 ¶ Then when the apostles returned, they told Him all that they had done. And He took them and withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida.

11 But when the people were aware of this, they followed Him. And He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God. And He healed those who had need of healing.

12 ¶ Now when the day began to end, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away so that they may go into the surrounding towns and country and lodge and get provisions, for we are in a desolate place here."

13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."

14 For there were about five thousand men. And He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty."

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two

fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they all ate and were filled. And there was taken up by them twelve baskets of the leftover fragments.

18 ¶ Now it came to pass as He was alone praying, His disciples were with Him. And He asked them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

19 They answered and said, "John the Baptist. But some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again."

20 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."

21 ¶ But He warned and commanded them to tell this to no one,

22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised the third day."

23 ¶ And He said to them all, "If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

24 "For whoever will save his life will lose it. But whoever will lose his life for My sake will save it.

25 "For what is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

(Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:30-44; Jn 6:1-13)

10-17 See comments Mt 14:13-21. The feeding of the five thousand took place sometime before the confession of Peter in verses 18-21. Matthew records that at the time Jesus called on the disciples to make the confession that He was the Christ and Son of God, He asked them first to recall the feeding of the four thousand and five thousand (Mt 16:9,10). Luke's purpose here, however, is to lead Theophilus to understand that the nature of the miracle of feeding the multitudes should move us to make the same confession concerning Jesus. It was a miracle of creation, and thus, should prove beyond doubt that Jesus was the Son of God (See comments Cl 1:16).

PETER'S CONFESSION

(Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30)

18-21 See comments Mt 16:13-28. **His disciples joined Him:** Jesus and the disciples are at Caesarea Philippi (Mt 16:13). It is here that they were together for a private meeting. At this meeting Jesus called on them for a confession of who He was. **Some say:** At this time in the ministry of Jesus, there was great speculation among people concerning who He was. **The Christ**

of God: Peter spoke for the rest of the disciples. Their confession at this time was that they believed Jesus was the Messiah, the anointed one of God who had come from God to deliver Israel. Matthew recorded all that Peter said. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16; see Jn 6:68,69). **22 The Son of Man must suffer many things:** It was from this time that Jesus began to prepare the disciples for His suffering and the cross that He must endure in order to accomplish the purpose for which He was sent (18:31-33; 23:46; 24:46; Mt 16:21; 17:22).

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

(Mt 16:21-28; Mk 8:31 - 9:1)

23-27 See comments Mt 16:21-28. **Take up his cross daily:** Commitment to serve Jesus is an everyday work in one's Christian life. Those who have committed themselves to serve have dedicated their entire lives to Jesus (Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20). Jesus' point is not that we concentrate on denying things, but on denying ourselves. When one denies himself, all things of this world are put into their correct perspective in reference to the kingdom (See comments Mt 6:31-34). **Whoever loses his life for My sake:** Those who do not give in to the lust of the flesh in this life will enjoy the abundance

26 “For whoever will be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and *the glory* of the Father and of the holy angels.

27 “But I tell you truthfully, there are some standing here who will not taste of death until they see the kingdom of God.”

28 ¶ Now it came to pass about eight days after these statements that He took Peter and John and James and went up on a mountain to pray.

29 Now as He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His clothing *became* white and glistening.

30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah,

31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His departure that He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and those who were with Him were heavy with sleep. And when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two

men who stood with Him.

33 Now it came to pass as they departed from Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah” – not knowing what he said.

34 While he was saying this, there came a cloud and *it began* to overshadow them. And they feared as they entered the cloud.

35 Then there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, “This is My Son, My chosen One! Hear Him!”

36 Now when the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and told no one in those days any of the things that they had seen.

37 ¶ Now it came to pass on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, many people met Him.

38 And behold, a man of the multitude cried out, saying, “Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only child.

39 “And behold, a spirit seizes him and he

of life (Jn 10:10). Those who have committed themselves to Jesus will not only receive the abundant life in this life (Jn 10:10), they will also reap eternal life in the new heavens and earth to come (See 17:33; Jn 12:25).

What profit: What profit is it to acquire that which is of this life in order to earn that which is beyond this life? The answer to the question is that no man with the goods of this world can make an exchange for the heaven that is to come (See 16:19-31; Mt 16:26; Mk 8:36; At 1:18,25).

Ashamed of Me and My words: Those who are ashamed of letting their spiritual light shine before men as a result of Jesus living in their hearts are certainly not worthy subjects of an eternal dwelling in the glory of God (See 12:9; Mt 10:33; Mk 8:38; 2 Tm 2:12; Rm 1:16).

They see the kingdom of God: See Mt 16:28; Mk 9:1; At 7:55,56. They would not see a physical kingdom of thrones on earth as a physical kingdom of this world. They would see the power of the kingdom reign of Jesus that would be manifested from heaven (24:49; At 1:8). And such they did see when the Holy Spirit was poured forth on the apostles on the day of Pentecost (At 2:1-4). This great event happened before many of those who were alive during Jesus' ministry died. Jesus' kingdom reign was not postponed or delayed from the time He said it would be established. He wanted His disciples to know that it would be established in their lifetime.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

(Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13)

28-36 See comments Mt 17:1-13. **Went up on the mountain:** Some believe this may have been Mount Hermon which is 2,814 meters above sea level. It would have been an isolated location for the event of the transfiguration. Great prophets in the Old Testament experienced the glory of God on mountains. Jesus possibly

wants these three disciples to experience the same (See Ex 24:15; 1 Kg 19:8). In this case, Moses represented the law of the Old Testament and Elijah the prophets. This event was to proclaim to the disciples that things were changing. The voice out of heaven proclaimed, “*This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (vs 35; see Ps 2:7; Is 41:1; Mt 3:17; 12:18; Mk 1:11). It was time for all men to listen to Jesus (Jn 12:48; Hb 1:1-3). **Let us make three tabernacles:** Peter made the mistake that many religious people make today. They want to memorialize a place by building a building for God. However, God does not dwell in buildings made with the hands of those He created (See 1 Kg 8:27; At 7:48-50; 17:24). God needs no physical structures on earth to symbolize either His being or presence. His presence is manifested by the lives of those who dedicate themselves to following after His will. It is the human temple of those who give themselves to holy living that manifests His presence, not temples made with the hands of men. **Cloud:** See Ex 24:15-18; Ps 97:2. **Told no one in those days:** They did not understand the full significance of the experience. And, it was not to be told until after all things had been revealed to them (See Mt 17:9; Mk 9:9).

FAITH AND A DEMONIC BOY

(Mt 17:14-23; Mk 9:14-32)

It is at this time that Jesus closes His ministry in Galilee. It is only a few months before the cross. Because the disciples do not understand all the implications of His death to come, He becomes more definite with them in teaching as He draws near to the cross. **37-42** See comments Mt 17:14-23. **Your disciples ... could not:** Jesus identified that the reason the disciples could not cast out the demon was because of their lack of faith (vs 41). Without Jesus they could do

suddenly cries out. And it convulses him so that he foams *at the mouth*. And it leaves him with great difficulty, bruising him.

40 “I asked Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not.”

41 And Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long will I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”

42 Now as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child. And He delivered him again to his father.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while everyone was amazed at all things that Jesus did, He said to His disciples,

44 “Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men.”

45 But they did not understand this statement. And it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask Him about this statement.

46 ¶ Then there arose a dispute among them as to which of them should be the greatest.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child and set him by Him,

48 and said to them, “Whoever will receive this child in My name receives Me. And whoever will receive Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all, the same will be great.”

49 ¶ Then John answered and said, “Master, we saw one casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us.”

50 And Jesus said to him, “Do not forbid *him*, he who is not against us is for us.”

51 ¶ Now it came to pass when the time had come for Him to be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

52 And He sent messengers before His face. And they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans to prepare for Him.

53 But they did not receive Him because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem.

54 Now when His disciples, James and John, saw *this*, they said, “Lord, do You want us to

nothing. Without faith in Him they were powerless. **43-45** *The Son of Man is about to be betrayed*: The disciples had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. However, they could not connect the Old Testament prophecies of the death of the Messiah with Jesus (See Is 53; Ps 22). They still had the common Jewish belief that the Messiah would come with the mission to physically deliver Israel from the oppression of foreign governments (See At 1:6). His prophecy of His death as given here was to prepare them for the crucifixion. Though they were not expecting the crucifixion, they would later understand that during His ministry, Jesus knew that His crucifixion would happen.

DISPUTE OVER GREATNESS

(Mt 18:1-5; Mk 9:33-50)

46-48 See comments Mt 18:1-5. *A dispute arose among them*: The fact that they did not understand the death and resurrection of Jesus, but had their minds on earthly kingdoms, is manifested in the fact that they disputed among themselves concerning who was the greatest. They maintained this rivalry unto the evening of the Last Supper (See 22:24; Mk 9:33-37; 10:35-45). **49,50** *Because he does not follow with us*: The disciples had evidently developed some sectarian arrogance in reference to their companionship with Jesus. Because this unknown disciple was not in the inner circle of disciples, John and the others forbade him from doing good. But Jesus counters their sectarian behavior. He says that all good must be commended (See 11:23; Mt 12:30). There are those who do good works in the community. The community reaps the effects from the good that is

done. Some even do their good works in the name of Jesus. The cause of Jesus is furthered by such. However, because those who do these good works are not in a covenant relationship with the Lord, their good works are all in vain in reference to their salvation. Only when one is in a covenant relationship with God through obedience to the gospel will his works follow with him into eternal glory. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (1 Co 15:58; see Rv 14:13). In order for one's good works not be in vain, he must be in the Lord (See comments Rm 6:3-6; Gl 3:26,27).

51-54 Beginning at this point in Luke's narrative, it is difficult to establish the chronological order of Jesus' activities. The orderly arrangement of the material itself is apparent, but chronology as it relates to the actual sequence of Jesus' ministry is difficult to determine. An orderly arrangement of the last six months of Jesus' ministry is indicated by John (See Jn 7:10; 10:22,40-42; 11:1-17,54; 12:1). *For Him to be received up*: Jesus was fully conscious of the fact that at this time His death was near (Is 50:7; Mk 16:19; At 1:2). His death was not unexpected because He knew that He was the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world (Is 53; Ps 22; Rv 13:8). *He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*: Jesus now focuses with determination on the cross, and by doing such, emphasizes teaching that the disciples will later understand after the resurrection and ascension (Mk 10:32). *A village of the Samaritans*: Jesus sent messengers ahead to prepare His entry into a village of the Samaritans. However, when

command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"

55 But He turned and rebuked them.

56 Then they went to another village.

57 ¶ Now it came to pass as they went along the road, a certain *man* said to Him, "Lord, I will follow you wherever You go."

58 Then Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head."

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

60 Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead. But you go and preach the kingdom of God."

61 And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go *and* say good-bye to those in my house."

62 Then Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Chapter 10

1 ¶ After these things the Lord appointed seventy-two others also. And He sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was going to come.

2 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few. Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest that He send out laborers into His harvest.

3 "Go your way. Behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

4 "Carry no money bag, no wallet, no sandals. And do not greet anyone along the way.

5 "And into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'

the Samaritans realized that Jesus was headed for the feast in Jerusalem, they rejected Him. **Do you want us to command fire:** The sons of thunder wanted to act immediately against those who rejected Jesus (Mk 3:17). However, Jesus was going to Jerusalem where He would be rejected. It was time now that the disciples also learn rejection. They had been with Jesus for about three years, living in a fellowship environment where the people in Galilee were accepting them by asking for Jesus. Now they must learn rejection without seeking to retaliate (Compare 2 Kg 1:10-12). God would render vengeance by the harsh judgment that would soon come in A.D. 70 upon those who rejected Jesus (See comments Mt 24). Vengeance, therefore, must be left to God. The disciples must learn to control themselves in reference to those who would reject them. **55,56 Manner of spirit you are:** In reference to the spirit of the world that would retaliate, James and John did know their spirit (See Rm 8:15; 2 Tm 1:7). They did not understand that their spirit of retaliation was actually the spirit of the world. However, in reference to the spiritual nature of the kingdom, they would have to understand that vengeance belongs only to God because He is the one who is rejected when His messengers are rejected. **To save them:** Jesus came to seek and to save those who were lost (19:10; Jn 3:17; 12:47). His disciples must also have a spirit of saving the lost, not a spirit of retaliation and destruction.

TOTAL COMMITMENT

(Mt 8:19-22)

57-62 See comments Mt 8:19-22. At this time in the ministry of Jesus, commitment to follow Him is demanded by Jesus. There were certainly others who were following Jesus other than the immediate twelve. Jesus taught that all must commit themselves to follow Him. They, as He, must be willing to sacrifice any permanent place of dwelling (vs 58; see Lk 2:7; 8:23). They must even put Him before social responsibilities and family relationships (vss 59,60; see comments 14:25-35). It

was now a time to look forward and not back. Those who look back are not of the nature that is demanded by the kingdom reign of Jesus. When one looks back he is questioning his faith in the One who is before him. When the kingdom reign of heaven is done on earth in the hearts of men, then kingdom business must always supersede that which is of this world (Mt 6:31-34; 2 Tm 4:10). One cannot trust in God as he does kingdom business while at the same time he looks back in order to trust in the things of this world.

Chapter 10

SENDING OF THE SEVENTY

This section of events and teachings are found only in this letter of Luke. **1** This is a different preaching tour than the one that Matthew mentions in Matthew 10. **Seventy others:** During His ministry, Jesus prepared more individuals for the work of preaching than the twelve apostles. In this case, seventy disciples are commissioned to heal the sick and preach the kingdom throughout the cities of Palestine (vs 9). **Two by two:** For protection, credibility and mutual encouragement Jesus sent them forth two by two. **Into every city and place:** Jesus was nearing the end of His ministry, therefore, He sent these disciples out in order to prepare the way for His coming and teaching in these cities. **2 Send out laborers:** See comments Mt 9:37,38. Herein is an imperative for the disciples in their prayers. They must pray for more evangelists (See 1 Co 3:9; 2 Th 3:1). **3,4** See comments Mt 10:7-16. They were to carry no excess baggage that would slow them down on their journey. They were not even to carry an extra pair of shoes. They must go as they were. They must learn to put their trust in God to take care of them. **Greet no one along the road:** There was an urgency about this mission. They were to waste no time on the road, but to make their way immediately to the cities to which Jesus was about to go. **5,6 Peace to this house:** This greeting was to determine if the hosts would receive them

6 “And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it. If not, it will return to you.

7 “And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give *you*, for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Do not go from house to house.

8 “And into whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

9 “And heal the sick that are in it, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’

10 “But into whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say,

11 ‘Even the very dust of your city that clings

to our feet, we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near to you.’

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

13 ¶ “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon that have been done in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 “But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.

15 “And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades!

16 “The one who hears you hears Me. And

into their houses. If these messengers were received into any house, God's blessing would be on that house. The disciples must learn to accept the hospitality of those who want to have fellowship with the preaching of the gospel (See comments 3 Jn 1-8). **7,8 Eating and drinking such things as they give:** They were not to complain about the food or be disrespectful concerning what they were served to eat. They must eat what they are served and be thankful for it. **The laborer is worthy of his wages:** They were to receive the hospitality of the host without feeling that they should repay money for what they received (Mt 10:10; 1 Co 9:4-8; 1 Tm 5:18). The evangelist must graciously receive that which is given to him because he receives it not for himself, but for the One for whom he labors in preaching. **Eat such things as are set before you:** These messengers were Jews and were going into Gentile areas. In view of the Old Testament law's restrictions concerning Jews eating certain foods, the seventy were to become all things to all men. They were instructed to eat what was set before them without causing a disturbance (Compare 10:9-16; Cl 2:16; see Mt 16:10-20; 1 Co 9:7; 10:27). **9** The seventy are here commanded to heal. They were also to cast out demons (vs 17). However, they were not commanded to raise the dead as the twelve were in Matthew 10:8. One of the signs of the Christ-sent apostles was probably that they could raise the dead (See comments 2 Co 12:12). **The kingdom of God has come near to you:** The kingdom reign had come near in the sense that the King was on earth ministering among men. He was about to ascend to the throne of David in heaven. **10,11** The command to the seventy was to proclaim the good news of God's salvation. The emphasis of their preaching at this time was on the proclamation of the kingdom. They preached repentance in view of the coming kingdom reign of King Jesus. **Wipe off against you:** The Jew's wiping off of the dust of another land – that which was considered a polluted land (Am 7:17) in contrast to Israel's holy land (Ez 45:1) – was a symbol that meant rejection and repudiation of the inhabitants of that land. Jesus instructs the disciples here to do such in order to indicate that they had relieved themselves of the blood of responsibility of those who reject them (See At 13:15). **12 In that day:** Israel

had great opportunity to repent during the ministry of Jesus because the Son of God was on earth and personally ministering to them. They thus received greater responsibility because they had received a greater witness to the work of God. Their rejection of Jesus would result in greater judgment. **Sodom:** See Gn 13:13; 18:20; 19:24; Is 13:19; Jr 49:18; 2 Pt 2:6; Jd 7. **13,14** The inhabitants of these cities are judged with great judgment because they had received the personal witness of the Son of God, and yet, there was no repentance (See Jh 3). **Chorazin:** See Mt 11:21-23. **Bethsaida:** See Mk 6:45; 8:22; Jn 1:44; 12:21. **Mighty works:** Many miracles were worked in these cities of Israel during the personal ministry of Jesus. Mark records only one miracle that was worked in these cities (Mk 8:22). But Luke records that Jesus had worked many miracles in these cities. Thus, the New Testament does not record all the miracles that were worked by Jesus throughout His ministry (Jn 20:30,31; 21:25). **Tyre and Sidon:** These were Gentile cities (Gn 10:15; 49:13; Is 23; Ez 26-28; 29:18). The ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had the opportunity the cities of Israel had during the personal ministry of Jesus. **Sackcloth and ashes:** Sackcloth was a very coarse material that was often made of goats' hair and was black in color (Rv 6:12). It was worn either as a sign of mourning for the dead (Gn 37:34; 2 Sm 3:31; Jl 1:8), mourning over personal or national distress (Jb 16:15; Lm 2:10; Et 4:1), mourning over personal sin (1 Kg 21:27; Ne 9:1; Jh 3:5; Mt 11:21), or in times of special prayer for deliverance (2 Kg 19:1,2; Dn 9:3). Jesus' use of sackcloth and ashes here is His revelation that the cities of Tyre and Sidon would have mourned over their sinful state and repented long before His immediate audience repented. Their repentance would have resulted from their recognition that they were not right with God. On the other hand, these to whom Jesus preached but did not repent, felt religiously right with God, and thus, were not moved to repentance. Those who refuse to allow the word of God to direct their lives will refuse to turn to God because they believe that they are righteous before God on the basis of their own religious beliefs (See comments Mk 7:1-9; Cl 2:20-23). **15 Hades:** Reference here is to the unseen abode of the dead, not the gehenna

the one who rejects you rejects Me. And the one who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

17 ¶ Then the seventy-two returned again with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”

18 And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven as lightning.

19 “Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. And nothing will by any means hurt you.

20 “Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you. But rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, “I thank You, O Father, Lord

of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

22 “All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.”

23 Then He turned to *His* disciples, and said privately, “Blessed *are* the eyes that see the things that you see,

24 for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen *them*, and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 ¶ “And behold, a certain lawyer stood up

of destruction that will follow the final judgment (See Mt 25:46; 2 Th 1:7-9). Capernaum had exalted herself to be seen, but she would go to the abode of the unseen. Her religious arrogance would be the occasion for her judgment. **16** If one rejects or receives any messenger of Jesus, it is the same as rejecting or receiving Jesus (Compare Mt 24:35ff). When Saul persecuted Christians, he was persecuting Jesus (At 22:8). Since Jesus works through those who carry out His mission, it is important that we receive His messengers in order to receive Him. Those who do not receive the evangelists of Jesus are rejecting Jesus. Some individuals and churches would do well to be warned by what Jesus states here (See comments 3 Jn 1-10).

RETURN OF THE SEVENTY

17,18 Demons are subject to us: The demons were subject to the command of the seventy because it was by the authority of Jesus that they could unleash the power of the supernatural in order to control any work of Satan. Jesus had total power over Satan, even through His disciples (See comments Mt 4:24). **Satan fall like lightning:** As lightning strikes from heaven to earth, Jesus here metaphorically pictured the fall of the power of Satan. Emphasis is not on Satan himself, but on his power as such as manifested through demon possession. Satan was being disarmed by Jesus and openly captivated by His power and authority. His power through sin would fall by the cross (1 Co 15:3). His power through physical death would fall through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Co 15:20-22; Hb 2:14). His presence among free-moral agents will fall in the final judgment (Mt 25:41). **19 Tample on serpents and scorpions:** These metaphors are symbolic of the disciples' conquest over the works of Satan (See Rm 8:38,39; 2 Co 10:3-5; Gl 5:19-21; Ep 6:10-18). Through the word of Jesus, the disciples had all power over the deceptions of Satan. Through the works of Jesus, they had all power over the being of Satan. **Nothing shall by any means hurt you:** Jesus here instills confidence in the disciples. It is a confidence that they will surely need after the cross and resurrection when they go forth to preach the gospel (Mk 16:15-20; Mt 28:19,20). **20** They

must remember that their rejoicing over the subjugation of Satan to them on the mission trip they had just completed was not as important as their salvation. The miraculous power that Jesus had entrusted to them for this trip was not as important as the salvation that they had received from Jesus. **Names are written in heaven:** Jesus makes this statement in order to reassure the disciples (See Ps 69:28; Is 4:3; Dn 12:1; Ph 4:3; Hb 12:23; Rv 13:8; 20:12).

THE HIDDEN THINGS

21 You have hidden these things: God was revealing the mystery, the gospel, that had been hidden from man since the creation of the world (See Ep 3:8-13; 1 Pt 1:10-12). However, the gospel would continue to be hidden from those who considered themselves wise. It was hidden from them, not because God did not reveal it, but because of their own arrogant attitudes toward Jesus (See Rm 9:11-17; 1 Co 1:22,24,26,27; compare Lk 9:47,48; Mt 16:17; 18:3,4; 2 Co 4:3,4). See comments Mt 13:10-17. **22 Delivered to Me:** See Jn 3:35; 5:27; 13:3; 17:2; Mt 28:18. **Except the Father:** Because men are not omniscient, they cannot know the nature of the relationship between the Father and Son (See Jn 1:18; 6:44,46). No one can know all that God is. For this reason, Jesus was revealed in order to reveal the Father (Jn 1:1-5; 6:44; 10:30; 14:6; 17:6,25,26). **23,24 The things you see:** The disciples could walk by fact not by faith because they stood in the presence of the Son of God. They personally experienced the unveiling of the realm of the supernatural. They were specifically blessed for living in such a time that God had chosen to personally reveal Himself through the Son. It is by their testimony that we believe. The immediate disciples were blessed because of their privilege of personally experiencing the Son of God. However, we are more blessed today because we believe but have not personally experienced the Son of God in the flesh (See comments Jn 20:29). **Many prophets:** Many Old Testament prophets looked forward to the days of the unveiling of mystery. They did not understand what was in the plan of God (1 Pt 1:10-12). However, by faith they knew that God was going to reveal a marvelous thing.

and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? How does it read to you?"

27 And he answered and said, "*You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.*"

28 And He said to him, "You have answered right. Do this and you will live."

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

30 And Jesus answered and said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 "And by chance there came down that way a certain priest. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 "And likewise a Levite, when he was at

the place, came and looked at him, and passed by on the other side.

33 "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

34 "Then he went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. And he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 "Now on the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the host, and said to him, 'Take care of him. And what more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'

36 "Now which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

37 Then he said, "He who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

38 ¶ Now it came to pass as they traveled that He entered into a certain village. And a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

25 This is a different encounter of Jesus with a lawyer (scribe) than the encounter that is recorded by Matthew and Mark in Matthew 22:34-40 and Mark 12:28-34. With the encounter that is recorded by Matthew and Mark, it was Jesus who responded with the statement to love God with one's total being. Here Luke records an encounter where the lawyer makes the same reply. **A certain lawyer:** This was a scribe, or one who was a lawyer of the Old Testament law and Jewish religious traditions. The first of the two questions he asked was presented in order to set a trap for Jesus. **26-28 You shall love the Lord your God:** See comments Mt 22:34-40. The lawyer knew this principle of the Old Testament law (Dt 6:5; Lv 19:18; Mt 19:19). In order to establish a vertical relationship with God, one must first love God. Love is manifested by one's response to the commandments of God (Jn 14:15). When one loves God, he responds with obedience to God (See 18:20; Mt 7:21-27; 19:17; 1 Jn 4:19). Therefore, it is upon the principle of love that all law in reference to God is based (See comments Rm 3:31). **Love ... your neighbor as yourself:** Our horizontal relationship with our fellow man is based on the fact that we manifest love (See comments Gl 5:13,14; 1 Jn 4:19). This principle of love is based on one's acceptance of one's self. We love others as we have concern for ourselves. However, Jesus would later give the principle of loving as He had loved us (See comments Jn 13:34,35). **29 Justify himself:** The lawyer's neighbor would extend far beyond what he here presumed. One's neighbor did not have cultural boundaries as the Jews established between themselves and the Gentiles (See Mt 5:43). When Jesus answered the lawyer's questions, the lawyer would have to love a Samaritan whom the Jews despised. **30-37** In this parable Jesus answers the question of who is our neigh-

bor. **A certain priest ... a Levite:** These were the respected religious leaders. They manifested an outward appearance of religious behavior, but they had no compassion in their hearts. Jesus here manifests the hypocrisy of their religious beliefs and behavior. The nation of Israel had spiritually fallen and these religious leaders were more concerned over their religious ceremonialism than over the people. **A certain Samaritan:** The Samaritans were a crossbreed between Jews and the Gentiles who were brought into Palestine after the Assyrian captivity of 721/22 B.C. They were despised by the Jews (See Jn 4:9). The religious leaders of Israel during Jesus' day would not associate with the Samaritans, therefore, they could not practice the principle of loving one's neighbor as himself. The scribe had asked who his neighbor was in order to justify himself (vs 29). But one cannot perform his own invented religion and at the same time, violate the very principle upon which the law of God hangs. That principle is that one love God with the totality of his being and to love his neighbor as himself (See comments Mt 22:37-40). **Go and do likewise:** True religion that is pure and undefiled before God is to minister to the needs of all men (Js 1:27). All humanity is the neighbor of the Christian. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gl 6:10).

MARY AND MARTHA

38,39 Martha: Martha, with her sister Mary and brother Lazarus, lived in Bethany (Jn 11:1; 12:2,3). **Sat at Jesus' feet:** She, as well as her brother and sister, were students and followers of Jesus' teachings (See At 22:3). **40 Distracted with much serving:** At the time Jesus was present in the house, Martha's priorities were wrong. She was doing a needed and good work.

into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet and heard His word.

40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she came to Him, and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her that she *must* help me."

41 And the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part that will not be taken away from her."

Chapter 11

1 ¶ Now it came to pass that as He was praying in a certain place, when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples."

2 Then He said to them, "When you pray,

say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.

3 'Give us each day our daily bread.

4 'And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation.'"

5 ¶ Then He said to them, "Which of you will have a friend, and goes to him at midnight, and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves,

6 'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey and I have nothing to set before him';

7 "and from within he will answer and say, 'Do not trouble me. The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give to you'?

8 "I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

9 ¶ "And I say to you, ask, and it will be given

However, the situation demanded a change in her priorities because the end of Jesus' ministry was drawing near. It was a time to listen to Jesus for the last time.

41,42 *Mary has chosen the good part:* It is good to care for the physical needs of the hour, however, the spiritual needs of man are always more important. One must not use the service of physical needs as an excuse to neglect the spiritual food that is more important. In this case, Mary sensed the finality of the hour, and thus, concentrated on what Jesus had to say.

Chapter 11

JESUS TEACHES ON PRAYER

This teaching on prayer took place at a different time than the time when Jesus taught on this subject in Matthew 6:7-15 (See Mt 7:7-11). We must keep in mind that Jesus taught on key subjects as prayer on more than one occasion. **1** *Teach us to pray:* The disciples were spiritually minded. However, they had been with Jesus long enough to realize that their prayers needed guidance. They realized that Jesus was moving them toward new things, and thus, they possibly felt here that they should change their prayer request to be in harmony with His will and mission (1 Jn 5:14). After the establishment of the church, these disciples went forth and established the church in areas of idolatrous worship. One work of the Holy Spirit that was later given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, was the gift of prophecy, which gift included the direction of prayer by the Holy Spirit (See comments 1 Co 14:14,15; Jd 20; see Rm 8:26,27). The newly converted did not know how to pray according to the word of God, and thus, needed direction by the Spirit. Today our prayers are directed by the word of God. **2-4** See comments Mt 6:7-15. Jesus is not teaching that we should recite this prayer word for word as a ritualistic prayer. He simply

gives an example of what should be contained in the prayer of the disciples. *Your kingdom come:* One must not believe that the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus was dependent on the prayers of the disciples. God was going to establish Jesus as King at His right hand regardless of the prayers of the disciples or the rejection of the Jews. Emphasis here is on the will of the Father being done on earth as it is done in heaven. When the will of the Father is done in the hearts of men, then the kingdom reign of God is established on earth (See comments 17:20,21). Jesus reigns in the hearts of those who have submitted to His will. When the first official announcement of His kingdom reign was made in Acts 2, and people submitted to such, then His kingdom reign was manifested on earth through obedient subjects. Those who were obedient comprised the church. Therefore, when one would pray for the kingdom to come, emphasis is on people accepting the kingdom reign of Jesus in their hearts through obedience to His will. When people do such, the will of the Father is done on earth as it is done in heaven.

PARABLE OF A PERSISTENT FRIEND

5-8 Jesus here continues with the subject of prayer that was stimulated by the disciples' requests concerning prayer. The lesson of this parable is that our heavenly Father is a willing listener. He is ready to answer the prayers of those who stand in an obedient relationship with Him (See 1 Jn 5:14). Jesus is teaching that the disciples continue in their prayers. In this case, He is teaching that one continue in requests for a specific thing, though in some things, one can pray only once and God will answer (See comments Js 5:17,18). One prayer will some times unleash the power of God.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

9-12 See comments Mt 7:9-11. *Ask ... seek ...*

to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you.

10 “For everyone who asks receives. And he who seeks finds. And to him who knocks it will be opened.

11 “If a son will ask for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?

12 “Or if he will ask for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

14 ¶ Now He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. And it came to pass when the demon had gone out, the mute spoke, and the people marveled.

15 But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”

16 And others, testing *Him*, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

17 But knowing their thoughts, He said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself

is brought to desolation. And a house *divided* against itself falls.

18 “If Satan is also divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? *I say this* because you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

19 “Now if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore, they will be your judges.

20 “But if I with the finger of God cast out demons, certainly the kingdom of God has come upon you.

21 “When an armed strong man keeps his palace, his goods are undisturbed.

22 “But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils.

23 “He who is not with Me is against Me. And he who does not gather with Me, scatters.

24 ¶ “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through waterless places,

knock: See Ps 50:14,15; Is 55:6; Jr 33:3; Mt 7:7,21,22; Mk 11:24; Jn 14:7; Js 1:5,6; 1 Jn 3:22. **13 Give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him:** Keep in mind that Jesus is here talking directly to the apostles. He is giving them instruction for their prayers that would be applicable to them in their lives as His special apostles to the world. This verse should be compared with the parallel statement He makes in Matthew 7:11. On the occasion of Matthew 7:11, Jesus said that the Father gives “good things.” Here Luke records that He said He gives the Holy Spirit. Emphasis, therefore, is on the good things that would come as a result of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is directing them toward the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit that would come in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28. The apostles would be baptized in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1-4. From this would come the miraculous gifts of the Spirit that would be imparted to the church through the laying on of the apostles’ hands (See comments Mk 16:17-20; At 2:38,39; 8:18; 19:1-6; Rm 1:11). The good things of the Holy Spirit, therefore, would go throughout the world as a result of His initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles in Acts 2. Therefore, in this dispensation of the Holy Spirit we partake of the good things of the Spirit

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

(Mt 12:22-30,43-45; Mk 3:22-27)

14,15 Casting out a demon: See comments Mt 4:24; 9:32-34; 12:22,24. **Dumb:** In this case of demon possession, the demon made the man unable to speak. This case of possession is similar to the one that is recorded in Matthew 12:22-37, though it is probably not the same case (See comments Mt 12:22-37). **By Beelzebul:** See comments Mt 9:34; 12:24. At this time in the ministry of Jesus, there were many in the

multitudes who were making and seeking accusations against Him because of what He taught and said. These religiously misguided individuals could not answer His arguments, nor could they deny His works. However, because of their unrighteous hearts, their hypocrisy was manifested by their unwillingness to accept Jesus regardless of the miraculous works that He worked. Those who are arrogantly religious have closed their minds to the truth. Regardless of what is said and done by a righteous proclaimer of the truth, those who are of a closed mind and unrighteous heart will continue to reject what is said. They will twist what they hear in order to slander those they oppose. **16-23 Sought ... a sign:** See Mt 12:38; 16:1; Mk 8:11. **Divided against itself:** See comments Mt 12:22-30. If their accusation against Jesus were true, then His kingdom would fall. However, what is manifested by their accusation is the fact that they could not deny that Jesus was doing the work of the kingdom of God. If they did admit that Jesus was doing the work of the kingdom, then they would have confessed that their efforts were against the kingdom of God. Therefore, they had to assign the work of Jesus to Satan because of their claim that they were of the kingdom of God. **When a stronger than he comes:** Jesus here states that He is stronger than Satan. God has given Satan control over the realm of darkness, but such in no way can be compared to the One who had created all things in the first place (Is 53:12; Cl 2:15; see comments Cl 1:16). We often do not consider the extremity between Jesus and Satan that is here expressed in a few words. Jesus created all things. This would include all things that are perceived through the senses of men, that is, the material world. He also created all that is of the unseen world (Cl 1:16). This would include Satan himself. Satan certainly was not created

seeking rest. And finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'

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

26 "Then he goes and takes *along* seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. And the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

27 ¶ Now it came to pass as He spoke these things, a certain woman of the crowd lifted up her voice and said to Him, "Blessed *is* the womb that bore You and the breasts that nursed You!"

28 But He said, "On the contrary, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it."

29 ¶ Now when the people were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. They seek a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.

30 "For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation.

31 "The Queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them. For she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

32 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it. For they repented unto the preaching of Jonah. And behold, a greater than Jonah *is* here.

33 "No man, when he has lit a lamp, puts *it* in a secret place or under a basket, but on a lampstand so that those who come in may see the light.

34 "The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light. But when *your eye* is evil, your body also *is* full of darkness.

35 "Therefore, take heed that the light that is in you is not darkness.

36 "If therefore your whole body *is* full of light, having no part dark, it will be full of

evil as he now is. He was created as a spirit being who free-morally gave up his intended habitation of dwelling (See 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6). As a created being, therefore, Satan has no indigenous power. He can act only insofar as God allows Him to act. He is thus allowed to work in order to create an environment of evil choices for free-moral individuals who desire to rebel against God. In the context here, Jesus wants us to understand that He has all authority to devastate the work of Satan. **Divides his spoils:** The time was approaching when Jesus would despoil the household of Satan in reference to his spiritual control over men (Cl 2:15; Hb 2:14). **He who is not with Me:** It was now time in the ministry of Jesus for people to choose sides (Mt 12:30; Mk 9:40). Those who do not choose to work for Jesus would identify themselves as servants of Satan. **24-26** Compare comments Mt 12:43-45. Jesus now warns that if one does not accept Him as God's representative, his heart will harden even more. He will be hardened because he has rejected the direct manifestation of the Son of God. There were many during the personal ministry of Jesus who rejected Him. Since there were many who personally rejected the Son of God when He was on earth, then we should not be surprised that there will be many today who will also reject Him. **27,28 Blessed:** This woman of the multitudes called Mary was blessed because she was the mother of Jesus who was the Son of God (1:28,48). Her admission and proclamation affirmed that Jesus was no ordinary child or teacher of Israel. Jesus replied that even more blessed are those who willingly hear God's word and obey (Ps 1:1,2; 112:1; 119:1,2; Is 48:17,18; Mt 7:21; Js 1:25). It is not good enough to hear only. One must have an active faith that follows the direction of God through His word (See com-

ments Js 1:22; 2:14-26). Without an active faith, one's faith is dead.

THE SIGN OF JONAH

(Mt 12:38-42; Mk 8:11,12)

29-32 Compare comments Mt 12:38-45. It is possible that these words of Jesus were spoken at a different time than the similar words that are recorded in Matthew 12:38-45. **Jonah became a sign:** The sign that was given through Jonah was his deliverance from the belly of the whale after he had been there for three days (Jh 1:17; 2:10; 3:3-10; Mt 12:39,40). Similarly, the sign of Jesus' resurrection after three days in the tomb would be the signal to His generation that He was from God (Rm 1:4). **Queen of the south:** See 1 Kg 10:1-9; 2 Ch 9:1-8. **Condemn it:** Those who repented before the coming of Jesus repented on the basis of hearing the word of God. Those of Jesus' generation did not repent though they both heard and saw the word of God. Therefore, those who repented without personally seeing Jesus will rise in judgment over those of Jesus' generation who were standing before Jesus who was the Son of God. He was the incarnate Word of God who had come into the world, and yet, they did not repent (Jn 1:1-3,14). Those who stood before Him, therefore, and rejected His teaching would be judged faithless by those who never saw but believed (See comments Jn 20:29).

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

33-36 Compare comments Mt 5:15; 6:22,23 (Lk 8:16; Mk 4:21). Jesus illustrated that God's true moral light had come into the world through Him (Jn 1:1ff; 8:12). However, only those who have an unprejudiced and pure

light, as when the bright lamp gives you light.”

37 ¶ And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him. And He went in and reclined to eat.

38 Now when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner.

39 Then the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.

40 “You foolish ones! Did not He who made that which is outside also make that which is inside?”

41 “But rather give alms of such things as you have. And then, all things are clean to

you.

42 “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe the mint and rue and all kinds of herbs, and disregard justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done without leaving the others undone.

43 “Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets.

44 “Woe to you because you are like unmarked graves, and men who walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.”

45 ¶ Then one of the lawyers answered and said to Him, “Teacher, by saying this, You insult us also.”

46 And He said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load men with burdens hard to bear,

heart are able to see this revelation from God. They are able to see because they are humble in heart. **Full of light ... of darkness:** Emphasis of the context is not on the light, but on the hearts of those who behold the light. One's reaction to the light, therefore, judges whether his heart is either full of light or darkness. The spiritual condition of the beholders of the light will judge whether one is either for or against Jesus. Judgment, therefore, is the responsibility of the individual. Jesus has come only to present the occasion for one to judge himself. For this reason Jesus said at the beginning of His ministry, “*He who believes in Him is not condemned. But he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.*” (Jn 3:18,19). Men may judge one another on the basis of laws that men have established for themselves. The authority of the judge lies in the fact that other men have devised the laws by which he judges. However, with God, His laws and judgment are different. Men did not formulate the laws of God that have been delivered to man. God gave His own laws. He has a right to do such because He is God. Therefore, when a representative of God delivers His law to the listeners, it is the authority of the God-ordained law that judges, not the messenger of the law. When one negatively reacts to the preached law of God, then that person has judged himself in reference to the divine standard of God's law.

WOE TO THE PHARISEES

37 Jesus frequently ate with those who were considered the religious leaders of the community. It was His work to work with all who would accept Him and what He taught. He also ate with those the religious leaders considered to be sinners in the community (5:29; 7:36; 14:1; 19:5; Jn 2:1-11; 12:1,2). One should never refuse an opportunity to teach and preach the word of God. **38** Compare comments Mt 15:1-20; Mk 7:1-23. **39 Outside ... clean ... inward ... wickedness:** Such was a description of what their legal oriented religion

had done to their lives. On the outside they professed religiosity by the performance of religious codes and ceremonies. However, their performance of their religious works did not change their hearts. They could thus maintain an outward performance of religious rules but maintain wickedness in their hearts (See comments introduction to Gl). **40,41** God made the whole man, and thus, meant that the outward behavior of the individual should manifest the inward character (See Gn 1:26,27). Anything different from this would be hypocrisy. Therefore, one's inner holiness must be manifested by outward obedience to the will of God. **42,43 Woe to you Pharisees:** In the house of this Pharisee Jesus directly addressed the hypocritical religion of the Pharisees (See comments Mt 23). **Pass by justice and love of God:** By emphasizing a pretense of a just heart before God by their religious performances, they neglected justice toward their fellow man and obedience as a result of their love of God (Mt 23:23; Jn 5:42). **Love the best seats:** See 14:7; 20:46; Mt 23:6; Mk 12:38,39. They loved to be seen for their religious performances. They loved being accepted and recognized as religious leaders and given special attention for such. **44 Graves which are not seen:** They covered their inner dead hearts by the outward performance of their religious rites and rules. Thus, men could not see their true hearts because of their pompous religious actions that were only on the outside. Their religious activities deceived others into thinking that they were spiritually driven from within.

WOE TO THE SCRIBES

45 Lawyers: These were the scribes who were the interpreters of both the Old Testament law and the Jewish oral and written religious traditions that had been handed down from generation to generation in Israel. In times of dispute, they made application of the law and traditions in reference to those who were in dispute. **You reproach us also:** These lawyers were of the same religious behavior as the Pharisees. They concentrated on the outward appearance of religious behavior, but their hearts were wicked. **46 For you load**

and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 “Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 “Therefore, you bear witness that you approve the deeds of your fathers. For they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs.

49 “Therefore, the wisdom of God also said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute,’

50 “so that the blood of all the prophets that was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,

51 “from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Truly, I say to you, it will be re-

quired of this generation.

52 “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You entered not in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

53 Now when He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to vehemently rail at Him and to provoke Him to speak on many things, **54** plotting against Him to catch Him in something He might say.

Chapter 12

1 ¶ In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled upon one another, He began to say to His disciples first, “Beware of

men with burdens hard to bear: These scribes were interpreters of the law who bound on the backs of others legal requirements that were not a part of the law, but their own interpretations and opinions. The fact that the people could not keep all their opinions and interpretations of the law is manifested in the fact that Jesus here identifies their system of religion as a burden to the people (At 15:10). **47,48 You build the tombs of the prophets:** These hypocritical religious leaders built beautiful tombs to honor God's Old Testament prophets. On the other hand, they rejected the word of the prophets (Mt 23:29; At 7:52). They were actually of the evil spirit of those who killed the prophets. **You approve the deeds of your fathers:** The scribes were behaving after the same manner as their fathers who killed the prophets of God. Not long from the time Jesus delivered this stunning rebuke to the legalistic scribes they joined with the other religious leaders in order to devise a plot to kill Jesus. They were more concerned with their power and positions as religious leaders than with the word of the Son of God who was in their presence. **49** Jesus refers here to His own prophecy of sending out His prophets and apostles with the message of the gospel (Mt 23:34). But the Jews who reject the New Testament apostles and prophets will deal with them in the same manner as the fathers of the rebellious Jews in the Old Testament (See At 4). They will persecute and kill the prophets and apostles of Jesus. **50,51** Compare comments Mt 23:35,36. All the rejection that antagonistic religious leaders had heaped upon the messengers of God would come upon Jesus' generation in that God would bring national Israel to a close. The nation would culminate with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. **Abel:** See Gn 4:8; 2 Ch 26:16. **Zachariah:** See 2 Ch 24:20,21. Jesus' generation of Jews would suffer the consequences of the sins of rejection by the fathers whose traditions had become so binding in Jesus' generation that many were blinded to the coming of Jesus (See comments Mk 7:1-9). They were blinded because they could not leave their traditional religion in order to accept the teachings of Jesus. The religious traditions were given more authority in religious matters than the word of God. **52 Taken away the key of knowledge:** These scribes who had bound

where God had not bound did not allow the kingdom reign of God to control their lives. They were more concerned with their religious traditions and numerous religious laws where God had not bound than they were with the word of God. In binding such on the consciences of the Jews, they hindered others from also entering into the kingdom reign of God (Mt 23:13). Others were hindered because they were intimidated by the teachings of the legalistic scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees thought that they had all the answers to the law and correct interpretations of prophecy, and thus, there was no more need for study and reconsideration of prophecies. If anyone did not conform to their interpretations and opinions of the law, then they were judged heretical in reference to Judaism. Therefore, they allowed no objective Bible study by individuals who wanted to reconsider the prophecies concerning the kingdom and Messiah. They thus shut out of the kingdom those who sought God by faith.

53,54 The scribes and the Pharisees began to assail Him vehemently: Such was only the natural reaction of all those who have satisfied themselves with their own manufactured religions after the desires and traditions of men. When one's religious tradition is under attack, he often resorts to vehement attack because he knows his faith is not based in God but in his own performance of his own traditions. **Cross-examine Him:** The legalist seeks to catch his opponent in some type of verbal trap in order to defeat his opponent. The foundation of his argumentation is not based on love and mercy, but on the arrogance of his own ability to verbally outperform his opposition. Luke here records the behavior of legalistic religionists in order that we identify the behavior and character of such in their opposition to the truth of God.

Chapter 12

WARNINGS AGAINST HYPOCRITICAL RELIGION

1 The leaven of the Pharisees: Jesus identifies the leaven as the hypocritical religion of the Pharisees (See comments Mt 16:6). Their religion was hypocritical because one could perform the outward ceremonies of the religion without dealing with one's heart. Ju-

the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy.

2 “For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.

3 “Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light. And what you have spoken in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

4 “And I say to you My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 “But I will forewarn you whom you should fear. Fear Him who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I say to you, fear Him!

6 “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? And not one of them is forgotten before God.

7 “But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear. You are of more value than many sparrows.

8 “Also I say to you, whoever will confess Me before men, him will the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God.

9 “But he who denies Me before men, will be denied before the angels of God.

10 “And whoever will speak a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him. But he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.

11 “And when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and powers, do not worry how or what you will answer, or what you will say.

12 “For the Holy Spirit will teach you in the same hour what you ought to say.”

13 ¶ Then one of the company said to Him, “Teacher, speak to my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

14 And He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?”

15 Then He said to them, “Take heed and beware of all covetousness, for a man’s life

daism was a code of regulations to which people were intimidated to conform. But in the performance of the outward obedience of codes and regulations that give the appearance of religiosity, one can leave his heart unchecked (See comments Cl 2:20-23). **2,3 Nothing covered:** One’s response to the grace of God, either negatively or positively, reveals his heart. Jesus’ coming was the occasion that would offer the opportunity for all men to either accept or reject Him. The response of each individual to Jesus would bring judgment into his or her life (See comments Mt 10:26-33; compare 1 Co 4:5; Ep 5:13). **4,5** This discourse is directed primarily to the disciples who would suffer at the hands of persecutors. The disciples must not fear the persecutors who can kill the body. They must walk in fear of God who has the power to cast one into the punishment and destruction of gehenna (See Ps 119:120; see comments Mt 10:28). **6,7** See comments Mt 10:29-31. God cares for those who are His. In these words, Jesus seeks to reassure the disciples because they do not know the extent of the persecution into which He is sending them. They will later remember these words in the heat of persecution in order to be comforted by the fact that God cares for His friends (vs 4). **8,9** See comments Mt 10:32,33. **Confesses Me before men:** The Christian confession is more than words that often give only lip service to God. Jesus calls on the commitment of one’s life in a sacrificial offering to God (Rm 12:1,2; see Rm 10:9; 2 Tm 2:12; 1 Jn 2:23). **10** One could speak against Jesus during His ministry. However, in the time of the Holy Spirit after the events of Acts 2 when the kingdom reign of Jesus was announced, one could not reject the work and word of the Holy Spirit and expect to be saved. The Holy Spirit’s work through the apostles and prophets was God’s last appeal to men to repent. As a result of the Spirit’s appeal through the apostles, many did

repent (At 2:36-38,41; 6:7; see comments 12:32; Mk 3:29). **11,12** These words are directed specifically to the twelve because it was to them that Jesus gave the special promise of the inspiration of the Spirit (See Jn 14:26; 16:13,14; see 24:44). The time of these trials before courts would happen after the establishment of the church in Acts 2 (Compare 21:15; At 4:8-12; see comments Mt 10:19,20).

TRUSTING IN THE WORLD

13-15 It was the privilege of the older brother in the Jewish culture to receive a double portion of the inheritance. However, he also had the responsibility of caring for the mother and unmarried sisters (See Gn 25:29-34; Dt 21:17). With the inheritance came also the responsibility. But this brother who asks Jesus to divide the inheritance has his mind focused on the material things of the inheritance and not the responsibility of the family. Jesus thus warns against being deceived into believing that material possessions add security to one’s life. **Beware of covetousness:** Materialism is the exaltation of the things of this world above that which will go beyond the destruction of this world (See 20:25; Cl 3:1-5; 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; Js 4:4). Materialism is the consumption of the wealth of this world upon one’s own pleasures in order to bring self-satisfaction. When one has a great amount of money, he has the opportunity to spend in order to enjoy possessions and activities that bring pleasure. However, such possessions and activities are personally enjoyed by the individual. His thinking thus changes. He spends his money and enjoys the results. He becomes materialistic. The poor man does not fall into the trap of materialistic thinking because he does not have enough money to establish the behavioral pattern of spending money in order to continually reap the material benefits. His spending is for survival,

does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses."

16 And He spoke a parable to them, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

17 "Now he thought within himself, saying, 'What will I do, because I have no room to store my crops?'

18 "Then he said, 'This I will do. I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

19 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years, take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'"

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be that you have provided?'

21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

22 ¶ Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not take thought for your life, what you will eat; nor for the body, what you will put on.

23 "The life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.

24 "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow

nor reap. They have neither storehouse nor barn. And God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds?

25 "And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

26 "If you then are not able to do that thing which is least, why are you anxious for the rest?

27 "Consider the lilies, how they grow. They toil not, nor do they spin. And yet, I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

28 "If God then so clothes the grass that is today in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?

29 "And do not seek what you will eat, or what you will drink, nor be worrisome.

30 "For all these things the nations of the world seek after. But your Father knows that you have need of these things.

31 "But rather seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

32 "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 "Sell what you have and give alms. Pro-

not possessions and pleasure. **16-21** The lesson of the parable is the deception of material possessions. Jesus does not condemn material things. He condemns such only when the material things possess the individual, and thus, direct one's mind away from that which is more important than the material (See 18:22; Mt 19:21). One must keep in mind that ambitions to acquire worldly treasures do not profit toward the edification and growth of the soul that must be spiritually prepared for eternal dwelling (See Jb 27:16-19; Ps 39:6; Ec 2:18,19,26). There is no spiritual profit in spending one's life in the acquisition of the things of the world, when in the end, the things of this world will be destroyed and one is left with a life that has been wasted on acquiring material things.

TRUSTING IN GOD

22-28 Compare comments Mt 6:25-33. **Life is more than food:** In contrast to the error of the materialistic person of the preceding parable, Jesus reminds the disciples that true life is more than the food which the body consumes. It is more than the activities in which one can participate in order to entertain himself.

God feeds them: Faith in God draws one away from the material world in order to trust in God as the provider of all that is necessary for life. The abundant life results in one's reliance on God as the provider of both our physical and spiritual needs (Jn 10:10). **29-31** **Seek the kingdom of God:** Matthew records that Jesus said

one must seek the kingdom first (Mt 6:33). Only in seeking first the kingdom of God can one maintain the correct priorities of the Christian life. It is when one places God first in all things that God takes care of him in all ways. **32-34** **Give you the kingdom:** All the threats and oppositions of the religious leaders that Jesus would encounter would not hinder the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven. Though the Jews as a whole rejected Jesus (Jn 1:11), God would establish the kingdom of Jesus (See Dn 7:18,27). The establishment of the kingdom was not dependent upon the will of man. **Sell what you have:** In the context of this statement of Jesus to the disciples, He is preparing them for their coming mission to all the world. They must dispense with anything that would hinder them from the mission He would soon give them which was to preach the gospel to all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15; see comments Mk 10:17-22). **For where your treasure is:** The direction of one's energy determines the focus of his heart. If our lives are consumed with the earning and possession of material things, then our hearts are directed toward such. On the other hand, if our minds and hearts are focused on that which is above, then the direction of our lives will be pointed toward heavenly things (Rm 12:1,2; Cl 3:1,2). Our work for the necessities of life takes second place to that which is above this world. When material things are in their right priority they become spiritual in the sense that we consider such to be blessings from God. It is not that material things

vide yourselves money bags that do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches, nor moth destroys.

34 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 ¶ “Let your waist be girded and *your* lights burning.

36 “Be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding, so that when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open to him.

37 “Blessed *are* those bondservants whom the lord, when he comes, will find watching. Truly I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

38 “Now if he comes in the second watch, or comes in the third watch, and finds *them* so, blessed are those bondservants.

39 “Now know this, that if the master of the

house had known what hour the thief would come, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

40 “Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect *Him*.”

41 ¶ Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to everyone *else*?”

42 Then the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward whom *his* lord will make ruler over his household, to give *them* their portion of food at the proper time?”

43 “Blessed *is* that bondservant whom his lord, when he comes, will find so doing.

44 “Of a truth I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

45 “But if that bondservant says in his heart, ‘My lord delays his coming,’ and will begin to beat *both* the men and women bondservants, and to eat and drink and be

are wrong. When material blessings are used for the work of God, then they are a blessing. The rich man who continually focuses his material blessings toward the propagation of the gospel is a blessing to the kingdom of God (See comments 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; 3 Jn 1-8).

WATCHING SERVANTS

35,36 The lesson here is similar to the one given by Jesus in the parable of the ten virgins (See comments Mt 25:1-13). Jesus' emphasis is that the servants be ready through active service in kingdom business. One must be prepared for the master by maintaining service. Those who have a heart of service will always be watching for the master. They are looking for the coming of the master because they are ready (See comments 2 Pt 3:11-13). **37 Blessed:** Servants who watch, maintain their preparedness by humble service (See Jn 13:4-8). **38 Second ... third watch:** These were times in the night according to the Roman accounting of time. Therefore, the master could come at any time, even in the night. In fact, when Jesus comes some people will be in the night on the earth, whereas others will be in the day. Jesus' point is that one must always be prepared for the coming of the Lord. **39,40** Compare comments Mt 24:43-51; Mk 13:33; 1 Th 5:2,6. **Be ready:** Those who have made it their priority to consume their time and energies with the things of this world have diverted their attention away from being prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. The materialist does not want the master to come because His coming will upset his comfortable way of life. In the historical context of what Jesus is saying, many of the rich to whom Jesus came were not prepared to receive Him. They were more concerned over the things of the world than fulfillment of prophecies concerning the Messiah. Jesus was the Son of Man (the Messiah) in their midst and they were not spiritually prepared to accept Him (See comments Mt 24:36-39). Specifically, the Pharisees

were lovers of money, and thus, were not prepared to have Jesus upset their financial use of religion to consume things upon their own lusts (See comments 16:14; Mt 15:3-6).

THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT

41 Compare the parable of Mt 24:45-51. **To us:** Peter wondered concerning the application of the preceding parable. The parable was for the disciples, though they did not understand the great persecution into which they were going. **42-44 Faithful and wise steward:** The twelve must become faithful to the mission Jesus is going to give them (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They must be wise in the application of the truth that will be revealed to them (Jn 14:26; 16:13,14). In general, every disciple must exercise the same faithfulness and wisdom with the truth that has been revealed through the apostles. **45,46 Cut him in two:** This is the severe punishment of being cut off from the presence of God (See 1 Sm 15:33; Dn 2:5; 3:29; Hb 11:37). The disciples must be careful not to engage in the affairs of this life, and thus be distracted from their mission (See comments 2 Pt 3:3,4). If they forget the coming of the Lord, they will become slack in their work. Jesus uses the fact that He is coming again as a stimulus to keep the disciples energetic about their preparedness for His coming. For this reason, neither He nor the apostles ever gave a specific date for the final coming of the Lord. The very reason He here leaves the specific time of His coming out of this parable and other teachings is evidence that there is no specific date stated in Scripture concerning either the coming of Jesus in judgment on Jerusalem or the end of the world. **47,48 Beaten with many stripes:** One stripe is severe in its punishment upon the unfaithful steward. The succession of stripes continues over a longer period of time. The point is that the one who receives many stripes receives the severity of stripes over a longer period than the one who re-

drunk,

46 “the lord of that bondservant will come in a day when he does not look for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 “But that bondservant who knew his master’s will and did not prepare, nor did according to his will, will be beaten with many *stripes*.

48 “But he who did not know, and did commit things deserving of stripes, will be beaten with few *stripes*. For to whomever much is given, of him will much be required. And to whom they have entrusted much, of him they will ask the more.

49 ¶ “I have come to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!

50 “But I have an immersion to be immersed with, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

51 “Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division.

52 “For from now on there will be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three.

53 “The father will be divided against the son and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

54 ¶ And He said also to the people, “When you see a cloud rise out of the west, immediately you say, ‘There is coming a shower,’ and so it is.

55 “Now when *you see* the south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather,’ and it comes to pass.

56 “Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it that you do not discern this present time?”

57 ¶ “Yes, and why even of yourselves do you not judge what is right?”

58 “When you go with your adversary to the magistrate, *as you are* on the way *there*, make every effort to settle with him, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

59 “I tell you, you will not depart from there until you have paid the very last cent.”

ceives only one stripe. **Did not know:** Ignorance is no excuse. Those who are ignorant of the will of God will be lost. They will be lost because the law of sin and death under which they lived cannot bring justification from sin (See comments Rm 4,5). Salvation, therefore, is only in Christ (At 4:12; 2 Tm 2:10; see Rm 1:20; 2 Th 1:7-9). Those in ignorance of the master’s word will be beaten because they had no remedy for their sin that separated them from God. **Beaten with few stripes:** The duration of their beating will be less than the one who knew but became unfaithful. Jesus emphasizes the fact that punishment will match the crime. The duration of the punishment for the unfaithful steward will be longer than for the one who did not know (See Mt 25:14-30; Js 3:1). However, both will be beaten, but one longer than the other. After the stripes have matched the crime, the end result of both will be their destruction from the presence of God (See comments Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:7-9). Some have affirmed that Jesus’ emphasis here is on the degrees of the severity of the punishment, not the duration. In other words, those who receive many stripes will receive more severe punishment than those who receive few stripes. This is true to a limited extent. Receiving more stripes is more intense than a few. From this reasoning it is assumed that there are degrees of punishment in an endless hell.

49 Fire on the earth: The preaching of the gospel would cause great turmoil among men because many would reject the gospel by remaining in their own reli-

gious beliefs (At 8:1-4). **50 Immersed:** The Greek word *baptizo* is used here. It is used to refer to the great suffering into which Jesus would be immersed in order to ignite the fire of judgment that would go throughout humanity by the preaching of the gospel (Mt 20:18,22,23; Mk 10:38). **51-53 Division:** Obedience to the gospel would cause religious division within families, among friends and wherever men would seek to obey traditional religions and feelings instead of God’s word (See Mt 10:24-36; Jn 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; At 14:4).

54-56 Compare comments Mt 16:1-5. Jesus here turns to the multitudes. He specifically turns to those who were caught up in the traditional religion of the Jews that had been handed down from the fathers (Mk 7:1-9). **Hypocrites:** They were zealous to perform the outward ceremonies of their religion, but were corrupt in their hearts. They legally performed the regulations of their religion but failed to obey the commandments of God (See comments Mt 15:1-9; Cl 2:20-23). **You can discern:** They could understand the changing of the weather by the changing of the signs of nature. However, they could not understand that the great miraculous works of Jesus indicated that something was about to be changed in Israel. Change was happening but they were too afraid to flow with the wave of change that would eventually overwhelm Judaism. They were in times of change, but their fear of change moved them to fight against Jesus who was causing the change. **57-59** Compare comments Mt 5:25,26. Jesus is the judge

Chapter 13

1 ¶ There were present at that time some who told Him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 Then Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things?"

3 "I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

4 "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were sinners above all the men who dwelt in Jerusalem?"

5 "I tell you, no. But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

6 ¶ He spoke also this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard.

And he came looking for fruit on it and found none.

7 "Then he said to the dresser of his vineyard, 'Behold, I have come these three years seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down. Why does it use up the ground?'"

8 "Then he answered and said to him, 'Lord, let it alone this year also, until I will dig around it and fertilize it.

9 'And if it bears fruit after that, *fine*. But if not, you can cut it down.'"

10 ¶ Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years. And she was bowed together and could in no way straighten *herself* up.

12 Now when Jesus saw her, He called *her*

in this case who is preaching the truth by which men will judge themselves. Those of Jesus' audience who rejected Him, judged themselves. They would have to face their own judgment in the destruction of national Israel, and finally, in their eternal condemnation in final judgment. It was the time, therefore, that they should be seeking reconciliation with the Judge who was in their midst.

Chapter 13

NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE

1 All that is known of this incident is what Luke records here. The indication is that Pilate sent soldiers to execute punishment on some insurrectionist Galileans while they were offering the sacrifices of the Passover. The reason some evidently brought this incident to the attention of Jesus was an effort to justify themselves in their own sin. In order to divert Jesus' previous teaching from direct application to themselves, they ask Jesus this question. A common belief among the Jews was that calamity was an indication of sin in the life of an individual (See Jn 9:2; At 28:4). Since those who suffered at the hand of Pilate were punished, they reasoned that they were deserving of such because of their sin. **2 Do you suppose:** All sin results in the same guilt. Sin separates one from God (Is 59:2), and thus, causes spiritual death (Rm 3:23; 6:23). One cannot justify his own sin by pointing out the supposedly greater sin of someone else. **3** One sin will cause one to perish (Js 2:10). And unless one repents of sin, he will perish from the presence of God (2 Th 1:7-9). **4,5 Those eighteen:** Jesus challenged the teaching that calamity was a sign of sin. The eighteen who perished were the victims of an unfortunate accident. Everyone knew that they were not sinners according to how sin was understood by those who made the accusation in verse 1. In this context, however, Jesus says that if those in Jerusalem did not repent, they would perish in a similar calamity. They did not repent, and thus, suffered the calamity of the destruction of Jerusalem wherein over one mil-

lion Jews died (See comments Mt 24). Though they would suffer physical death in the destruction of Jerusalem, they would suffer eternal condemnation when Jesus comes again (2 Th 1:7-9). **Repent:** In order to escape destruction, one must change his thinking and life in order to submit to the will of God (At 3:19; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9). Repentance means that one must not only change his thinking, he must change his life to conform to that which he knows he must do. A remorseful heart that does not lead to a change in one's life is useless in reference to one's salvation.

PARABLE OF THE UNFRUITFUL TREE

6-9 The ax was laid at the root of national Israel (Mt 3:10). The nation was soon to be cut down. The meaning of this parable is that Israel (the fig tree) was planted years before the coming of Jesus to receive its fruit (See Gn 12:1-3). However, Israel was unfruitful in that many in Israel strayed from God to follow after their own traditional religion (Mk 7:1-9). Nevertheless, Jesus (the vinedresser) pleaded to God on behalf of Israel. But Israel would not repent, and thus, the tree was cut down in A.D. 70 (See comments Mt 24). The lesson of the parable is that God expects fruit. He expects fruit because fruit is the indication of an obedient heart. If there is no fruit, then there is no active faith. And without active faith, no one can be saved (See comments Js 2:14-16).

HEALING ON THE SABBATH

10-13 **Spirit of infirmity:** We do not know specifically what this infirmity was. Since the sick woman could not straighten herself up, some believe it was a deformity in her back. **Jesus saw her:** This is a case where Jesus took the initiative to heal the woman. He did so because she had not come to Him seeking healing. **Immediately she was made straight:** True miracles that confirmed God's message and messengers before unbelievers are instantaneous. They could be recognized as miraculous even by those who did not believe in Jesus (At 4:14-16). **14 Ruler of the synagogue answered**

to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity."

13 Then He laid His hands on her. And immediately she was made straight and glorified God.

14 Then the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. And he said to the people, "There are six days in which men ought to work. Therefore, in them come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day."

15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrites! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it away to water *him*?"

16 "So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for these eighteen *long* years be released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

17 Now when He had said these things, all His adversaries were ashamed. And all the people rejoiced over all the glorious things that were done by Him.

18 Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like, and to what will I compare it?"

19 "It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden. And it grew and became a tree. And the birds of the air lodged in its branches."

20 ¶ And again He said, "To what will I compare the kingdom of God?"

21 "It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened."

22 ¶ Now He went through the cities and villages, teaching and traveling toward Jerusalem.

23 Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there

with indignation: The ruler did not deny the miracle. His indignation resulted from the fact that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He evidently had little concern for humanitarian works in view of the fact that one of the traditional regulations of the Sabbath was broken. Such indicates the judgmental harshness of legal religion in reference to the weightier matters of the law as love, mercy and justice. Those who promote legal religions are more concerned over conformity to their humanly devised regulations than the will of God (Mk 7:1-9; compare also Mt 12:10; Mk 3:2; Lk 4:16; 6:1-6; 14:1-6; Jn 5:16). **15,16 Hypocrites:** All those present who felt that Jesus was violating a Sabbath law as interpreted by the religious leaders fell under the condemnation Jesus gives. The binding of their interpretations of the Sabbath law had led them away from God's original purpose of the Sabbath. At the time of Jesus, the Jews were more concerned with their interpretations and opinions of the Sabbath law than the original intent of the Sabbath. If humanitarian healing on the Sabbath contradicted what they believed was a violation of Sabbath law, then their interpretation was wrong. In fact, Jesus points out that they were more concerned for their animals on the Sabbath than for a fellow human being. **17 All His adversaries were put to shame:** Those who were the adversaries of Jesus were in bondage to their beliefs because they had bound that which God had not bound. Their interpretations of the law had led them astray from the One who gave the law in the first place. Their antagonism against Jesus manifested that their religious beliefs did not originate from God, but from themselves. **All the multitude:** It seems that the common people who were not of the social group of religious leaders were receptive to the teachings of Jesus. They rejoiced over the work of Jesus. On the other hand, those who were bound by the politics of religious leadership suffered with indignation because Jesus threatened their social religious fellowship. Jesus upset their institutional religious fellowship, and thus was the subject of persecution.

DEFINITION OF THE KINGDOM

(Mt 13:31-33; Mk 4:30-32)

18,19 See comments Mt 13:31-33; Mk 4:31,32.

Mustard seed: The kingdom reign that originates from the God of heaven is planted in the hearts of men when men submit to the will of the Father (17:20,21). When the will of the Father is done on earth as it is done in heaven (Mt 6:9,10), then the kingdom has come. The beginning of the process of submitting to the will of God starts small in the lives of a few disciples as a mustard seed. From this small start the influence of the kingdom grows throughout society. During the ministry of Jesus there were only a few disciples. However, this would change. From those small beginnings the kingdom reign of Jesus has spread throughout the world to millions of hearts.

20,21 Leaven: Once the seeds of the kingdom are planted in the hearts of men, as leaven is placed in the bread, then the growth begins. In time, the influence of the kingdom spreads throughout society (Mt 13:33). The kingdom thus starts small and then has the characteristic of gradually growing throughout the hearts of people. Workers in the kingdom, therefore, should always be patient. It takes time for one's labors to bring forth fruit. Patient laboring in the vineyard will bring forth fruit. The seed of the kingdom will produce if one is patient for the fruit.

ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

(Mt 7:13,14,21-23)

22 Went through the cities and villages: As the prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus journeyed through the population centers in order to teach. He was laying the foundation upon which the disciples would reap a great harvest after the cross, resurrection and establishment of the church in Acts 2. **Toward Jerusalem:** Jesus was near Jerusalem in the town of Bethany when he raised Lazarus from the dead. The resurrection of Lazarus took place on this final trip to Jerusalem (Jn 10:22-42). **23 Few who are saved:** This question

few who are saved?" And He said to them,
24 "Strive to enter in through the narrow gate. For many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, and will not be able.
25 "Once the owner of the house rises up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us,' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.'
26 "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.'
27 "But He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from. Depart from Me all you workers of iniquity.'
28 "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrown out.
29 "And they will come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south, and will sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 "And behold, *some* are last who will be first and *some* are first who will be last."
31 ¶ The same day there came some of the Pharisees, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."
32 Then He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and I do healing today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I will be finished.'
33 "Nevertheless, I must walk today and tomorrow, and the *day* following; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem.
34 ¶ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to you. How often I would have gathered your children together as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, and you were not willing!
35 "Behold, your house is left to you desolate. And indeed I say to you *that* you will not see Me until *the time* comes when you will say, 'Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

stimulated Jesus' teaching concerning the narrow gate. It is a fact of historical significance. Throughout history few people are obedient in comparison to the population of the world. As in the few eight souls who were saved in Noah's ark, so there are few who will be obedient to the gospel at any one time in history (1 Pt 3:20,21).
24 Strive to enter: See 1 Co 9:24-27; Ph 3:12; 1 Tm 6:12; 2 Tm 4:7. **Narrow gate:** The gate is narrow, not because it is the fault of God, but because of the unwillingness of men to submit to the will of God. Men make the gate narrow because of their own rebellion against God (See comments Mt 7:13,14). **Will not be able:** They cannot enter because they are either trapped by their love of the world or are caught in the deception of their own devised religions. Many religious people do not want to enter because they have tried to make their own gate through which to enter. Since they have convinced themselves that their gate is the right gate, they will not seek to enter the true gate (Jn 14:6; At 4:12).
25-27 Lord, Lord: The context and nature of the teachings of Jesus here seem to indicate that His teaching is in reference to the last days of national Israel. Jesus was at this time personally in their presence eating and drinking with those who would reject Him. However, there would come a time when they would finally realize that they should have accepted Him. But it will be too late at the time they come to such a realization. God's judgment through the proxy of the Roman Empire would have already been set in motion and only the total destruction of the Jewish State would stop the fury of Rome and the justice of God for Israel's rejection of His Son. At the time of the destruction, many who had formerly rejected Jesus would accept Him. However, at the end of the world there would be no second chance. When

Jesus comes for the final time, all choices to obey Him will be terminated at the time of His coming. **Depart from Me:** Compare comments Mt 7:13-23; 8:11ff; 19:30; 20:16; 25:10-12,41; Ti 1:16. **28 Weeping and gnashing of teeth:** See Mt 8:12; 13:42; 24:51. This figure does not refer to pain or torment, but to the anguish of losing that for which one hoped and thought he had secured. The religious leaders thought that they were right in their religion. However, when they finally realized through the total destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish State in A.D. 70 that God had rejected them, then they would weep and gnash their teeth, realizing that God had rejected them. **29,30 They will come:** The obedient of all the world would come to submit to the kingdom of God. The kingdom would not be exclusively for the Jews, but for Gentiles throughout the world (Is 45:6; 49:12; Cl 1:13; Hb 11:8-10). Jesus came to deterritorialize God's people in the world. His word would go into all the world. Those who were obedient to His word in all nations would come into covenant relationship with Him, and thus, be the universal church in all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16). **Last who will be first:** Those people the self-righteous religious leaders considered to be last will actually, because of their humble hearts, be the first to submit to the will of God in obedience to the gospel (See comments Mt 20:16). And so it is in reference to those who have constructed their own religious means by which they would enter the kingdom. Those who trusted in their own religion in Jesus' day did not realize the futility of Judaism until God destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. After the destruction of Jerusalem, however, they started understanding that God had rejected Israel (Compare At 6:7).

Chapter 14

1 ¶ Now it came to pass as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they closely watched Him.

2 And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy.

3 Then Jesus answered and spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?"

4 But they held their peace. And He took *him* and healed him, and let him go.

5 He then answered them, saying, "Which of you will have a son or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?"

6 Now they could not answer Him again concerning these things.

7 ¶ Then He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose out the chief places, saying to them,

8 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding, do not sit down in the highest places, lest a more honorable man than you be invited by him,

9 "and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give this place to this man,' and then in disgrace you take the lowest place.

10 "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place so that when he who invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have honor in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.

11 "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled. And he who humbles himself will be exalted."

12 ¶ Then He said also to him who invited Him, "When you prepare a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

EVIL INTENTIONS OF HEROD

31 Herod Antipas had arrested John the Baptist because John had a great following of people. This report by some of the Pharisees that Herod was seeking to kill Jesus was, according to these Pharisees, for the same reason. However, it is not probable that Herod wanted to kill Jesus for he later had the chance to kill Jesus at the time of Jesus' trials, but did not (See 23:11). These Pharisees were proclaiming this lie in order to intimidate Jesus into not teaching. At least, they wanted Him to depart from their region. **32 Tell that fox:** The Greek word here is "she fox." Jesus was not intimidated by the cunning practices of Herod. He would continue on with His predetermined ministry regardless of the wickedness of Herod. **33** Jesus had set his face toward Jerusalem, the place where it was predestined that He die on the cross for the sins of man (Rv 13:8).

34,35 See comments Mt 23:37-39. Jesus here addressed "Jerusalem" in the first person. He was God on earth who would have forgiven the city as He forgave Nineveh, if only she would repent. The inhabitants of the city were not willingly to gather unto God because they had forsaken the commandments of God and gone after their own religion (Mk 7:1-9). **Your house:** The temple was now desolate of any significance in reference to God. It was now their house. God had forsaken it because the religious leaders had stolen away the vineyard. They would in a few days from the time Jesus made these statements kill the Son of the owner of the vineyard (See comments Mt 21:33-45).

Chapter 14

HEALING A MAN WITH DROPSY

1-3 As on many other occasions, Jesus never refused an invitation and an opportunity for teaching. **Dropsy:** This may have been a disease that was manifested by the accumulation of water under the skin. It

would be called edema in modern medical terms. Only Luke, the physician, records this particular miracle of Jesus. **They watched Him closely:** It seems that there may have been a group of Pharisees and scribes present at this gathering. They sought for an occasion to accuse Jesus of violating their Sabbath laws. **Is it lawful:** If they answered Jesus' question by saying that it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath, then they would have been perceived to be unmerciful toward the person who was healed (See Mt 12:10). If they answered yes, then they would have no occasion to accuse Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. **4-6** From what Jesus here says, they valued their animals more than they did the humanitarian act of healing someone on the Sabbath (13:15; Mt 12:11,12).

PARABLE ON HUMILITY

7-11 Chose the best places: The pompous character of the religious leaders moved them to choose places of prominence and notoriety when in public gatherings. The principal seats were seats where the honored guests were expected to be seated. But in this teaching, Jesus provides a lesson on humility for those who would seek to be noticed. **Do not sit down in the best place:** One should not seek recognition for the sake of exalting himself before others. Those who behave in a manner to be noticed in public will invariably be embarrassed because of their over exaltation of themselves. **Sit down in the lowest place:** This is good advice for those who would use religion as a means to exalt themselves among men (See 18:9ff; Pv 25:6,7; Ez 21:26). **Will be humbled:** See Jb 22:29; Ps 18:27; Pv 29:23; Mt 23:12; Lk 18:14; Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5.

12-14 Blessed because they cannot repay you: True hospitality is shown in being benevolent to those who cannot repay. It is giving in a manner where one does not receive any benefit as a result of the giving. Unlike the Pharisees who formed social groups in order

13 “But when you prepare a feast, call *the* poor, crippled, lame *and* blind.

14 “And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

15 ¶ Now when one of those who reclined at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, “Blessed *is* he who will eat the bread in the kingdom of God!”

16 Then He said to him, “A certain man made a great supper and invited many.

17 “And he sent his bondservant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’

18 “But they all with one *accord* began to make excuse. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’

19 “And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’

20 “Then another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’

21 “So that bondservant came and reported these things to his lord. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his bondservant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the* poor and crippled and lame and blind.’

22 “Then the bondservant said, ‘Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’

23 “And the master said to the bondservant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in so that my house may be filled.

24 ‘For I say to you that none of those men who were invited will taste of my supper.’”

25 ¶ Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them,

26 “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

27 “And whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.

to entertain themselves, Christians would do well to invite to their fellowship meals those who are poor (Ne 8:10-12; Mt 25:34-40). Jesus does not condemn feasts among friends, but he does condemn having such for the purpose of gaining an invitation to another feast for one's own gratification. Jesus' point is that one should show a spirit of giving without motives of reaping something from giving.

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

15 ***Eat bread in the kingdom:*** While still at the feast in the Pharisee's house that Luke records in 14:1, the opportunity now shifts for Jesus to change the subject concerning feasts to a parable. The parable is in reference to the great feast of spiritual food that God has prepared for all. This feast was provided through the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus (Compare comments Mt 22:1-14). 16,17 ***Great supper:*** Many of the Jews thought that the messianic era of an earthly kingdom would be inaugurated with the celebration of a great feast. However, such would not happen. In this parable Jesus seeks to correct their misconceptions. They must come to His kingdom feast upon the basis of repentance (13:3-5). ***Invited many:*** The invitation was going out at the very time Jesus was sitting at the Pharisee's table. All must come to the spiritual feast of righteousness in the kingdom reign of Jesus. 18-20 ***All ... began to make excuses:*** God (the man who prepared the supper) prepared the kingdom reign of the Son (the great supper). The messengers of the kingdom (the apostles and evangelists) went out to invite the Jews to come to the spiritual feast of the Messiah's kingdom. However, the Jews who were invited were too concerned over the material things of life (piece of ground, oxen, marriage) to give attention to

the seriousness of the invitation. Jesus' point is that the Jews stumbled over their materialistic lusts. They thought that the Messiah should establish some type of an earthly kingdom reign where they would enjoy more of the world's possessions. The Jews presumed that the kingdom reign of the Messiah would be of this world where they could possess the world and live a very materialistic life of comfort. 21-24 ***Go out into the streets and lanes ... highways and hedges:*** Those who were gratified with their own religions and material possessions did not receive the message of Jesus. Therefore, God sent His messengers to those who were receptive. In this case, the receptive were the common people of society. The lesson is that when one realizes the unreceptive attitude of certain groups, he must go to those who are receptive in order that God's house be filled. In this parable the host did not tell his servant to linger with the unreceptive. Once the lack of receptivity was discovered, he told the servant to go quickly to those who were receptive to his invitation. ***Compel them to come in:*** The receptive, including the Gentiles, were constrained to submit to the kingdom reign of God by the appeal of the gospel (1 Th 2:12; 2 Th 2:14). People are compelled to come to Jesus by the appeal of the cross. Jesus draws people to Himself by His loving sacrifice for their sins (Jn 12:32). Those who are not drawn by love are not of the nature that characterizes the kingdom of God. ***Shall taste my supper:*** The religiously comfortable and materialistically satisfied will not submit to the kingdom reign of Jesus. Therefore, they will not enjoy the salvation that Jesus offers simply because they have chosen to maintain their own life-style which is patterned after the world (See comments Ep 2:1-4). If one would come to Jesus as a disciple, he or she must make every necessary sacrifice.

28 “For which one of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it?”

29 “Otherwise, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all who see *it* begin to mock him,

30 “saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’”

31 “Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand *men* to encounter him who comes against him with twenty thousand?”

32 “Or else, while the other is still a great

way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

33 “So likewise, whoever of you who does not forsake all that he has, cannot be My disciple.

34 ¶ “Salt *is* good. But if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will it be seasoned?”

35 “It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill. It is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Chapter 15

1 ¶ Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

25-27 See comments Mt 10:34-42. **Great multitudes went with Him:** People were following Jesus to Jerusalem for various reasons. However, it is at this time in Jesus' ministry that He is nearing Jerusalem and the cross. In the following discourse He seeks to sift out of the multitudes those who are not willing to pay the cost of being a true disciple. These are hard words for those who are not willing to totally commit themselves to Him. Many will not pass the test. But those who do will have a tremendous influence in the world with their lives. **Hate ... father ... mother ... wife ... children ... brothers ... sisters ... own life:** Matthew says, “*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me*” (Mt 10:37). Luke's use of the word “hate” means that one must love his family less than he loves Jesus. In order to be a disciple of Jesus one cannot love his family and his own life more than he loves Jesus. If any situation develops in one's life when he has to make a decision between following and serving Jesus or his own family, his eternal destiny would dictate that he follow Jesus (See comments Mt 22:37-40; see Dt 13:6; Rm 9:13; Rv 12:11). **Cannot be My disciple:** Jesus calls for total commitment. He calls for the sacrifice of one's entire life (See 9:23; Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20; 6:14). Many cannot be Christians simply because they are not willing to pay the price of discipleship. The evangelist must understand that there are many to whom he will preach who cannot meet the qualifications of self-denial that Jesus here calls on people to make in order to follow Him. **28-30 Sit down first and count the cost:** Counting the cost of what it will take to be a Christian assumes that one may make the decision to turn away from the gospel. Though Paul was a chosen vessel for God's work, Jesus still showed him all things that he had to suffer in order to carry out his mission (See comments At 9:15,16). The early disciples were shown what the cost of discipleship would be in their lives. They, as well as all Christians, must go through many sufferings in order to be saved (At 14:22; Rv 2:10; see Rm 8:18). **Begin to mock him:** Those who convert to Jesus, and then fall away, will be mocked by those who never wanted to become Christians in the first place (See 2 Pt 2:20-22). **31-33** Before a king goes to war with the enemy he must first consider whether he has enough power to win the battle. Before one becomes a Christian he must

first consider whether he can win the battle (Ep 6:10-18). Jesus' emphasis here is that one must seriously consider his call to discipleship. His emphasis is on the seriousness by which we must consider being a disciple of Jesus. Those who do not take their discipleship seriously will inevitably become indifferent and lukewarm. Their attitude of indifference and lukewarmness will be as leaven, and thus, affect the entire group of disciples (See comments Rv 3:15,16). **Forsake all that he has:** The rich young ruler who wanted to be a disciple of Jesus had to pay this price because his riches stood between him and commitment to Jesus (See comments Mk 10:17-31). If one wants to be a disciple of Jesus, he must be willing to forsake all that is necessary in order to be such (9:61; 12:33; Ph 3:7-11). If he is not willing to forsake all for Jesus, then that which he is not willing to forsake will eventually be his stumbling block over which he will fall as a Christian. **34,35 The salt has lost its flavor:** When salt loses its saltiness, it is good for nothing, and thus, thrown out into the rubbish heap. So it is with a Christian. When a Christian loses his Christian influence in the community, he is good for nothing with reference to influencing people to come to Jesus. His bad reputation repels people from Jesus. It is the light of the gospel dwelling in the hearts of humble people that draws the lost to the cross (Mt 5:13-16; Mk 9:50). Therefore, when one considers becoming a disciple of Jesus, he must consider whether he will be a positive influence for Jesus or a negative influence. Those who are not willing to forsake all for Jesus, will be a negative influence for Jesus. Those who are willing to pay the price of discipleship will reap the life about which Jesus spoke in John 10:10. “*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*”

Chapter 15

1,2 In this chapter Luke brings together several parables of Jesus that deal with the condition of the lost and their opportunity for salvation. **Tax collectors ... sinners drew near to Him:** See Mt 9:10-15. These were those who were judged to be sinners by the Pharisees and scribes because they did not conform to their code of religious behavior. However, the hearts of these tax collectors and “sinners” were humble enough to know that Jesus had the words of life. They did not stumble

2 But the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

3 ¶ Then He spoke this parable to them, saying,

4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?"

5 "Now when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 "And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost!'"

7 "I say to you, that likewise more joy will be in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8 ¶ "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and diligently seek until she finds it?"

9 "And when she has found it, she calls her

friends and neighbors together, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost!'"

10 "Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11 ¶ And He said, "A certain man had two sons.

12 "Now the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of the inheritance that falls to me.' And he divided to them his livelihood.

13 "And not many days after, the younger son gathered everything together and took his journey to a far country. And there he wasted his inheritance with wild living.

14 "Now when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land. And he began to be in need.

15 "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country. And he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 "And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating.

over their religiosity to find in Jesus that which they knew they needed in their lives. **Receives sinners:** This is the work of Jesus and all who would claim to be of Him (19:10; see comments Rm 14). Those who seek Jesus are those who realize their own sin. When one is religiously self-righteous, he will not seek God's grace. He will remain in his own self-deception and turn away from the One who can spiritually heal him of sin.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

(Mt 18:12-14)

3-7 See comments Mt 18:12-14. **He loses one of them:** The fact is that one loses himself when he strays from the flock. When lost, he cannot find his way back, and thus, is hopeless in a situation where he cannot save himself. However, from God's viewpoint, it is He who loses a sheep and it is He who provides the grace for the lost sheep to be restored to the flock. **Go after the one:** Once it is discovered that the sheep has strayed, the owner immediately goes after the stray (See Jr 31:10-20; Ez 34:11-16; 1 Pt 2:25). Good shepherds know the flock well enough to know when a sheep goes astray. They love enough to go after lost sheep. **Rejoice with me:** All those who are in the fold of sheep are identified as such because they rejoice over the fact that a lost sheep was found (Rm 12:15). They rejoice because they are of the same nature as the shepherd. His mission is their mission. They are identified to be of the flock because their desire is the same as the shepherd of the flock. However, those who are of a judgmental attitude will not willingly receive the lost sheep back into the fold (See comments 15:27-32). Their nature excludes them from being identified with the flock.

PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN

8-10 **Coins:** The coin here was a drachma which was a valuable coin that was often worn by married women around the neck in a ten-piece garland. Jesus' emphasis in this parable is on the value of just one soul. **Sweep the house:** With diligence God desires to find those who are lost. **Rejoice with me:** As in the parable of the lost sheep, so here again Jesus emphasizes the rejoicing of God over the salvation of those who are lost. Those who cause rejoicing in the presence of the angels of heaven are those who save the lost by the preaching of the gospel. In the cultural context in which Jesus presents these parables, there are racist Jews who do not associate with either the Samaritans or Gentiles. In the community of God that Jesus will establish, however, all those who come to Him in obedience to His lordship must accept one another regardless of cultural background (See comments Jn 4:1-26; Gl 3:26-29).

PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

11-16 This parable describes the behavior and attitude of two sons. The younger son foolishly took his inheritance and wasted it in riotous living until he ended up in the worst of conditions. It took tragedy in his life to bring him to his senses. On the other hand, the older son remained faithful to his duties. In the context of this chapter and the presence of the Pharisees and scribes, the older son would represent the religious segregationist attitudes of these religious leaders who judged the Gentiles unworthy. Those whom the scribes and Pharisees considered unrighteous are here pictured coming back to God with a repentant attitude. The Jews thought that God had made the promise of Genesis 12:3 exclusively

But no one gave *anything* to him.

17 “Now when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many hired servants of my father’s have enough bread and to spare, and I am dying with hunger!

18 ‘I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,

19 “and I am no more worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants.”

20 “Then he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion. And he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

21 “Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no more worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put *it* on him. And put a ring on his hand and shoes on *his* feet.

23 “And bring here the fattened calf and kill *it*. Let us eat and be merry,

24 ‘for this my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 “Then he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

27 “And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.’

28 “Then he became angry and would not go in. Therefore, His father came out and pleaded with him.

29 “And he answered and said to *his* father, ‘Look, these many years I have been serving you. I have never transgressed your commandment at any time. And yet, you never gave me a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.

30 ‘But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you have killed for him the fattened calf.’

31 “Then he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.

32 ‘It was right that we should celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive again. And he was lost and is found.’”

to them. However, the promise was that in Abraham all nations of the earth would be blessed (See comments Gl 3:26-29). **17-19** When the prodigal son finally realized the depths to which he had gone in life, he humbled himself in order to return and seek the work of a slave in his father’s house (See Ex 9:27; 10:16; Nm 22:34; Ja 7:20; 1 Sm 15:24,30; 26:21; 2 Sm 12:13; Ps 51:4; Mt 27:4). And so it is with those who come to Jesus. Those who have been humbled by life are receptive to the message of the One who would be their Lord, and thus, direct their lives to an abundant life (Jn 10:10; 1 Pt 5:5,6). Those who have come the longest way in changing to accept the lordship of Jesus are often those who have a greater appreciation of God’s grace. **20,21** Once the prodigal son had made the decision to return, and was carrying out his return to the father, the father embraced him and accepted him back into the family. However, when the prodigal was in the pig pen, the father did not search him out and drag him back home. The son had to make the decision for himself in order that his repentance bring forth fruit in his life. In the company of Jesus on this occasion were the tax collectors and “sinners” whom the Jewish religious leaders had judged unworthy. But those who were humbled by their life in the pig pen wanted to draw near to Jesus (vs 1). **22-24** As the Father rejoiced over the one lost sheep (vs 7) and the lost coin (vs 10), so here there is rejoicing again over one who has realized the sin of his life (See 9:60; 15:32; Mt 8:22; Rm 11:15; Ep 2:1-5; 5:14; Cl 2:13; 1 Tm 5:6).

In the historical context of Jesus’ ministry, the common people, Samaritans and Gentiles were coming to Jesus. Those who were considered religiously unclean by the Jewish religious leadership were the ones who were receiving the message of the kingdom. **25-30** *The older son ... was angry*: The older son could not understand why the father would show grace and mercy to one who had rebelled against the father. The older son had remained faithful to his duties, and thus, judged the younger son to be undeserving of the mercy of the father. So also was the legalistic attitude of the Pharisees and scribes concerning any that they had judged to be sinners. They could not understand how God could extend grace and mercy to those who had been rebellious against the commandments of God (See comments Ep 2:1-10). To them it was inconceivable that God would reach out to the Gentiles or Samaritans. **31,32** The Pharisees and scribes had maintained their institutional religiosity. However, they also developed an arrogant attitude toward those who were not of their cultural or religious fellowship. They thus became judgmental of all those who were not submissive to their system of institutional religion. But Jesus teaches here that if they would remain faithful to the Father, they would have to change their attitudes toward the Gentiles who were coming into the kingdom by their submission to the commandments of God. They would have to come out of their isolation and embrace the Gentiles who were to be invited by God through the preaching of the gospel.

Chapter 16

1 ¶ Then He also said to His disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward. And it was reported to him that *the steward* was wasting his goods.

2 "And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear of you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'

3 "Then the steward said within himself, 'What will I do? For my lord takes away from me the stewardship. I cannot dig. I am ashamed to beg.

4 'I know what to do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship they may receive me into their houses.'

5 "So he called every one of his master's debtors, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

6 "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill and sit down quickly and write fifty.'

7 "Then he said to another, 'And how much

do you owe?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

8 "Then the master commended the unjust steward, because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this age are more shrewd in relation to their generation than the children of light.

9 "Now I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.

10 "He who is faithful in that which is a little is also faithful in much. And he who is unrighteous in a little is also unrighteous in much.

11 "Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?

12 "And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who will give you that which is your own?

13 "No servant can serve two masters. For

Chapter 16

PARABLE OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

1,2 Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples but the message of the parable was about the religious leaders of Israel. **A steward:** The religious leaders were entrusted with the heritage of God, but they became materialistic with their holdings (vs 14). They took advantage of the people and consumed the material things of Israel upon themselves because they were lovers of money (See comments Mt 15:1-9). **A certain rich man:** God had entrusted the religious leaders of Israel with the spiritual care of the nation (Mt 23:2; Rm 3:2). They were to spiritually lead the nation by directing their minds toward God and the hope of Israel. However, because of their materialism they were directed by their love of money in their relationship with the people. They viewed the people as a source for the feeding of their greed. **Give an account:** The presence of the Son of God in their midst meant that it was the time that they should give account of their stewardship before God. But these stewards would soon kill the Son and seize upon His inheritance (See comments Mt 21:33-45). Their greed and possession of positions among the people moved them to do that which was contrary to the will of God. **3,4 I cannot dig:** These religious leaders had lived off the coveted contributions of the people for some time. They had been "fulltime" in society for so long that they could not make a living for themselves with their hands. Instead of correcting their life-style in reference to God, which meant that they would lose their "fulltime" position as religious leaders, they schemed as to how they might maintain their position. When Jesus came, their financial security was endangered, and thus, they rose up against Jesus. **5-8 He had dealt shrewdly:** The

master did not commend his dishonesty. He commended his shrewdness to seize the opportunity to take care of himself. The steward had dealt in a shrewd manner with the possessions that did not belong to him. His actions were selfish in that he was looking out for himself and not for the stewardship that was entrusted to him. And so, the Pharisees were looking out for themselves in reference to the threat that Jesus made concerning their fulltime support from the multitudes. **Sons of this world:** Unrighteous religious leaders who are lovers of money will behave as the world in order to guard their financial support. They are selfishly more concerned for themselves than for the spiritual well-being of the people. **9-12** Jesus now applies the lesson of the parable. He teaches that the righteous leaders should be wise about taking care of their spiritual life as the shrewd steward took care of his material life. **Unrighteous mammon:** This would be material possessions that are dishonestly acquired. The possessions within themselves are not wrong. What is wrong is how they are acquired and coveted (See 1 Tm 6:10; 2 Tm 4:10). The Pharisees, who were lovers of money (vs 14), were not faithful to God in what they had acquired (See comments Mt 15:3-6). They could not be good stewards of God's heritage because they had proved themselves dishonest by taking advantage of the people in order to take care of their own material well-being. If one cannot be trusted with the correct use of material things, he cannot be trusted to do right if entrusted with the care of the flock of God. Therefore, one's correct use of material things will determine one's right to eternal life. A man's faithfulness is measured by what he does with what he has (See comments At 2:44,45; 4:32-37; 3 Jn 1-8). **13** See Mt 6:24; Cl 3:1-3; Js 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15. One cannot take his possessions with him into

either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

14 ¶ And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they scoffed at Him.

15 Then He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men. But God knows your hearts. For that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

16 “The law and the prophets *were preached* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

17 “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 “Whoever puts away his wife and marries another, commits adultery. And he who marries one who has been put away from a husband commits adultery.

19 ¶ “There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen. And he lived in luxury every day.

20 “Now there was a certain beggar named Lazarus who was laid at his gate, covered with sores,

21 “and desiring to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 “Now it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

23 “And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. And he saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.’”

the dwelling of the new heavens and earth, but he can take the results of his giving (See 12:21; Mt 19:21; 2 Co 4:7; Gl 6:10; see comments 1 Co 15:58; Rv 14:13).

14 Lovers of money: It is not the money that is evil, but the love and selfish use of it (See Mt 23:14; 1 Co 5:10,11; 6:10; 1 Tm 6:10). It is not sin to be rich. Riches are wrong when they lead one into sin (See comments 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; 1 Jn 3:16,17). **Derided:** Literally, they turned up their noses at Jesus. **15 God knows your hearts:** One may self-righteously approve of himself as right in the eyes of God, but God knows what is in our hearts (1 Ch 28:9; 2 Ch 6:30; Ps 7:9; Pv 15:11; Jr 17:10). One may seek to gain the approval of others by religious performances (10:29; Mt 6:2,4,16), but what is important is what is in one’s heart. One’s acceptance by others in the religious world should not be one’s motivation for behavior. What is most important is our acceptance by God. We can know that we are accepted by God if we love Him and keep His commandments (Jn 14:15; see comments 1 Jn 5:1-4). **16** The Jews lived under the Old Testament law and prophets. However, John the Baptist, though he lived under the Old Testament law, began the introduction of a new dispensation. It was a new dispensation of grace and truth (Jn 1:17). **Pressing into it:** The Jews had an earthly concept of the kingdom of the Messiah. They thought that His reign would be over a kingdom of this world (See comments At 1:6). Based on this misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom, many tried to press Jesus into being an earthly king in order that they might establish this earthly kingdom. They were eager to rebel against Rome in order to set up the Jewish State in the glory that it enjoyed during the days of David and Solomon. But such was not in the minds of the prophets who spoke of Jesus as the Messiah of a spiritual kingdom (17:20,21; Jn 18:33-37). **17** Jesus did not destroy the purpose for which the law was given. He came to fulfill the law. Once the law was fulfilled, it had accom-

plished the purpose for which it was given (See comments Mt 5:17,18; Cl 2:14; Rm 7:4). Once the law was fulfilled, then men were brought under the established law of Christ. Today people should look to the law of Christ for salvational guidance and to the Old Testament for learning concerning the ways of God and wisdom (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). **18** See comments Mt 19:18,19; compare comments Rm 7:1-4.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

In order to illustrate further the situation of the Pharisees who loved money (vs 14), Jesus revealed the following case concerning the life and death of a rich man and a poor man. In telling this story of the rich man and Lazarus, He reveals facts about life after death that are nowhere else explained in the Bible. **19-21 Rich man:** In Jesus’ illustration, the individual who is not here named represented the privileged few. Their riches had made them grow callous to the needs of the poor. **Lazarus:** Lazarus was a beggar who was of a condition that was repulsive to others. His condition was so deplorable that others had to lay him at the gate of the rich man in order to beg. **Desiring ... crumbs:** Lazarus did not seek the wealth of food at the rich man’s table. He sought only that which the rich man would never eat. **22,23** Lazarus died, his body was buried, and his spirit was taken by angels to a place of comfort. He went to be with the Lord (See 2 Co 5:1-8; 12:1-4; Ph 1:23). The rich man also died, his body was buried, and his spirit was taken into torments in hades. The spirits of both went to a specific place and were not allowed to roam at will among men. When one dies, the spirit returns to God who gave it (Ec 12:7). **Hades:** This Greek word simply means the “unseen abode of the dead.” When one dies, his spirit goes into a realm where it cannot be perceived by the living. In this case, the spirit of the rich man went into a realm of torments. The rich man’s torments were different than the torment that one would

25 “But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things. But now he is comforted and you are suffering.

26 ‘And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they who wish to come over from here to you cannot, nor can those from there cross over to us.’

27 “Then he said, ‘Therefore, I beg you, father, that you would send him to my father’s house.

28 ‘For I have five brothers to whom he may testify, lest they also come to this place of torment.’

29 “Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them.’

30 “But he said, ‘No, father Abraham. But if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’

31 “Then he said to him, ‘If they do not hear

Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded even if one rises from the dead.’”

Chapter 17

1 ¶ Then He said to the disciples, “It is inevitable that offenses will come. But woe to *him* through whom they come!

2 “It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 “Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him. And if he repents, forgive him.

4 “And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns, saying, ‘I repent,’ you will forgive him.”

5 ¶ Then the apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”

6 And the Lord said, “If you had faith as a

receive in the flesh, for at the time of the rich man’s torments, he was disembodied. In both cases, neither the rich man nor Lazarus was left floating in space. They were without bodies, and thus, in a disembodied state of existence in some dwelling place that had been prepared by God. **Lifted up his eyes and saw:** His perception was not as that which would be experienced by the physical eyes of a physical body because his physical body was in the grave. There is evidently a different manner of perception and communication after death which we do not understand this side of death. **24-26** The rich man did not ask for deliverance from his predicament. He asked for relief. He realized the hopelessness of deliverance from his condemnation to torments. **Finger ... water tongue ... flame:** These are metaphorical statements that have reference to that which is beyond the physical. The hadean world is a realm of existence that is beyond this physical world. **A great gulf fixed:** There is no hope for those who die in sin. The rich man had received final judgment, for he could not be delivered from his state of condemnation. He could not go to Abraham’s bosom, neither could he return to the earth in order to warn his brothers. Lazarus could not go to him nor could he return to earth. There is finality about all things after death. Our realization of such should motivate us to be prepared for death. **27-31** The living cannot communicate with the dead, neither are the dead allowed to send someone to communicate to the living. **They have Moses and the prophets:** This is why it is unnecessary for the dead to communicate with the living. It is the responsibility of the living to turn to God’s word in order to be directed by God. In the context here, Jesus is referring directly to the Pharisees and scribes who should be listening to Moses and the prophets who spoke of the coming of Jesus (See Is 34:16; Jn 5:39,45; At 15:21; 17:11). If one will not listen to what God says through His word, then he will not be delivered from the destiny that the rich man was experiencing. **If one goes to them from**

the dead: They would not listen to someone who was resurrected. Jesus resurrected the Lazarus who was the brother of Mary and Martha, but the Jews would not listen to him because they devised a plot to murder him and Jesus (Jn 11; 12:10). When Jesus was resurrected from the dead, people would not and still do not listen to Him. The point is that if one will not listen to God through His word, he is not of an open and humble heart to listen to any miraculous witness that God might give.

Chapter 17

WARNINGS TO THE DISCIPLES

1,2 See Mt 17:19-21; 18:6,7,21,22; Mk 9:23,29,42. Jesus now turns to the disciples in order to warn them concerning apostasy. Satan will use deceived men in order to work in order to cause the disciples to fall away (Rm 14:13; 1 Co 8:12,13). If the disciples are inclined to believe the deceptions of Satan, they will be in danger of falling away after the enticing words of those who speak well through the deceptions of false doctrines (See comments Mt 24:23-25). **Offenses shall come:** Because of their commitment to Jesus, they will be offended for the sake of the name of Jesus (See Mt 18:6,7; 26:24; Mk 9:42; 1 Co 11:19; 2 Th 1:6; Jd 11). **3,4** See comments Mt 18:14,20-25 (Ps 119:164). **You shall forgive him:** There is no sin too great that we can commit against one another that we should not forgive. However, it is difficult for one to forget. Nevertheless, forgiveness means putting thoughts of the offense out of our minds. Such is true because of the great mercy God has had on those who have sinned against Him (See comments Mt 18:22-35; Js 2:13). Unlike man, God is able to forget our sins (Hb 10:17). However, regardless of our inability to totally forget, we must carry on with forgiveness. Forgiveness is for the benefit of the one who is sinned against. If one does not forgive, his unforgiving attitude will hinder his spiritual growth.

5-10 Increase our faith: The disciples are startled

grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be plucked up by the root and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

7 "But which of you, having a bondservant plowing or feeding cattle, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'?"

8 "But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink. Afterward you may eat and drink'?"

9 "Does he thank that bondservant because he did the things that were commanded?"

10 "So likewise you, when you have done all those things that are commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable bondservants. We have done that which was our duty to do.'"

11 ¶ Now it came to pass as He went to Jerusalem that He passed between Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as He entered into a certain village, He was met by ten men who were lepers, who

stood at a distance.

13 Then they lifted up *their* voices, and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

14 Now when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." And it came to pass that as they were going, they were cleansed.

15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God.

16 And he fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where *are* the nine?"

18 "Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?"

19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

20 ¶ Now when he was questioned by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The king-

by what Jesus just said concerning forgiveness. They sense that they might be in a situation where they feel that they would not be able to forgive. They were not asking Jesus to miraculously give them faith. They were asking Him to help them to learn how to forgive when sinned against. In the future, they would learn to forgive by the many experiences wherein they would suffer at the hands of those who would unjustly persecute them. **Faith as a mustard seed:** See comments Mt 17:20; 21:21 (Mk 9:23; 11:23). It is our faith that gives us the power to allow God to work through us in order to accomplish His work. **A servant:** The slave obediently serves his master. He does all that is required of him. When he has done his duty, he asks the master what is yet to be done. When the disciples have done all that they think is required of them as disciples, they will still lack. In reference to their salvation, they owe more than they can ever repay. When considering the reward of heaven with a few years of service on earth, one can never put God in debt to pay one with eternity in heaven. It is because of God's grace that we receive the reward that far outweighs the small price of service Christians must pay by faithfulness to their duties as slaves of God on earth. Therefore, when the disciples ask what they lack, the answer will always be that they lack too much to complete.

THE GRATEFUL LEPER

11-13 He went to Jerusalem: This is Jesus' journey to Jerusalem in order to go to the cross. This is the end of His three-year earthly ministry, and thus, the statements He now makes are in reference to the end of the ministry as He focused on the cross. Luke's historical mention of Jesus' going to Jerusalem in 9:51; 13:22; 17:11 probably corresponds to John's statements of Jesus' going to Jerusalem in John 7:2; 11:17; 12:1.

Between verses 10 and 11 in this context Jesus went to Bethany, Ephraim, Samaria and Galilee (See Jn 11).

Ten men who were lepers: Because of their leprosy they could not associate with society, for they were considered by the law to be unclean (See Lv 13:45,46; Nm 5:2). **14 Show yourselves to the priest:** After a leper was cleansed of his disease, he was to present himself to a priest in order to receive confirmation that he was clean (Lk 5:14; Lv 13:1-6,45-49; 14:1-32). **15,16 Glorified God ... giving Him thanks:** It was the Samaritan who was thankful for his healing (5:25; 18:43). This one who was rejected by the Jewish society was shown mercy by God, and thus, God's mercy stimulated thanksgiving in his heart. The natural inclination of those who have received mercy from God is to give their lives in thanksgiving for what they have received (See comments At 13:46-48; 1 Co 15:10). **17-19** Jesus asked the questions here to stimulate all to think concerning their obligation of returning thanks to God for all that He would do in showing mercy to man. The gratitude of the one leper in contrast to the ingratitude of the nine illustrates how often men forget God's blessings in both the material and spiritual realms. Christians give their lives to God for all that God has done for them in saving them through the grace of the cross. Those who are ungrateful will not serve God with zeal. Lazy Christians will be lost because they showed no gratitude for what God did for them through the cross.

THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

20,21 These Pharisees do not understand the nature of the kingdom. They are asking from their understanding that the kingdom of God would be a physical kingdom of this world where Israel would enjoy prosperity and national sovereignty (At 1:6). They thus ask this question because they have misunderstood Jesus' pre-

dom of God does not come with observation. **21** "Nor will they say, 'Look here!' or, 'Look there!' For behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

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

23 "And they will say to you, 'See here,' or, 'Look there.' Do not go after *them* or follow *them*."

24 "For as the lightning flashes out of one *part* of the sky, shines to the other *part* of the sky, so will also the Son of Man be in His day."

25 "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation."

26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so

will it be also in the days of the Son of Man."

27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives. They were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."

28 "Likewise it was also as in the days of Lot. They were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting *and* building."

29 "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all."

30 "In this way it will be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not come down to take them out. And he who is in the field, let him likewise not turn back."

32 "Remember Lot's wife."

vious teachings concerning the nature of the kingdom. They are here possibly seeking for a sign of the coming of the kingdom (See 3:16; 11:2-31; 13:20; 16:16; Mt 16:1-4). **Does not come with observation:** A physical kingdom would come with observation. One could see the king reign on a literal throne in Jerusalem. But such would not be the nature of the kingdom that Jesus would establish. **The kingdom of God is within you:** The kingdom reign of Jesus was never intended to be a physical kingdom as those of the world. The metaphorical use of the word "kingdom" indicates that the kingdom of God is something greater than a physical kingdom of this world. It is a kingdom with authority and rule that originates from God out of heaven and is manifested in the hearts of those who submit to Jesus as King and Lord (See comments Jn 18:36-38). Therefore, "*The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*" (Rm 14:17).

THE DAY OF THE SON

Verses 22-27 refer primarily to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, though the judgment language that is used by Jesus in this context refers to any of God's judgments either in time or at the end of time. God's judgments in time illustrate His judgment at the end of time when Jesus will come to terminate all things of this world. **22 When you will desire:** Jesus turns to the disciples. He stated that the cataclysmic days of turmoil were coming when they would wish that they were back in the days of Jesus' presence and mercy during His earthly ministry (Compare Mt 9:15; 13:21; 24:30). **23,24 Look here:** See Mt 24:23; Mk 13:21. **Do not go after them:** Jesus warns against following after false teachers (Mt 24:4,5). The coming of the Son of Man in judgment on Jerusalem will not be a hidden event. As lightning is seen by all, so will the coming about which He speaks here be known by all (Mt 24:27). **25** Jesus must first go to the cross. Sometime after the cross all the events of judgment about which He speaks in this context will happen (Mt 26:67; 27:29-31; Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33). Not only would Jesus personally suffer,

His body (the church) would also suffer the rejection of His generation (At 8:1-4). **26,27 Days of Noah:** In the days of Noah, Noah's generation rejected God's call to repentance through righteous Noah (Gn 6:5-8; 7:6-24; 1 Pt 3:20). People were more concerned over worldly living and things than over righteousness. When the flood came to destroy them, it was too late for repentance (Gn 7:1-23). **28-30 Days of Lot:** Likewise in the days of Lot, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were given over to materialistic living and unrighteousness (Gn 19; 2 Pt 2:6,7). In both the cases of Noah and Lot, the wicked were taken and the righteous were left. So it would be in the destruction of Jerusalem. The normal activities of the lives of unconcerned men will be occurring when the Roman armies would come upon the Jewish State. The Jews never believed that their city, and especially the temple, would be destroyed by the will of God. However, the Christians knew that God would do such because they believed Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction. For this reason, Christians stayed away from Jerusalem during the time preceding the destruction in A.D. 70. **Son of Man is revealed:** Jesus would be revealed as the Messiah because His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem would have come to pass. This revelation of Jesus as the Messiah would be important in time, not at the end of time, because it would stimulate many Jews to reconsider who Jesus was. **31 In that day:** Jesus now gives details concerning the time of the destruction (See comments Mt 24). There will be no purpose in considering the salvation of material goods in the time when the city is being destroyed, for all will be lost. When the Roman armies did come, Titus withdrew from his attack upon the city to return to Rome. But this withdrawal lasted only a short time. It was at this time that every faithful Christian remembered these words of Jesus, and thus, fled the region. **32 Remember Lot's wife:** Lot's wife hesitated by longing for those things she possessed in the city that were about to be destroyed. She thus looked back with the desire of returning (Gn 19:26). **33** See comments 9:24; Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mk 8:35; Jn 12:25. Those who have com-

33 “Whoever will seek to save his life will lose it. And whoever will lose his life will preserve it.

34 “I tell you, in that night there will be two *men* in one bed. The one will be taken and the other will be left.

35 “Two *women* will be grinding together. The one will be taken and the other left.

36 [“Two *people* will be in the field. The one will be taken and the other left.”]

37 And they answered and said to Him, “Where, Lord?” And He said to them, “Wherever the body *is*, there will the vultures be gathered together.”

Chapter 18

1 ¶ And He spoke a parable to them that men should always pray and not lose heart.

2 He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God nor respect man.

3 “Now there was a widow in that city. And she came to him, saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’

4 “But he would not for a while. But afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God, nor respect man,

5 ‘yet because this widow troubles me, I will give her justice, lest by her continual coming she weary me.’”

6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.

7 “And will not God bring about justice for His own elect who cry day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?”

8 “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

9 ¶ Now He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous,

mitted themselves totally to Jesus will believe what He is here saying, and thus, will be willing to leave all that they have in order to save their lives in the impending destruction. **34-36** See comments Mt 24:40. As in the days of Noah and Lot, the wicked are taken and the righteous are left. So it would be in the days of the destruction of Jerusalem. Those who would give heed to Jesus would spare themselves by believing this prophecy of the destruction. Those Jews in Jerusalem who rejected Jesus and held on to their possessions and way of life would lose their lives by being taken away with the over one million Jews who were killed during the war. Those Jews who survived were sold into slavery. **37** The dead carcass is the Jewish State. The vultures of the Roman armies would gather overhead in order to devour the spiritually dead who rejected the Son of Man (See comments Mt 24:28). We must keep in mind that the end of Israel was to be in Christ. National Israel was to be absorbed in Christ where there is neither Jew or Gentile. However, the nationalism of the Jews had grown too strong to accept the dissolving of Israel in Christ. The religion of the nation had become so traditional that the religious leaders could not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Therefore, it became a dead carcass in reference to God's further use of the nation. A.D. 70 was the termination of centuries of God's work among a people who had forgotten the very purpose for which they were called out of the world.

Chapter 18

PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

1 Men always ought to pray: It is the desire of the Father that His children approach Him in prayer. Prayer is the natural response of those who recognize their need for the help of God in their lives (See 11:5-10; 18:9-14; Rm 12:12; Ep 6:18; Cl 4:2; 1 Th 5:17). **2-5 Judge who did not fear God:** One who does not re-

spect the law of God will often have little respect for man. **Get justice for me:** Someone had wronged this woman. She thus made her plea to the judge for justice against the one who wronged her. **He would not:** The judge seems to be unconcerned with doing his duties. It seems that he is more interested in getting rid of this pleading woman than in doing his job as a just judge. Nevertheless, because of the persistent pleading of the woman, the judge acted and dealt just judgment to the one who had unjustly treated the woman. **6-8 God ... will avenge them speedily:** Jesus' lesson is that if an unrighteous and unconcerned judge would act upon the persistent requests of a pleading woman, then certainly a righteous and concerned God would avenge those who persecute His children (See Hb 10:37; 2 Pt 3:8,9; Rv 6:10). Therefore, Christians must believe that God will readily answer their prayers. Jesus here encourages Christians to continue in prayer for deliverance throughout their time of persecution. God will rain down judgment upon those who persecute His flock. In the historical context of His statements here, Jesus foresees the time between the establishment of the church in Acts 2 and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It would be during this time when the Jews would severely persecute Christians from city to city. However, after God's judgment on the nation of Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem, Jewish persecution of the church would be greatly curtailed, though eventually launched again by the Roman State.

PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN

9 Trusted in themselves that they were righteous: Luke introduces this parable by telling us exactly what it is about. It is about legalistic religionists who justify themselves because of the performance of their religious regulations (10:29; 16:15; Pv 30:12). Those who do not conform to their religious behavior are thus judged or condemned because they do not mea-

and despised others:

10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11 “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not as other men: extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

12 ‘I fast twice a week. I give tithes of all that I possess.’

13 “But the tax collector, standing far away, would not so much as lift up *his* eyes to heaven. But he beat his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’

14 “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be abased. And he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

15 ¶ Now they also brought to Him babies so that He might touch them. But when *His* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *to Him*, and said, “Permit little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom

of God.

17 “Truly I say to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will in no way enter into it.”

18 ¶ And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

19 Then Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

20 “You know the commandments: ‘*Do not commit adultery,*’ ‘*Do not kill,*’ ‘*Do not steal,*’ ‘*Do not bear false witness,*’ ‘*Honor your father and your mother.*’”

21 And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.”

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you possess and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. And come, follow Me.”

23 Then when he heard this, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

24 ¶ Now when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those

sure up to the legalists' self-imposed standards. Such was the nature of the religion of the scribes and Pharisees (See introduction to Gl; see comments Cl 2:20-23). **10-12 A Pharisee:** The Pharisee boasted concerning his obedience to his self-imposed religious behavior. He checked off his list of righteous deeds which he did and his evil deeds which he did not do. He thus trusted in himself, feeling self-confident that his performance of law should satisfy God, and thus, put God in debt to save him (See comments Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16). **13 The tax collector:** The tax collector stood far from the Pharisee because he was judged unrighteous by the Pharisee. However, he stood close to God because he approached God on the basis of his spiritual inadequacies (See comments Mt 5:3-10). Because he recognized his spiritual poverty, he trusted in God's grace for his salvation. **14 Down to his house justified:** He was justified by his faith in God's grace, not by his perfect law-keeping or performance of good deeds (Hk 2:4; Rm 1:17; Gl 3:11; Hb 10:38). **Exalts himself:** See 14:11; Jb 22:29; Mt 23:12; Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5. Those who have self-righteously exalted themselves will be brought down. And so, God brought the arrogant Pharisal religion of Jerusalem down in A.D. 70.

JESUS AND CHILDREN

(Mt 19:13-15; Mk 10:13-16)

15-17 See comments Mt 19:13-15. In order to receive the kingdom reign of Jesus, one must humble himself as a child who is not presumptuous in his behavior. One must accept God's conditions and directives in reference to righteous behavior and not be presumptuous by establishing his own religion. We must

not come to God with preconceived ideas and beliefs that contradict God's word, lest we bring into the church of Christ religious practices that have been invented after the desires of men and not God.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

(Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-32)

18-30 See comments Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-32. As the Pharisee of verses 9-14, the rich young ruler was also trusting in his performance of law-keeping in order to justify himself before God. He boasted of all that he had done from his youth. However, according to Jesus he still lacked that which was necessary in order to be a disciple. He had to dispose of that which hindered his total commitment to the kingdom. He had to sell all that he had in order to follow Jesus. Therefore, one must not come to Jesus with his own self-righteousness as the Pharisee. Self righteousness must be discarded for total dependence on God for direction. When one comes to Jesus, he must, as the young ruler, discard that which will hinder total commitment to Him (See comments 14:25-35). Because some people cannot place total trust in God in all aspects of life and belief, they cannot be disciples of Jesus. On the other hand, there are those who create religions that conform to the level of commitment they are willing to give. Lukewarm Christians will convince themselves that God is pleased with their lukewarm discipleship (See Rv 3:15,16). They thus create a religion in which their consciences are not bothered by the commitment that Jesus demands (14:25-35). A lukewarm Christianity is not Christianity at all. Jesus calls upon our total commitment and dedication to Him without compromise.

who are rich to enter the kingdom of God!

25 “For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”

26 Then those who heard *it* said, “Who then can be saved?”

27 And He said, “The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.”

28 Then Peter said, “Behold, we have left all and followed You.”

29 And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or wife or brothers or children for the sake of the kingdom of God,

30 “who will not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come eternal life.”

31 ¶ Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. And all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished.

32 “For He will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and spitefully mistreated and spit upon.

33 “And they will scourge *Him* and put Him to death. And the third day He will rise again.”

34 But they understood none of these things. *The meaning of this saying was hidden from them. Neither did they comprehend the things that were spoken.*

35 Now it came to pass that as He came near

to Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the road begging.

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.

38 Then he cried, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.”

39 But those who went ahead rebuked him that he should hold his peace. But he cried all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

40 Then Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him,

41 saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” And he said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.”

42 Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight. Your faith has made you well.”

43 And immediately he received his sight and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise to God.

Chapter 19

1 ¶ Then *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who was the chief among the tax collectors. And he was rich.

3 And he sought to see who Jesus was. But

BOUND FOR THE CROSS

(Mt 20:17-19)

31-34 See comments Mt 20:17-19. The preconceived ideas of the disciples concerning the nature of the kingdom and the work of Jesus still blinded them from understanding the destiny of Jesus. They knew the prophecies (See Is 53; Ps 22). They accepted Jesus as the Messiah. However, they failed to understand that the Messiah, as prophesied, must suffer at the hands of wicked men (See 2:50; 9:45; Mk 9:32; Jn 10:6; 12:16). The kingdom over which He would reign would not be a kingdom of this world (17:20,21; Jn 18:36-38). The disciples must now focus on that which is above this world because the hour was soon to come in Jesus’ ministry where the world would unleash a blow of death against Him.

TWO BLIND MEN ARE HEALED

(Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52)

35-43 See comments Mt 20:29-34. There were two blind men here as recorded by Matthew (Mt 20:30). However, Luke informs us that there was one who was

the outspoken of the two. Luke’s testimony here defines the nature of a true miracle. Miracles are to be believed because of the valid testimony of true witnesses. There were multitudes present at this healing who could give testimony to what actually happened. Luke wants Theophilus to know that the miracles of Jesus were true happenings. They were not the invention of over zealous religionists who were promoting a new religion in the Roman Empire. The miracles Jesus worked were not the performance of a skillful person who deceived the people. The miracles that Jesus worked were a testimony that God was with Him (Jn 3:2; 20:30,31).

Chapter 19

THE ZEAL OF ZACCHAEUS

1,2 Chief tax collector: The name Zacchaeus means “pure.” He was a superintendent of tax collectors in his region. Though we are not given information on how he became rich, we must assume that he was honest in his dealings as a tax collector. He was a righ-

he could not because of the crowd, for he was short in stature.

4 And he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was about to pass that way.

5 Now when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and He said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately, for today I must stay at your house."

6 Now he came down immediately and received Him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be the guest with a man who is a sinner."

8 Then Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore to him fourfold."

9 Then Jesus said to him, "This day salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.

10 "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

11 ¶ And while they heard these things, He went on to tell a parable because He was near Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear.

12 Therefore, He said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

13 "And he called his ten bondservants and delivered to them ten minas. And he said to them, 'Do business until I come.'

14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

15 "When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he commanded these bondservants to whom he had given the money, to be called to him so that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Lord, your mina has gained ten minas.'

teous rich man as Gaius in 3 John 1-8. This is one case where it is possible for God to save the rich who submit to Him (See 18:24-27; 1 Tm 6:6-10,12). **3,4 He sought to see Jesus:** Though a rich man of great dignity, Zacchaeus is driven to climb a tree in order to see Jesus. **5-7** Jesus' omniscience to know the minds of men allowed Him the opportunity to know this man by name (See 6:8; 9:47; Mt 9:4; 12:25; 22:18; 24:25; Mk 2:8; 5:30). **Received Him joyfully:** God will receive anyone who will receive Him with joy. **A man who is a sinner:** Those who assumed that Zacchaeus was a sinner made their judgments as men judge. Zacchaeus did not conform to their code of religious conduct. He was thus classified with all tax collectors who were considered traitors to Israel because they worked for Rome in collecting taxes from the Jews. The multitudes here made the mistake of judging one to be a sinner because of his associations. **8 I give half of my goods to the poor:** The tense of the verb "I give" is progressive action. Zacchaeus continually gave to the poor. He was thus a benevolent man who had compassion on the poor (Ps 41:1). **I restore fourfold:** This restoration went beyond what the Old Testament law required (See Ex 22; Nm 5:6,7; Lv 6:1-6), but was often what was required by Roman law in some cases. What Zacchaeus' restoration policy manifested was his caution to deal justly with all people in reference to money. If he inadvertently miscalculated one's taxes, he restored fourfold. He was willing to pay the price to guard his own integrity. **9,10 Salvation has come to this house:** Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham by faith (See comments Rm 2:28,29; Gl 3:7,26-29). By his faith he was saved for his faith moved him to respond to Jesus. We must not conclude that he was saved by faith only. Faith without obedient response is of no profit in reference to one's salvation (See comments Js 2:14-26).

PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

11 Luke gives us an inspired interpretation of the meaning of this parable. The Jews thought that the Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom reign with the Messiah reigning as king in Jerusalem (See At 1:6). Such a kingdom fostered the materialistic inclinations of the Pharisees and Sadducees, for both were lovers of money (16:14). Jesus did not fit into their concept of what and who the Messiah would be. Since He is nearing Jerusalem and the cross, Jesus gives this parable concerning their rejection of Him as the Messiah. They rejected Him because He did not conform to their teachings concerning the Messiah and the kingdom. **12-14 To receive for himself a kingdom:** Jesus (the nobleman) ascended to the Father in order to receive a kingdom, glory and dominion. In fulfillment of prophecy, such would be what He would do not long from this time (See Dn 7:13,14; At 1:9,10). Jesus will return at the end of time. Verse 15 says that He will have already received the kingdom when He returns. He is not coming at the end of time in order to establish another kingdom. He is coming in order to terminate this present environment, and then, return kingdom reign to God (See comments 1 Co 15:25-28). **His servants:** The responsibility for carrying the gospel to all the world was given to the servants. They are to be about kingdom business throughout Jesus' kingdom reign. **Mina:** A mina is worth about three months' salary. **His citizens hated him:** Jesus came to the Jews, but the Jews rejected Him as their Messiah (Jn 1:11). They thus worked through the Roman authorities in Jerusalem in order to have Him crucified. **15-19** In Acts 1 Jesus ascended to receive kingdom reign at the right hand of the Father (At 1:9,10; Ep 1:20-22; see Dn 7:13,14). A few days later on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 Peter announced the kingdom reign of Jesus (At 2:29-36). From this day the servants were

17 “And he said to him, ‘Well done, good bondservant. Because you have been faithful in very little, you have authority over ten cities.’

18 “And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has gained five minas.’

19 “And he said likewise to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’

20 “Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, behold, *here is* your mina which I have kept laid up in a handkerchief.

21 ‘For I feared you, because you are an exacting man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’

22 “Then he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth will I judge you, *you* wicked bondservant. You knew that I am an exacting man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.

23 ‘Then why did you not put my money in the bank, so that at my coming I might have required my own with interest?’

24 “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take from him the mina and give *it* to him who has ten minas.’

25 “But they said to him, ‘Lord, he *already* has ten minas.’

26 ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given. And from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

27 ‘But these enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay *them* before me.’”

28 ¶ And when He had thus spoken, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

29 Now it came to pass when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called Olivet, He sent two of His disciples,

30 saying, “Go into the village opposite *you*, where, as you enter you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat. Untie it and bring *it here*.

31 “And if anyone asks you, ‘Why do you untie *it*?’ thus you will say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of him.’”

32 ¶ Then those who were sent went their way and found *it* as He had said to them.

33 And as they were untying the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

34 Then they said, “The Lord has need of him.”

35 And they brought him to Jesus. And they cast their garments on the colt, and they set Jesus on him.

36 Now as He went, they spread their clothes on the road.

37 And when He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty

to do kingdom business. Some of the servants produced. On the other hand, some refused to work. **20-23** In the context of Luke's explanation as to why Jesus gave this parable, the unproductive servant represented those of Israel who did not give their service to the King. **24-27 Enemies ... who did not want me to reign over them:** Such were the Jewish religious leaders who did not want Jesus as their Messiah and King. He did not conform to their definition of the Messiah. Therefore, they sentenced Him to the death of the cross. However, those who condemned Jesus were themselves slain in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (See comments Mt 24).

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

(Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11; Jn 12:12-19)

28-36 See comments Mt 21:1-11. Jesus is now on His way into Jerusalem in order to accomplish the scheme of redemption for man that was in the mind of God before the creation of the world (Ep 3:8-13). **Bethphage and Bethany:** These were two towns east of Jerusalem on the hillside of the Mount of Olives. Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived in Bethany (Mt 26:6; Jn 12:1).

Colt: It was the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 that Jesus proceed with the victory march into Jerusalem. The acquisition of the colt for Jesus' plan to triumphantly enter the city of Jerusalem was for the purpose of symbolizing the victory return of a conquering king. Jesus knew He would conquer Satan with the victory of the cross and the conquest of the open tomb. Jesus also allowed the triumphal entry in order to provide the opportunity for the religious leaders of Jerusalem to manifest their envious hearts. Once their envy was stimulated, such would drive them to nail Him to the cross. **37-40 Multitude of the disciples:** It was the disciples who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. The Pharisees in the midst of the multitude were evidently motivated to jealousy because the disciples had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Because they resented the disciples' admiration of Jesus, they asked Jesus to ask the disciples to be quiet concerning their praise of Him. The Pharisees had accepted Jesus as a teacher, but they did not accept Him as a king. Therefore, their rejection of Him is the fulfillment of the parable of verses 11-27 (Jn 1:11). **Stones ... cry out:** See Hk 2:11. Such should be the response of those who recognize the sonship of Jesus.

works that they had seen,

38 saying, “*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.*” Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

39 But some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said to Him, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

40 And He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”

41 ¶ Now when He had come near, He looked at the city and wept over it,

42 saying, “If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

43 “For the days will come on you that your enemies will cast a barricade around you, and encompass you and hem you in on every side,

44 “and will level you to the ground and your children within you. And they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

45 ¶ Then He went into the temple and be-

gan to throw out those who were selling,

46 saying to them, “It is written, ‘*My house will be the house of prayer.*’ But you have made it a den of thieves.”

47 ¶ Now He taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him.

48 But they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.

Chapter 20

1 ¶ Now it came to pass on one of those days as He taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him.

2 And they spoke to Him, saying, “Tell us, by what authority do you do these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?”

3 And He answered and said to them, “I will also ask you one thing, and answer Me:

4 “The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or from men?”

5 And they reasoned among themselves, say-

LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM

41-44 Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because it was caught up in the world of materialism and religious heresy. The religious hierarchy of leadership had rejected the word of God, and thus, the religious leaders rejected the Son of God who was sent to redeem all Israel (Mk 7:1-9). Jesus also knew that because of their rejection, Jerusalem would be levelled to the ground within forty years by the Roman army (See comments Mt 24). The nation that had been the chosen of God to bring the Redeemer into the world was rejected by God because she had rejected God. History was indeed repeating itself in Israel (See Hs 4:6). The nation had a history of rejecting God. This was just another in a series of rejections for which they would pay the ultimate price. This was the final rejection and final judgment for this nation.

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

(Mt 21:12,13; Mk 11:15-17; Jn 2:13-17)

45,46 See comments Mt 21:12,13. **My house is a house of prayer:** See Is 56:7; Jr 7:11. The religionists of Israel had turned from prayer to God to payments for sacrifices. The money changers in the temple had turned the temple into a market for selling at unfair exchange rates the sacrifices that were necessary for the feast of the Passover. They were using the sacrificial responsibilities that were required under the Old Testament law as an occasion to make unfair profit from the people. **47,48 Teaching daily in the temple:** See 21:37; 22:53. The work of a teacher is to teach. Jesus taught daily in the place where religious people assembled because of their interest in the Old Testament law. It will be the

practice of good teachers to teach daily. Their daily teaching will be in places where religious people who are interested in the Scriptures will assemble. When there is much teaching going on concerning the word of God, there will be responses. **Sought to destroy Him:** Luke's historical record of the plot of the Jewish religious leaders to kill Jesus was a testimony to Theophilus that Christianity was not a sect of Judaism. The Jewish religious leadership rejected Jesus. They did not accept Him as the Messiah of Israel. Therefore, the belief that Christianity was just another sect of Jewish denominationalism was not true. Those who led the Judaism of the day rejected Jesus who was the Son of God. Jesus claimed to be both the Messiah and Son of God. The religious leaders could not accept either claim, regardless of the miraculous confirmation of Jesus. Therefore, these religious leaders deceived themselves into believing that they could violate one of the ten commandments – you shall not kill – in order to silence the teaching of Jesus.

Chapter 20

JESUS' AUTHORITY IS CHALLENGED

(Mt 21:23-27; Mk 11:27-33)

1-8 See comments Mt 21:23-27. **Preaching the gospel:** It is at this time that Jesus speaks to all the multitudes concerning the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29; Rv 13:8; see comments 1 Co 15:1-4). This is the good news for Israel for which those who were children of Abraham by faith had been waiting. **Chief priests ... scribes ... elders:** This is the local establishment of the religious leaders of

ing, "If we will say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe him?'"

6 But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet."

7 And they answered that they could not tell from where *it was*.

8 Then Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

9 ¶ Then He began to speak to the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard and let it out to vinedressers. And he went into a far country for a long time.

10 "And at the *harvest* time he sent a bond-servant to the vinedressers so that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty.

11 "And again he sent another bondservant. And they beat him also and treated *him* shamefully. And they sent *him* away empty.

12 "And again he sent a third. And they wounded him also, and threw *him* out.

13 "Then the owner of the vineyard said,

'What will I do? I will send my beloved son. Perhaps, they will respect *him* when they see *him*.'

14 "But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him so that the inheritance may be ours.'

15 "So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them?"

16 "He will come and destroy these vinedressers, and will give the vineyard to others." And when they heard *it*, they said, "Certainly not!"

17 But He looked at them, and said, "What is this then that is written, '*The stone that the builders rejected, the same has become the cornerstone*'?"

18 "Whoever will fall on that stone will be broken. But on whomever it will fall, it will grind him to powder."

19 Then the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on Him. But they feared the people, for they understood

Jerusalem who had been consumed by the positions and traditions of Judaism (Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9). **Confronted Him:** Jesus did not fit the mold of the traditional religious establishment. As a result, the religious establishment of Jerusalem rose up against Him. Not soon from this time they would be agitated by the teachings of Jesus to the point of planning and carrying out a plot to murder Him. Such illustrates the extent to which traditional leaders of religion will go in order to protect their jobs and influence with the people over which they have set themselves as protectors and judges. **By what authority:** Jesus was teaching by direct authority from God (At 4:7; 7:27). He was not teaching with the authority or approval of the fathers. He needed no diploma from their schools or the laying on of hands from the religious leaders in order to teach. Since He was the author of the word He spoke, He did not need the approval of man (See Jn 12:48). It is through the authority of His word that men of God speak today. Those who would seek to be preachers and teachers of the word of God today, speak the authority of Jesus by preaching the word of God. God's preachers and teachers have the authority of God if they simply stand up and preach from the word of God. The authority is in the Bible, not in the man (Jn 12:48; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 4:1,2). **They answered that they did not know:** Their answer was not based on the fact of recognizing the source of His authority. The Pharisee Nicodemus was of this group and had previously stated to Jesus, "*Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him*" (Jn 3:2). The authority by which Jesus spoke originated from God. Though most of the Pharisees did not recog-

nize this, they did understand that the miraculous works of Jesus originated from that which was beyond this world (At 4:14-16). Their concern was not in the fact of the miracles and teachings, but on maintaining their positions and influence among the people. If what Jesus were saying was true, then they would lose their possessions and positions. It is for this reason that they would not confess that He was the Son of God and Messiah of Israel.

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

(Mt 21:33-46; Mk 12:1-2)

9-18 See comments Mt 21:33-46. Jesus gave this parable in order to call on the religious leadership of Israel to unknowingly judge themselves. God (a certain man) had planted a vineyard (Israel). He gave the responsibility for spiritual leadership of the vineyard to the religious leaders of Israel (vinedressers). When Jesus (the beloved son) and the early evangelists (servant) came (harvest time), it was the time to reap those who were children of Abraham by faith. **What will the owner of the vineyard do to them:** Matthew's account mentions that the religious leaders answered this question (Mt 21:40,41). Their answer was that the owner (God) would destroy the wicked men who killed the son and seized the vineyard. Luke records that Jesus repeated their answer. And such was the fulfillment of the prophecy. The builders would reject the chief cornerstone by which the measurements of the entire house were determined (Ps 118:22,23; Is 28:16; Mt 21:42; 1 Pt 2:7,8). They rejected the Son of God, and thus, God would manifest His rejection of them by the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in A.D. 70. **19 They knew:** The

that He had spoken this parable against them. **20 ¶** Now they watched *Him*. And they sent out spies who pretended to be righteous men, so that they might catch Him in some statement in order to deliver Him to the rule and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You say and teach correctly, and You do not show partiality, but teach the way of God in truth.

22 "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

23 But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me?"

24 "Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's."

25 Then He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

26 And they could not catch Him in His words before the people. And they marveled at His answer and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then some of the Sadducees, who deny

that there is any resurrection, came to *Him* and asked Him,

28 saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote to us, 'If any man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up seed for his brother.'

29 "Therefore, there were seven brothers. The first took a wife and died without children.

30 "And the second [took her as wife, and he died childless.]

31 "Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also left no children, and died.

32 "Last of all the woman also died.

33 "Therefore, in the resurrection whose wife will she be, for all seven had her as wife?"

34 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "The children of this world marry and are given in marriage.

35 "But those who are considered worthy to take part in that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage.

36 "Nor can they die anymore. For they are

religious leaders had no problem understanding this parable. As a result, their anger was agitated to the point of disposing of Jesus at that very time (19:47,48). However, the common people were accepting the teaching of Jesus. Because of the religious pomp and pride of the religious leaders, they sought for an occasion to destroy Jesus. If it were not for the hate of the religious leaders, therefore, Jesus would not have gone to the cross. As a result of the religious leaders' sinful attitudes, the multitudes were eventually turned against Jesus in order to have Him crucified. We must assume, therefore, that it was not the common people of Israel who rejected Jesus, but the religious leaders who deceitfully led them against Him.

PAYING TAXES TO CAESAR

(Mt 22:15-22; Mk 12:13-17)

20-26 See comments Mt 22:15-22. **Watched Him and sent spies:** The religious leaders are now on a witch-hunt (See comments Gl 2:4). Such is the behavior of legalistic religionists who seek to accuse, and thus, discredit others before the people by pointing out violations of their self-imposed traditions they have confused with the word of God. In this case, they want to find some accusation against Jesus where He may have possibly contradicted Roman law. **He perceived their craftiness:** Men with evil hearts will debate issues in order to trap their opposition. Their motive is not to correct their opposition, but to discredit them. Those who would be wise would do well to use great wisdom in such debate in order not to fall victim to the work of Satan in the hearts of envious men. **They could not catch Him:** The religious leaders marveled at the wis-

dom by which Jesus answered their question which they intended to be a trap. Therefore, because they could not publicly discredit Jesus before the multitudes, they sought to do away with Him secretly (vs 19; 19:47,48).

CONFRONTATION WITH THE SADDUCEES

(Mt 22:23-33; Mk 12:18-27)

27-33 See comments Mt 22:23-33. The autocratic Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection and life after death sought to trap Jesus with a question that proposed a supposed dilemma. However, they did not know the law of Moses (See Dt 25:5-10). **34-40** In answering their question, Jesus also answers their disbelief in the resurrection. Moses lived four hundred years after the death of Abraham. However, he wrote that God is the God of the living (Ex 3:1-6,15). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were still alive and in fellowship with God at the time Moses wrote. Contrary to the beliefs of the Sadducees, therefore, there is life after death. The scribes – many of whom were Pharisees – agreed with this teaching because they were theologically opposed to the Sadducees.

JESUS, THE LORD OF DAVID

(Mt 22:41-46; Mk 12:35-37)

41-44 See comments Mt 22:41-46. Matthew gives the account that Jesus here addresses the Pharisees. The Pharisees affirmed that the Messiah would come from the lineage of David. They were right. In Jesus' quotation of Psalm 110:1 He reminded them that David called his descending "son" Lord. Therefore, David considered his descendant to be more than a prophet which David was. The Pharisees considered David to be a

equal to the angels and are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection.

37 “But in the *record* of the *burning* bush, Moses showed that the dead rise when he calls the Lord ‘*the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*’

38 “For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to Him.”

39 Then some of the scribes answered and said, “Teacher, You have spoken well.”

40 Now after that they did not question Him any longer.

41 ¶ Then He said to them, “How *is it* that they say the Christ is the Son of David?”

42 “Now David himself says in the book of Psalms, ‘*The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand,*

43 *until I make Your enemies Your footstool.*”

44 “Therefore, David calls Him ‘Lord.’ How is He then his Son?”

45 ¶ Then in the hearing of all the people He said to His disciples,

46 “Beware of the scribes who desire to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,

47 “who devour widows’ houses, and for a show make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.”

Chapter 21

1 ¶ Now He looked up and saw the rich men putting their gifts into the treasury.

2 Then He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins.

3 And He said, “Of a truth I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all,

4 for all these have out of their abundance put into the offering. But she out of her poverty has put in all the livelihood that she had.”

5 ¶ Then as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts, He said,

6 “*As for* these things that you behold, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

7 And they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things will come to pass?”

8 Then He said, “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He,*’ and ‘The time draws near.’ Do not go after them.

9 “But when you hear of wars and disturbances, do not be terrified. For these things must first come to pass, but the end does not immediately *follow.*”

10 Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

11 “And there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

12 “But before all these, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing *you* before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.

13 “And it will turn out for you as an opportunity for your testimony.

14 “Therefore, make up your minds not to meditate before what you will answer,

15 “for I will give you a mouth and wisdom

prophet. Since they considered him to be a prophet, then they must consider his descendant to be more than a prophet (See Jn 4:19,20,42).

DENUNCIATION OF THE SCRIBES & PHARISEES

(Mt 23:1-36; Mk 12:38-40)

45-47 See comments Mt 12:1-13. Matthew records that this address was to the scribes and Pharisees. Many of the scribes were Pharisees, and thus, the denunciation is directed toward the religious establishment that held the people captive by their doctrines and traditions of men (See comments Mk 7:1-9). **Devour widows’ houses:** Because the Pharisees loved money (16:14), they played on the consciences of widows to donate their houses for religious purposes. However, the mo-

tives of the Pharisees was selfish. They enjoyed all that was donated to God by the sincere hearts of those who wanted to please God (See comments Mt 15:3-6). They materialistically played on the sincere consciences of those who wanted to please God in order to satisfy their own love of money.

Chapter 21

SACRIFICIAL THANKSGIVING

(Mk 12:41-44)

1-4 **Two mites:** A mite was a small Jewish coin (*lepta*) of bronze or copper that was the smallest in value of coins (Mk 12:42). It is also called a farthing, cent or some other translation (12:59). Out of her poverty this

that all your adversaries will not be able to refute or resist.

16 “And you will be betrayed both by parents and brothers and relatives and friends. And they will put *some* of you to death.

17 “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake.

18 “But not a hair of your head will be lost.

19 “In your endurance you will gain your souls.

20 ¶ “Now when you see Jerusalem surrounded with armies, then know that her desolation is near.

21 “Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. And let those who are in the midst of it depart. And do not let those who are in the country enter into her.

22 “For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

24 “And they will fall by the edge of the sword. And they will be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

25 “And there will be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars. And on the earth, *there will be* distress among nations and perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves.

26 “Men’s hearts *will be* failing them for

fear, and for expecting those things that are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven will be shaken.

27 “And then will they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draws near.”

29 ¶ And He spoke to them a parable: “Behold the fig tree and all the trees.

30 “When they sprout *leaves*, you see and know of your own selves that summer is now near.

31 “So you also, when you see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near.

32 “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things are fulfilled.

33 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

34 “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts are weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you unexpectedly.

35 “For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 “Therefore, watch and always pray so that you may be able to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

37 ¶ Now in the daytime He was teaching in the temple. And at night He went out and stayed on the mount that is called Olivet.

widow gave all that she had. Jesus did not ask that her contribution be given back to her because she, as all men who come to Jesus, must express their sacrificial thanksgiving for their salvation. When one becomes a Christian his standard of living comes down because of sacrificial giving. The materialist can never understand why the widow gave all that she had. He cannot understand because he usually gives as the rich in the context of this incident. The rich man has selfishly consumed so much upon his own desires by buying things and engaging in fleshly activities that he does not understand the twinkling of the widow who never had an opportunity to enjoy excess wealth in her life. Her giving, therefore, was easy simply because before she gave she did not consider whether the giving would endanger her life-style. She simply gave out of a heart of gratitude for all that God had done for her. It was not a matter of sacrifice, but a response to God’s love that she felt in her heart. And such should be the response of everyone who has recognized the grace of God by which one is saved.

JUDGMENT ON JERUSALEM

(Mt 24; Mk 13:1-37)

5-36 See comments Mt 24. When studying this chapter, the Bible student must keep in mind that Jesus’ primary emphasis is on the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This historical event dramatically affected the lives of all Jews throughout the world and the church in and around the area of Palestine, and specifically, the city of Jerusalem. This event changed the historical environment in which the early church worked and also instigated world evangelism as Christian Jews fled from Palestine to find safety in the far corners of the world. The biblical interpreter, therefore, should not underestimate the impact of the A.D. 70 event upon the lives of the early Christians and the resulting proclamation of the gospel to all the world. Therefore, we must not underestimate the inferences and notations the New Testament writers make concerning this event.

37,38 Teaching in the temple: This is a restatement of Jesus’ daily work of teaching in the temple during these final days before the cross. Assembled at the

38 And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the temple to hear Him.

Chapter 22

1 ¶ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, drew near.

2 Now the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him, but they feared the people.

3 Then Satan entered into Judas surnamed Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.

4 So he went his way and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them.

5 And they were glad and agreed to give him money.

6 And he consented. Then he sought an opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

7 ¶ Then the day of Unleavened Bread came when the Passover *lamb* must be killed.

8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go

and prepare *for* us the Passover so that we may eat."

9 And they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?"

10 And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered into the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house which he enters.

11 "And you will say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room in which I will eat the Passover with My disciples?"'

12 "And he will show you a large, furnished upper room. There make ready."

13 Now they went and found as He had said to them. And they made ready the Passover.

14 ¶ Then when the hour had come, He sat down, and the apostles with Him.

15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

16 "For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

temple were those who sought answers from God by study of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the evenings Jesus evidently stayed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany, whose house was on the slopes of the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem (See 22:39; Jn 8:1,2).

Chapter 22

THE BETRAYAL SCHEME OF JUDAS

(Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11)

1,2 See Mt 26:2; Mk 14:1. **Sought how they might kill Him:** This desire by the chief priests and scribes manifests the extent to which Satan can deceive the human mind with religiously misguided beliefs. These religious leaders were meeting in order to devise some method by which they might physically dispose of their religious opposition. **3-6** See comments Mt 26:14-16. **Satan entered Judas:** This is not talking about locating Satan literally inside Judas. Satan is not as God who alone can be everywhere and in all those who are His. What is meant is that Judas first conceived in his mind to betray Jesus, and then, he carried out his betrayal scheme (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11; Jn 13:2). Satan was in him in the sense that he was carrying out the desires of Satan to betray Jesus. When anyone sets his course of life to do the will of Satan, Satan metaphorically dwells in that person in the sense that his life is controlled by the will of Satan. **In the absence of the multitude:** Judas knew where Jesus would be away from the multitudes and by Himself. In such an environment he could secretly betray Jesus to the chief priests and scribes without causing a riot among the people. His actions of betrayal were truly planned beforehand with the religious leaders.

PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER

(Mt 26:17-19; Mk 14:12-16)

7-13 See comments Mt 26:17-19. Preparation day was before the annual Passover and was in preparation for the Passover (Mt 27:62; Mk 15:42). The Passover was instituted to remember the Jews' deliverance from Egyptian captivity (Ex 10:2; 12:8,14). There is some question as to whether Jesus ate the actual Passover meal with the disciples. Some Bible students believe that Jesus, the Passover Lamb, was either on the cross or in the tomb at the time the customary Passover meal was eaten. Therefore, it is assumed that He ate a pre-Passover meal with the disciples, but ate it during the Passover events which carried on for more than one day. What is of primary importance here is the fact that Jesus became the sacrificial lamb that was offered for the sins of mankind (Jn 1:29). He offered His blood in order that God pass over our sins. **Upper room:** Some believe that this may have been the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark (See At 1:13; 12:12). **14-16 I have desired to eat this Passover:** See comments Jn 13:1-28; 19:14. Jesus had a strong desire to eat the Passover celebration meal with the disciples, though He may have been crucified before the actual time the Passover meal was eaten. If He did not eat the actual Passover meal, then in view of His death He ate a special preparatory meal with the disciples on the day of Preparation. At the time of the Passover, the Preparation Day meal would have been considered a part of the entire Passover event. In eating a meal on this day Jesus would have been eating with the disciples on the Passover. The Passover meal was a celebration of deliverance from Egyptian bondage. He wanted to celebrate their deliverance from sin through the cross.

17 Then He took the cup and gave thanks. And He said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves.

18 "For I say to you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 And He took bread and gave thanks. And He broke *it* and gave to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

20 Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood which is poured out for you.

21 "But behold, the hand of him who is betraying Me *is* with Mine on the table.

22 "And truly the Son of Man goes as it was determined. But woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

23 Then they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was who would do this thing.

24 ¶ Now there was also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them should be considered the greatest.

25 Then He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them. And

THE LAST SUPPER

(Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Jn 13:1-30; 1 Co 11:23-26)

17-20 See comments Mt 26:26-29; 1 Co 11:23-26.

Until it is fulfilled in the kingdom: In Acts 1:9,10 it is recorded that Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father to reign as king (Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22). He was reigning as king when Peter made the first official announcement of His kingdom reign on the day of Pentecost (At 2:36). It was then that the disciples began eating with the Lord at His table in His kingdom (See At 2:42; 20:7). **The cup:** Emphasis is not on the container but what was in the container. There is no spiritual significance with the container that was only incidental to the institution of this great memorial representation of Jesus' blood. The disciples were in an upper room, but such was also only incidental for the institution of the Supper. We must be careful not to concentrate on the incidental things and events surrounding the institution of the Lord's Supper and miss the significance of the memorial on which Jesus wanted us to concentrate.

This is My body: The bread that He used to represent His body did not become His literal body. The bread only became the representation of His body. Therefore, when the disciples partook of the fruit of the vine that was in the cup and the bread that was in His hand, they were to remember His body and blood of the new covenant He would establish with them. They were to remember the blood of the covenant, the body that was sacrificed and His universal body of disciples. Paul adds that the body represents also the oneness of the disciples as the united church of Christ (1 Co 10:14-17). Therefore, when brethren partake of the Lord's Supper throughout the world today, they remember the oneness of the body of Christ (the church) that exists throughout the world. **21-23** See comments Mt 26:21-25. Throughout the three years of His ministry, and at this time of the institution of the Supper, Jesus knew who would betray Him (Ps 41:9; Mt 26:21,23; Mk 14:18; Jn 13:21,26,27). He knew also that it was necessary that He be betrayed by one whom Satan would use. What is illustrated again in reference to God's use of Satan's evil, is what Satan has done throughout the centuries to destroy the seedline of woman to bring the Savior into the world. Regardless of Satan's onslaught against the work of God, the Seed of woman came into the world for the salvation of all men (See Gn 3:15). God has even used Satan's work through the religious leaders to condemn and kill Jesus in order that Jesus be the sac-

rifice for the sins of the world. We must always keep in mind that Jesus has control of all that is happening at this time (Jn 10:17,18).

SERVANTHOOD GREATNESS

24-27 It is at this time that Jesus, the Son of God, washes the disciples' feet (See comments Jn 13:3-17). He even washes the feet of Judas. Sometime during this meeting with the disciples, and after Jesus washed his feet, Judas left their presence in order to carry out his betrayal scheme (Jn 13:30). **Dispute among them:** See comments Mt 20:25-28 (Compare Lk 9:46-48; Mt 18:1-4; Mk 10:35-45). Because the disciples had an earthly concept of the kingdom, they thought there would be positions of power in the kingdom. They equated the kingdom about which Jesus spoke with the physical kingdoms of this world (At 1:6; see comments Jn 18:36-38). **Kings of the Gentiles:** Jesus reminded them of what they already knew. In the world, those who are in authority are in positions of command where they can hand down decisions to those over whom they have been placed. **Benefactors:** This was given as a title of honor to rulers, especially to those who did good, for the title means "doer of good." **But not so among you:** The leadership by authority that is seen in the world must not be brought into the community of God. The reason for the disciples' dispute among themselves concerning who was the greatest must not be a motivation for desiring greatness among God's community of servants. There will be no system of rank and power in the kingdom of Jesus as is seen in the world. Whenever we think about what leadership should be in the community of God on earth, we must at least affirm that it should not be as the leadership of the world. Unfortunately, there are those who use the flock of God as an occasion to exercise their desire to be first (See comments 3 Jn 9,10). They manifest their lust for power and control by intimidating the sheep into submitting to their demands (2 Pt 3:1-5). They steal the sheep of God by regimenting others to conform to their regulations. They satisfy their selfish ambition by feeding their own egos (See At 20:29,30; Rm 16:17,18). Such leaders should never be among the community of God because they who are such serve themselves and not the flock of God (See comments 2 Pt 2). **He who sits at the table:** The disciples viewed themselves as sitting at the table and being served by others. However, Jesus came to be the servant of all. If the disciples would be as Jesus,

those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.'

26 "But you *will not be* this way. But he who is greatest among you, let him be as the youngest. And he who leads, as he who serves.

27 "For who *is* greater, the one reclining at the table or the one serving? *Is* it not the one reclining at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

28 "You are those who have continued with Me in My trials.

29 "And I grant to you a kingdom just as My Father has granted to Me,

30 "so that you may eat and drink at My table, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes

of Israel.

31 ¶ "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired *to have* you so that he may sift *you* as wheat.

32 "But I have prayed for you so that your faith not fail. And when you are converted, strengthen your brethren."

33 And he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death."

34 Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

35 ¶ And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag and knapsack and sandals, did you lack anything?" And they said, "Nothing."

they must view their lives as servants and slaves to the needs of others (See comments Mk 10:35-45). **As the One who serves:** Jesus was the creator of all things (Cl 1:16). He was the Son of God incarnate in this world (Jn 1:1,2,14). He had the right to rule with authority. Though the disciples misunderstood the nature of His kingdom, they knew that Jesus had the right to reign with authority in any kingdom. However, He came to serve (See Mt 20:28; Jn 13:13,14; Ph 2:7). And in coming as a servant, He died for the sake of others. Such is the nature of the leadership in the kingdom over which Jesus now reigns. It is certainly not a kingdom that is of this world (Jn 18:36-38). It is a kingdom of bondservants who have allowed the will of Jesus in heaven to reign in their hearts (See Mt 6:9,10). Any concept of leadership that one would conceive in reference to the community of God must be centered around servanthood (See Mk 10:35-45). There is only one head of the church who remains as the controlling center of reference from which all authority comes. This is Jesus (Cl 1:18). There is only one Lord to which we are all slaves. This is Jesus (At 2:36; Ep 4:4-6). Anyone who would in leadership of the church seek the position of lording over the flock or becoming the center of control of church affairs is setting aside the lordship and headship of Jesus. There is now only one who has all authority (Mt 28:18). Any who would claim authority in the church in order to make laws is taking authority from King Jesus. **28-30 I bestow upon you a kingdom:** The apostles would reign in the sense that through them the Holy Spirit would deliver inspired direction to the church (Jn 14:26; 16:13,14). They would bind and loose on earth that which God would deliver to them for the direction of His people (See comments Mt 16:18,19). Such would put them in a position of greatness, not because of power that originated from themselves as was characteristic with worldly kings and lords, but because of the power of God working through them. The authority they would manifest would not be in themselves but in the revealed word of God. In the kingdom of Jesus, therefore, all authority must rest in the reign of Jesus from heaven (Jn 12:48; Mt 28:18). He is the final authority in the kingdom because He is the King (See comments Ep 1:20-23). **Judging the twelve tribes of Israel:** Their judgment of Is-

rael would be through the revelation of God's word through them. Men would judge themselves as they either responded to or rejected the inspired word that was preached by the twelve. Figuratively speaking, therefore, the apostles would be the judges of Israel when they preached the word of God.

PROPHECY OF PETER'S DENIAL

(Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31; Jn 13:36-38)

31-34 See comments Mt 26:31-35. **Satan has asked for you:** Satan wanted to use one of those who was closest to Jesus in order to deter Jesus from His destiny (Compare 1 Pt 5:8; Am 9:9). We do not know when this asking by Satan took place. We do know that Satan could not simply possess or voluntarily take control of Peter in order to subject him to his control. He had to ask permission. Jesus prayed, and thus, Satan's desires were stopped. **I have prayed for you:** Jesus specifically prayed that Peter be strong. He also prayed for all the twelve on this occasion (Jn 17:9,11,15). His prayer was that their faith be strong enough to withstand the trials through which they were about to go in the next few days. It was a prayer that they not be so discouraged that they fall away. **When you return:** Jesus knew that Peter would stumble because of the turmoil of the arrest, trials and crucifixion that were about to happen. But He also knew that afterward Peter would come to himself and return. Jesus knew a weakness in Peter that Peter did not know. Peter sometimes talked big things, but he had a weakness of timidity that often led to his downfall (See comments Gl 2:12). **Strengthen my brethren:** See comments Jn 21:15-17 (At 1:15; 2:14; 2 Pt 1:10-15). One responsibility of Peter and the other disciples was to care for the flock of God (See 1 Pt 5:1-5). Though Peter would stumble, Jesus would still use him to introduce the kingdom of God. Those disciples who would return to Jesus after stumbling, must allow themselves to be used by God to their greatest potential. Once one is restored, his stumbling should never be used to intimidate him into not doing his best in the church. When one's restitution is based on true repentance, he is restored to the flock. The forgiving spirit of the flock should encourage such a one to begin again his work for God. **To prison and to death:** Such

36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* knapsack. And he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

37 "For I say to you that this which is written must yet be fulfilled in Me, '*And He was numbered among the transgressors.*' For the things concerning Me have a fulfillment.

38 And they said, "Lord, behold, here *are* two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

39 ¶ Then He came out and went as was His custom to the Mount of Olives. And His disciples also followed Him.

40 Now when He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you do not enter into temptation."

41 Then He withdrew from them about a stone's throw. And He kneeled down and prayed,

42 saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours be done."

[43] And there an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.]

45 And when He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.

46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

47 ¶ Now while He was still speaking, be-

would be the desires of a faithful disciple (Rv 2:10). He must be willing to suffer prison and death for the name of Jesus. Though Peter would stumble for a moment, he would eventually suffer prison and death for the name of Jesus because of his commitment to Jesus (At 14:22; Rv 2:10). He would overcome his weakness by faith in God (Ph 4:13). **35** *Did you lack:* Jesus reminded them of the times He sent them out on preaching tours. During those tours they lacked nothing (9:3ff; 10:4ff; Mt 10:9ff; Mk 6:8). God will care for those who have committed themselves to serve Him. "*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*" (Mt 6:33). **36** Jesus now looks toward their commission to all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They must use all they have in order to accomplish the mission to the world to preach the gospel to every creature. *Sword:* Jesus is not teaching that the kingdom is to be propagated by the use of weapons of war. This was not the spirit of Jesus, nor the nature of the kingdom (See Jn 18:36-38). He does, however, recognize the perils of their journeys and instructs them concerning self-defense. His thought here is that they must not die uselessly at the hand of some thief or murderer while on their journeys from one city to another. He also emphasizes the dangerous environment into which He is sending them. All things would change in the future from the environment of peace in which He sent them forth on the preaching tours during His ministry. Now He was sending them into a hostile environment. **37** *Which is written:* See Is 53:12 (Mt 27:38; Mk 15:28). *Come to an end:* Jesus' ministry had come to an end. He had accomplished all things that were to be accomplished during His earthly ministry. Now it was time to accomplish that for which He came into the world, that is, the atonement for the sins of mankind. **38** The Jews had previously planned to secretly assassinate Jesus (Mt 26:1-5). The swords here were possibly taken in order to be a means to intimidate those who might seek to carry out their murder scheme against Jesus. At least Peter, who swung a sword to kill Malchus, misunderstood Jesus. On the spur of the moment he took aggressive action in order to defend Jesus. The swords

were taken for defense, not aggression. However, at the time the mob came to take Jesus into custody, Jesus willingly relinquished Himself to them. It was time to go to the cross. Therefore, Jesus offered no resistance.

THE PRAYER IN GETHSEMANE

(Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Jn 18:1)

39-46 See comments Mt 26:30,36-46. The meal in the upper room was completed and now Jesus goes to mentally prepare for the cross. *Take this cup away from Me:* The cup was a metaphorical expression that symbolized that portion of responsibility that was accepted by the Son of God to make the eternal sacrifice of the cross. His humanity would naturally not wish to suffer on a cross as a humiliated spectacle before a mocking crowd. On the other hand, His omniscience as Deity allowed Him the opportunity to know that the sacrifice had to be made. *Not My will, but Yours be done:* Before the creation of the world, Jesus knew that He had to drink of the sufferings of the cross (See Rm 13:8). He was thus committed to do the Father's will while on earth in order to accomplish the scheme of redemption that had been planned before the world began (Is 50:5; Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; see comments Ep 3:8-12). *An angel appeared:* In the absence of the comfort of man, God sent the angel to bring strength by his presence with Jesus (See Mt 4:11). *Being in agony:* The intensity of the moment called for agony in prayer (Rm 15:13, see comments Cl 4:12). *Rise and pray:* The purpose for prayer that is given here by Jesus is that they do not enter into temptation, and thus, fall. In times of great turmoil it is a time for agony in prayer in order that one not be tempted to forsake his faith. Jesus did not ask the disciples here to pray simply as a mental exercise of works. Prayer accomplishes that for which He asks them to pray. And so it is today. We must pray earnestly that we remain faithful to our calling. Those who have fallen away are usually those who have not agonized in prayer.

THE BETRAYAL AND ARREST

(Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Jn 18:2-14)

hold, a multitude *came*. And he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him.

48 But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

49 When they who were around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?"

50 And one of them smote the bondservant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

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

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a thief?"

53 "When I was daily with you in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness."

54 ¶ Then they took Him and led Him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed at a distance.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the hall, and had sat down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain servant girl saw him as he sat by the fire. And she earnestly looked at him, and said, "This man was also with Him."

57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him."

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, "You are also of them." And Peter said, "Man, I am not!"

59 Now after about the space of one hour another insisted, saying, "Of a truth this *man* also was with Him, for he is a Galilean."

60 Then Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

61 Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the cock crow today, you will deny Me three times."

62 Then Peter went out and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ And the men who held Jesus began mocking and beating Him.

64 And when they had blindfolded Him, they asked Him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who hit You?"

65 And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him.

47,48 See comments Mt 26:47-56; Jn 18:2-14. These were the final hours before the cross. We must not assume that all that happens was not foreknown and foreplanned by God before the creation of the world (See Rv 13:8). What was about to happen was in the plan of God to save man. **Judas:** See Ps 41:9; Mt 20:18; Lk 9:44; At 1:16,17. **With a kiss:** The common Jewish kiss of brotherly affection is here used by Judas for a totally opposite reason. Judas uses the kiss as a kiss of betrayal, not brotherly affection. The fact that Judas so behaves in this manner manifests what had been lurking in his heart. His heart was not right with God, and because of this, Satan was able to use him to carry out the betrayal of the Son of God. **49-51 One of them struck:** Peter lashed out with a sword and struck off the ear of Malchus who was a servant of the high priest (Mt 26:51; Jn 18:10). This was a moment of great anxiety. We should probably expect nothing less of Peter who was an impulsive person. **Permit even this:** The kingdom of God would not be promoted with swords and physical violence (See Jn 18:36-38). The disciples must permit the betrayal and crucifixion to happen for it was the plan of God. **52,53 This is your hour and the power of darkness:** Jesus now relinquished Himself to the hands of those who sought to kill Him. It was their time to carry out their murderous schemes. All such schemes were the deception of Satan and the world of darkness working through them. These chief priests and elders were allowing Satan to use them in order to accomplish what God had intended from times eternal.

Little did Satan or the chief priests and elders know that God was working their evil for the good of mankind (See comments Rm 8:28). We must also assume that Satan did not know what he was about to accomplish through his own evil work. The mystery of God's scheme of redemption had been concealed from all men, angels, demons and Satan from the beginning of time (1 Pt 1:10-12). Satan had no idea that he was actually carrying out the work of God by his evil work of having Jesus crucified (See At 2:23).

THE TRIALS

(Mt 26:57-75; Mk 14:53-65; Jn 18:24)

54-62 See comments Mt 26:57-75 (Concerning Peter's denials, see comments Mt 26:58,69-71; see Mk 14:54,66-72; Jn 18:15-18,25-27). Peter's denials of the Lord manifest the fact that those who often suppose to be the most brave in discipleship can fall when the occasion brings out one's weakness (See vs 33; Gl 2:11,12). "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Co 10:12; see Rm 11:20). **Peter followed at a distance:** When Jesus was taken away, at least Peter stayed as close to Jesus as he dared. **The Lord turned and looked at Peter:** After the denials and the time of the crow of the early morning roosters, Peter was close enough to Jesus for Peter to see His face when He turned and looked at him. Jesus said nothing, but Peter remembered the prophecy of Jesus that he would deny Him. And so, Peter went out and bitterly cried in remorse over what he had done. He not

66 ¶ Now as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together and led Him into their Council, saying,

67 “Are You the Christ? Tell us.” And He said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe.

68 “And if I ask *you*, you will not answer [Me or let Me go].

69 “From now on the Son of Man will sit at the right hand of the power of God.”

70 Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?” And He said to them, “You say that I am.”

71 Then they said, “What further witness do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”

Chapter 23

1 ¶ Now the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this *man* perverting our nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.”

3 ¶ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And He answered him and said, “*It is as you say.*”

4 Then Pilate said to the chief priests and to the people, “I find no fault in this man.”

5 But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.”

6 When Pilate heard, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.

only denied his friendship with Jesus, he also denied the One he believed to be the Christ and Son of God (See Mt 16:13-19). However, his bitter remorse indicated the nature of his heart. God can use men and women who can recognize the error of their way and have remorse over their sin (See comments Mt 5:1-12). Their remorse manifests their repentant hearts.

63-65 Mocked Him: This not only begins the trials of Jesus, but also the humiliation He suffered from the hands of those He had created (Cl 1:16). Jesus was taken through a succession of trials. He stood before the Jewish authorities (22:64-71). He was then taken before Pilate, the Roman governor (23:1-5). He was then sent by Pilate to Herod (23:6-12). And finally, He was taken again before Pilate (23:13-25). The Jews had no authority to condemn one to death. Only Pilate, as representative of Rome, could do this. Through all the trials Jesus stood alone. The disciples had all fled. Jesus' knowledge of His destiny of the cross gave Him strength to carry out the plan of God. When Christians discover their destiny in the kingdom of God, they will also be determined as Jesus to carry such to the end of their lives.

66-71 See comments Mt 27:1,2. **You will by no means believe:** They had both the miraculous evidence and the teachings of Jesus (Mk 14:61,62). Nevertheless, those who are moved by jealousy and evil motives will overlook all evidence in order to dispose of their opposition (20:5-7). Their motives will not allow them to accept the truth. It is for this reason that men must be cautious about their motives. The exhortation of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 would certainly have applied to those who rejected Jesus regardless of the evidence. “... and with all deception of wickedness among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion so that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.” **The Son of Man will sit on the right hand:** Jesus knew where He was going (See Ps 110:1; Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22). He was going to reign over all things as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15; 1 Pt 3:22).

Every Christian should also know where he is going. The knowledge of one's destiny will take him through great trials as Jesus here focused on His destiny. **Son of God:** As He always had, Jesus affirmed that He was the Son of God (Mt 26:64,65; 27:11; Mk 14:62). He was not one in a succession of sons of God. He was the only begotten (*monogenes*) Son of God (See comments Jn 1:14; 3:16). Anyone who would accept Jesus for less than what He claimed to be will not reap the benefits of His sonship. We must believe who He is and that He rewards those who accept Him as the Son of God (See Hb 11:6).

Chapter 23

THE FINAL HOURS

(Mt 27:1,2,11-26; Mk 15:1-15; Jn 18:28 - 19:16)

THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

1,2 See comments Mt 27:1,2; Jn 18:28-38. **The whole multitude:** This was a delegation of accusers who came to the garden. **Perverting the nation and forbidding to pay taxes:** Unrighteous men with evil motives will always resort to slanderous accusations against those they seek to destroy (See Mt 17:27; Mk 12:17; compare At 17:7). Since Jesus was sinless, the only means by which an accusation could be made against Him was through slanderous charges. **3-5 I find no fault:** According to Roman law, Jesus had committed no crime (Mt 27:11; 1 Tm 6:13). Credit must at least be given to Pilate for being objective. As Luke writes to Theophilus, he wants Theophilus to know that according to Roman law there was no crime found in Jesus. Jesus was crucified because of the envy and jealousy of wicked religious leaders who saw Jesus as a threat to their power and positions. **He stirs up the people:** The teachings of Jesus did stir up the people, but the people who were stirred up were not the common people. The religious leaders of Israel were stirred up because Jesus did not fit into their regimented code of religious rules and conduct (Mk 7:1-9). The nature of what He taught was contrary to the institutional religion that they had constructed after their traditions.

7 Now as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who also was in Jerusalem at that time.

8 ¶ Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad, for he had desired to see Him for a long *time* because he had heard many things about Him. And he hoped to see some miracle done by Him.

9 Then he questioned Him with many words. But He answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him.

11 After treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, Herod, with his soldiers, clothed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod became friends together, for before they had been enemies with each other.

13 ¶ Now when Pilate had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14 he said to them, "You have brought this man to me as one who incites the people. But

behold, having examined *Him* before you, I have found no fault in this man concerning those things of which you accuse Him.

15 "No, nor has Herod, for he sent Him back to us. And behold, nothing deserving of death has been done by Him.

16 "Therefore, I will punish Him and release *Him*."

17 [For it was necessary for him to release one to them at the feast.]

18 And they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this *man*, and release to us Barabbas!"

19 (He was a certain *man* who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection made in the city, and for murder.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spoke again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, "Crucify *Him*! Crucify Him!"

22 And he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. Therefore, I will pun-

THE TRIAL BEFORE HEROD

6-12 **He sent Him to Herod:** This trial before Herod Antipas, who ruled Galilee and Perea, the center of Jesus' ministry, is recorded only by Luke. In 13:31 it is recorded that the Pharisees had lied by saying that Herod wanted to kill Jesus. But Luke here records that Herod did not want to kill Jesus, for he sent Jesus back to Pilate. **Exceedingly glad:** Herod's desire to see Jesus was because he had heard of the many miracles that Jesus had worked. He therefore wanted Jesus to perform a circus act of miracles before him in order to satisfy his idle curiosity (See At 4:26,27). **Vehemently accused Him:** The tremendous self-control of Jesus is most evident in this and similar situations. He knew what He was doing. He was taking Himself to the cross (Jn 10:17,18). In the midst of slanderous accusations by those who have evil motives, it is sometimes best to be silent as Jesus and simply move on with one's work. **Pilate and Herod became friends:** Enmity may have started between Pilate and Herod when Pilate had previously put down a probable insurrection in Galilee which was under Herod's jurisdiction (13:1,2). Whatever the reason for the enmity, the act of legal courtesy on the part of Pilate to send Jesus to Herod led to the dissolving of the enmity, and thus, the two become friends. Luke possibly records this in order to inform Theophilus that Jesus was not a cause for political division. Jesus' work centered around religious matters. It was the Jewish religious leaders, therefore, who put Jesus on the cross, not the government officials of Rome, though Jesus could be nailed to the cross only by the sanction of the Roman official, Pilate.

SECOND TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

13-17 See comments Mt 27:15-26; Jn 18:39 - 19:16

(Mk 15:6-15). **I find no fault in this Man:** Pilate perceived the truth concerning the slanderous accusations the religious leaders were making against Jesus. Neither he nor Herod could find anything that would be deserving of the punishment of death that the religious leaders wanted to inflict upon Jesus. **Chastise Him and release Him:** In view of the fact that there was no cause for the death penalty, Pilate sought to soothe the anger of the religious leaders by scourging Jesus and letting Him go. We must not miss the point here that Pilate is inadvertently giving testimony that Jesus was innocent of all false accusations that were made against Him in reference to Roman law. Rome's authority in Palestine could find no fault in Jesus. Luke wants Theophilus to know that Jesus was not an insurrectionist against the Roman government. Jesus did not break Roman law in Palestine. He was innocent of all negative gossip about Him that Theophilus may have heard, for at the time of Luke's writing, many things were spoken against Christ and Christianity in Rome (See At 28:22). **18,19 Release to us Barabbas:** See Is 53:3; At 3:13-15. A Roman courtesy during the Passover and Pentecost feasts was to release to the Jews a condemned Jew. In this case, Pilate was politically motivated to release a Jewish insurrectionist, Barabbas, who had committed murder. He sought to release Jesus instead of Barabbas. However, the religious leaders cried out that Jesus should be crucified. **20,21 Wishing to release Jesus:** This again is another time Pilate tried to have Jesus released. But God would not have it so. God is using Satan's work through the misguided religious leaders to accomplish the scheme of redemption (At 2:23). **22-25 He delivered Jesus to their will:** Pilate thus relinquished to the demands of the vehement religious leaders in order to maintain calm in a

ish Him and let *Him* go.”

23 And they were insistent with loud voices, demanding that He be crucified. And their voices prevailed.

24 Then Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they demanded.

25 And he released the one they had desired who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder. But he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 ¶ Now as they led Him away, they laid hold on one Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country. And they laid on him the cross so that he might bear *it* behind Jesus.

27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and of women who were mourning and lamenting Him.

28 But turning to them, Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

29 “For behold, the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed *are* the barren and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.’

30 “Then will they begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’

31 “For if they do these things when the tree is green, what will be done when it is dry?”

32 And there were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death.

33 Now when they had come to the place that is called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

34 Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they parted His clothing and cast lots.

35 And the people stood looking on. And even the rulers with them were sneering at *Him*, saying, “He saved others. Let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

36 And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him and offering Him sour wine,

37 and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

38 And an inscription also was written above Him, “THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

39 And one of the criminals who hung *there* railed at Him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save us.”

40 But the other answered and rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation?

41 “And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward for our deeds. But this Man has done nothing wrong.”

42 Then he said to Jesus, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

43 And Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

44 ¶ And it was now about the sixth hour,

politically charged environment. Little did those who sought Jesus' death know that they were accomplishing the will of God that the incarnate Word be crucified for the salvation of mankind and the ultimate destruction of the kingdom of darkness. Satan's desire to crush the seed of woman ultimately led to his own crushing (See Gn 3:15).

THE CRUCIFIXION

(Mt 27:27-44; Mk 15:16-36; Jn 19:16-27)

26 See comments Mt 27:27-44. **27** This multitude that followed Jesus probably consisted of a great number of the disciples. At least many of the women who were disciples of Jesus followed in the procession where He carried His cross to the site of the crucifixion. **28-31** *Daughters of Jerusalem*: Jesus again made a prophecy concerning the great turmoil that was coming upon national Israel. He reminds these lamenting women to mourn for themselves in view of the fact that Israel is headed for a great national calamity (See comments Mt 24). **32** See Is 53:9,12. Both criminals were thieves (Mt 27:38,44; Mk 14:27). **33** See comments Mt

27:33,34 (Mk 15:22,23; Jn 19:16,17). *Calvary*: This means the “place of the skull” (Ps 22:16-18; Mt 27:33-44; Jn 19:17,18). **34** *Father, forgive them*: The nature of God's grace toward all men is here revealed even in the last hours of the work of the Son of God on earth. His grace is extended because they are carrying out this deed in ignorance of who Jesus is (See Ps 108:4; At 3:17; 7:60; 1 Co 4:12). See comments Mt 27:35-44 (Mk 15:24-32; Jn 19:18-22). *Divided His garments*: See Ps 22:18 (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Jn 19:23). **35** *Sneered*: Some were so calloused in heart that they would mock and sneer even at a person who was about to die (Ps 22:8,17; Zc 12:10). **36-38** *This is the King of the Jews*: Pilate had the sign placed above Jesus' head in order to mock the Jews (Mt 27:37; Mk 15:26; Jn 19:19). **39-42** At first both thieves railed at Jesus (Mt 27:44). However, one thief realized his predicament which brought him to his senses. He asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom reign. At some time in the past this particular thief had learned of Jesus and His teachings concerning His kingdom. He may at one time have even been a disciple of either

and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two.

46 And crying out with a loud voice, Jesus said, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit!" And having said this, He breathed His last.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"

48 And all the people who came together for this spectacle, when they saw the things that had happened, beat their breasts, and returned.

49 And all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, seeing these things.

50 ¶ And behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a Council member *and* a good and just man.

51 He had not consented to their plan and action. *He was* from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who also himself was waiting for the kingdom of God.

52 This *man* went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down and wrapped it in linen. And he laid it in a tomb that was cut in stone, in which no man was before laid.

54 Now that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

55 And the women also, who came with Him from Galilee, followed behind. And they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.

56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. Then they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

Chapter 24

1 ¶ Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb,

John or Jesus. **43 *Be with Me in Paradise:*** Even on the cross Jesus continued to forgive sins. It is God who forgives. As the Son of God was hanging on the cross beside the thief, He had the authority to forgive sins (Mt 9:6). This thief was personally forgiven by the Son of God who had authority to forgive sins. Since sin is against God, then it is God who can forgive. Jesus' authority to forgive sins on earth was evidence that He was the manifestation of God on earth. **Paradise:** When Jesus died, He went in spirit to Paradise of the hadean (unseen) existence (At 2:29-31). It was to this realm the repentant thief also went in a disembodied state. All the spirits of the righteous dead are now with Jesus in Paradise (Ph 1:23; 2 Co 5:8). They are there in a disembodied state until the final resurrection of the dead when they will be reunited with a new habitation from God (See comments 1 Co 15; 2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Th 4:13-17). On the other hand, the other thief did not go to Paradise in the hadean world (See comments 16:19-23). His destiny after death was not the same as the repentant thief.

THE DEATH OF JESUS

(Mt 27:45-56; Mk 15:33-41; Jn 19:28-30)

44-49 See comments Mt 27:45-56. **Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit:** It was Jesus' decision to die (Jn 10:17,18). When He had accomplished all that was predetermined before the creation of the world in relation to the salvation of man, He gave up His spirit into the hands of the Father. God's part in the scheme of redemption was accomplished. **Beat their breasts:** The crowd knew that they had crucified an innocent man. Their lust for blood that was driven by the envious hate of the religious leaders, finally exhausted itself in the events of the crucifixion. Their guilt was now apparent as they returned to Jerusalem. It would be the remorse of many of these that would later drive them to plead

about fifty days later, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" (At 2:23,37). They had done a deed that only grace and mercy could rectify. **All His acquaintances:** The disciples stood in unbelief. The One in whom they had hopes to be the Messiah of Israel was now dead on a cross. They stood stunned (Ps 38:11).

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

(Mt 27:57-66; Mk 15:42-47; Jn 19:31-42)

50 See comments Mt 27:52-61. **Joseph:** This member of the Sanhedrin was a good and just man. Therefore, we must not assume that all the religious leaders of Israel were as wicked as many of the scribes, Pharisees and chief priests who were the majority that instigated the crucifixion. **51-54** Joseph was bold enough now to go to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. The body was thus wrapped for burial and hurriedly placed in his own new tomb outside the walls of Jerusalem. **55,56 *They observed the tomb and how His body was laid:*** Luke records this important detail for Theophilus. He does so because there would later be the rumor spread throughout the land that these women had gone to the wrong tomb three days after the burial. It would be claimed that they went to an empty tomb, and then, spread a false hope that Jesus had arisen from the dead. Luke wants us to understand that there was no mistake about the empty tomb. They had found the right tomb on the third day. It was empty. **Prepared spices and fragrant oils:** Their intention was to return on the first day of the week (Sunday) in order to complete the burial preparations.

Chapter 24

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

(Mt 28:1-8; Mk 16:1-8; Jn 20:1)

1-8 See comments Mt 28:1-8. Mary Magdalene,

bringing the spices that they had prepared.

2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

3 So they entered in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 Now it came to pass as they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in shining clothing.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the ground, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"

6 "He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,

7 "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.'"

8 And they remembered His words.

9 Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary *the mother* of James, and the other *women who were* with them, who told these things to the apostles.

11 But their words seemed to them as idle tales. And they did not believe them.

12 Then Peter arose and ran to the tomb. And stooping down, he saw the linen clothes by themselves. And he departed, wondering to himself at what had happened.

13 ¶ And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together about all these things that had happened.

15 Now it came to pass while they talked and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

16 But their eyes were restrained so that they would not know Him.

17 And He said to them, "What manner of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk? And they stood still, looking sad.

18 Then one of them whose name was Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem and have not known the things that have come to pass there in these days?"

19 And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the

Mary, the mother of James, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, steward of Herod (8:3; 24:10) and Solome, the mother of James and John (Mt 27:56; Mk 16:1; Jn 19:25-27), all went to the tomb in order to complete the burial of Jesus. It was early Sunday morning. **Did not find the body of the Lord Jesus:** Luke now identifies Jesus as the Lord. He had risen from the dead. Of the two angels that were present, one told the women that Jesus had risen and that they needed to tell the other disciples (Jn 20:12). **They remembered:** See Hs 6:1,2; Lk 9:22,44; 11:29,30; 18:31-33.

THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS

9-12 See comments Mt 28:8-10. The women immediately went to the disciples and told them that Jesus had been raised from the dead. **Their words seemed like idle tales:** The disciples were not expecting the resurrection of Jesus. Luke wants Theophilus to understand that the resurrection was not the invention of men who were so expectant of the resurrection that they hallucinated such in order to begin a new sect of religion. He records that when the resurrection was first reported, the disciples did not believe in the resurrection themselves (vs 25). **13,14** This event follows a few hours after the women had reported that Jesus was resurrected (vs 22). **Two of them:** These two disciples, one of whom was named Cleopas (vs 18; Jn 19:25), had given up hope in Jesus as the Messiah to establish a physical kingdom reign here on earth. They were thus on their

way home. Luke adds this incident to reconfirm the fact that the disciples were not expecting the resurrection. Though the resurrection had been reported to them, they still did not believe (vs 25). **15,16 Their eyes were restrained:** As the disciples walked, they were discussing what had happened. They possibly reasoned concerning the fact that all the prophecies seemed to be fulfilled in Jesus, but something had gone wrong. Jesus joined them, but He did not allow their minds to perceive that He was in their presence. **17-24** In order to invite Himself into their conversation, Jesus asked a question. They were puzzled because of the question, for everyone from the rulers to the common people knew of the events that surrounded the death of Jesus (At 26:26). **Jesus of Nazareth:** Jesus was called a Nazarene because He grew up in the small village of Nazareth (1:26; 2:39; 18:37). **Mighty in deed and word:** Jesus had done many miraculous works and taught many good things (Mt 21:11; Lk 7:16; Jn 3:2; 12:17; At 2:22; 7:22). His reputation throughout all the region of Palestine was concerning His deeds and teachings. **We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel:** The statement of these two disciples explains the physical concept many of the disciples had concerning the nature of the kingdom reign of the Messiah. They thought that Israel would be redeemed from Roman occupation. They would be set free from foreign powers as God redeemed Israel out of Egyptian captivity. Their hopes, therefore, had been dashed by

people,

20 “and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.

21 “But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. And beside all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

22 “Yes, and some women among us amazed us. When they were early at the tomb,

23 and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive.

24 “And some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found *it* even as the women had said. But Him they did not see.”

25 Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

26 “Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?”

27 And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

28 Then they drew near to the village where

they were going. And He acted as though He would have gone farther.

29 But they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.

30 ¶ Now it came to pass as He sat at the table with them, He took bread and blessed *it* and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them.

31 Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. And He vanished from their sight.

32 Then they said one to another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?”

33 Then they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them,

34 saying, “The Lord is indeed risen, and has appeared to Simon!”

35 And they told the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was recognized by them in breaking of the bread.

36 ¶ Now as they spoke these things, Jesus

the crucifixion of the One they thought would reign in Jerusalem on David's throne. They told Jesus that the Messiah for whom they hoped was condemned to death and crucified. They thought that this was the end of the story, though the women had reported the resurrection. They had witnessed the death, but not the resurrection.

Third day: The crucifixion took place on Friday since the events that are recorded here took place on Sunday. John 21:19 states that Jesus appeared to the disciples on this same day. **Certain of ... us went to the tomb:** Peter and John had gone to the tomb to reconfirm the report of the women (See vs 12; Jn 20:3-6). **25-27 O foolish ones:** See the prophecies of Jesus' death in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. The Jews sought for an earthly Messiah who would establish an earthly kingdom (At 1:6). This twisting of prophecy by the materialistic and nationalistic Jews clouded their correct application of the prophecies to Jesus who fulfilled all prophecies concerning the Messiah (See 1 Pt 1:10-12). **Beginning at Moses:** See Gn 3:15; 12:3; 22:18; Nm 21:9; 24:17; Dt 18:15; Ps 16:9,10; 22; 132:11; Is 7:14; 9:6; 53; Jr 23:5; 33:14,15; Ez 34:23; 37:25; Dn 9:24; Mc 5:2; 7:20; Zc 6:12; 9:9; Ml 3:1; 4:2. There are over three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament that have reference to Jesus and the events surrounding His coming and establishment of His kingdom reign. All these prophecies were fulfilled. It was not by chance that so many prophecies were fulfilled in one individual. The fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies in Jesus is proof that Jesus was the Messiah of God, the prophet of God who would redeem all men from the debt of sin. **28,29 They constrained Him:** These men hungered

and thirsted after the word of God. Jesus' explanation of the prophecies took some time, and thus, these two men were motivated to study more. **30,31 Their eyes were opened:** It was Jesus' desire that they now know who He was. He therefore opened their perception of who He was. **He vanished:** Jesus disappeared from their sight. At this time Jesus is in His resurrected and changed body in which He could appear and disappear as He so chose. It was a real body, but one that was not limited as our physical body (See comments 1 Jn 3:2).

32 He opened the Scriptures to us: Jesus interpreted the prophecies in order that they might understand that the kingdom was going to be a spiritual kingdom and not a physical kingdom of this world. The Messiah was to be a king, but not a king who would rule on this earth. Jesus had made application of the Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of the Messiah and applied such to the nature of who He was and how He would reign from heaven over all things. **33-35** The two men of Emmaus began their journey back to Jerusalem in the evening. It was possibly dark by this time. They found the eleven apostles still together and confused concerning the events that had happened, and especially, the report of the women that Jesus had arisen. **Appeared to Simon:** Jesus appeared specifically to Peter (1 Co 15:5). For what reason we do not know. He may have appeared to him because of his denials during the trials. He wanted to reassure Peter that all was well. He wanted to reassure Peter that he had greater things to do, for in only a few days from this time, Peter would be standing up and boldly proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus and His kingdom reign over all things

Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 But He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me, and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

40 Now when He had spoken this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 And while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Do you have any food here?"

42 And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish.

43 Then He took *it* and ate before them.

44 And He said to them, "These *are* the words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled that were written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms, concerning Me."

45 Then He opened their understanding so that they might understand the Scriptures.

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,

47 "and that repentance and remission of sins would be preached in His name among all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 "And you are witnesses of these things.

49 "And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high."

(See At 2:16-36). **36,37 Terrified and frightened:** They reacted with such emotions because they had never before experienced such (See Mt 14:26; Mk 6:49). **38,39 A spirit does not have flesh and bones:** Jesus here defined the nature of a spirit. At the same time He defined that He was not in the form of a spirit because He had flesh and bones. His actual body had been resurrected, but it had been changed. He was able to eat and be touched in His resurrected body (See Jn 20:20,27; 1 Jn 1:1,2; 3:2). **40** His body still had the nail holes from the crucifixion (Jn 20:27). Luke wants Theophilus to understand that the physical senses of the disciples proved that Jesus had risen from the dead. The disciples did not experience some kind of hallucination. The pierced hands and feet proved that it was the same Jesus who stood before them who was nailed to the cross and buried in a tomb. **41-43 Did not believe for joy:** They were so excited that their emotions and thinking had not yet caught up with the reality of His presence. **Ate in their presence:** He did such in order to continue to prove that He was actually there in the resurrected body. They were not seeing a spirit because of either anxiety or expectation.

PROMISES & COMMISSIONS TO THE APOSTLES

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the eleven at different times and discussed different things with them concerning their work. The appearances occurred over a period of forty days. Luke recorded that Jesus "presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (At 1:3). The teachings Jesus delivered during some of the appearances are recorded in Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:1-12 (See comments Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-20). **44 All things must be fulfilled:** All Old Testament prophecies concerning the work and reign of Jesus would be fulfilled when He ascended to the right hand of the Father. This He did when He ascended. Therefore, He is not coming again in the future in order to fulfill more prophecies concerning a supposed earthly kingdom reign. We must understand, therefore, that in

this statement Jesus is affirming that all Old Testament prophecies concerning His work and reign in reference to the disciples have now been fulfilled. There are no Old Testament prophecies yet to be fulfilled in reference to Jesus' kingdom reign. The New Testament prophecy of His return and the kingdom of heaven that is to come, will be fulfilled when He comes again (1 Co 15:24-28).

45 Opened their understanding: Here is a case where Jesus aided them through inspiration to understand the Scriptures concerning the fulfillment of prophecy in Him. This was something that was personally done by Jesus and specifically for the eleven apostles. **46 It was necessary:** Without the cross, there would have been no salvation for mankind. Therefore, it was necessary that a manifestation of God through the Son be offered as a sufficient sacrifice for man's sin. **47 Should be preached:** This is the great commission to the disciples (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They should preach the suffering Christ on the cross and His resurrection (See comments 1 Co 15:1-4). Repentance toward God and God's remission of man's sins in obedience to the gospel should be proclaimed to all men (See At 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). **Beginning at Jerusalem:** When Peter announced the kingdom reign of Jesus in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost not many days from the time Jesus gave this commission, men and women submitted to the kingdom reign of Jesus (At 2:41,47). The church began as a result of men and women submitting to the kingdom reign of Jesus who is now at the right hand of God (See comments 17:20,21; Mt 6:9,10; At 2:29-36,41,47). **48 You are witnesses:** The apostles were the special witnesses of the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus that they personally experienced (At 1:8). They were to proclaim to others what they had seen. **49 I send the Promise of My Father upon you:** The antecedent of the pronoun "you" is the eleven apostles that Luke has identified in verse 33 of this narrative. The special promise about which Jesus here speaks is specifically to the eleven apostles. Luke wanted Theophilus to clearly understand that this special promise was made to the apostles, for he wrote in the second document to Theophilus, "But you [the

50 ¶ Then He led them out as far as Bethany. And He lifted up His hands and blessed them.
51 Now it came to pass while He blessed them, He departed from them and was carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.
53 And they were continually in the temple, praising God.

apostles] *shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*" (At 1:8). Any witness who proclaimed something different concerning Jesus than what the eleven proclaimed, was to be considered a false witness with false information. **Endued with power:** In Acts 2:1-4 the apostles were empowered with power from on high when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This baptism was the fulfillment of the promise that Jesus had made to them in this context and during His ministry.

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

(At 1:9-11)

50-53 See comments At 1:9-11. The ascension of Jesus to heaven took place around Bethany which is east of Jerusalem. **Carried up into heaven:** Jesus was bodily raised up to heaven in a cloud in order to sit at the right hand of God to reign over all things (Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:9-11). He is now at the right

hand of God as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15). He is reigning over all things for the sake of the church (Ep 1:22,23; 1 Pt 3:22). He will so reign until the last enemy, death, has been conquered (See comments 1 Co 15:24-28). **They worshiped Him:** Worship does not have to be commanded. It is the natural response of hearts that recognize the majesty of God. It is spontaneous in the hearts of those who come to understand the power, authority and presence of God. On this occasion, the disciples are visibly made aware of the deity of Jesus. The result of this awareness is that they pour out their worship of Him. **Returned to Jerusalem:** They returned to Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed in order to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, who would come in about six days on the day of Pentecost.

(Luke concludes this first defense of Christianity by giving evidence to the sonship of Jesus. Jesus is the cause that motivated thousands to become Christians. Luke then turned to writing the document of Acts in order to explain the effect of the fact that Jesus was the resurrected Son of God.)

John's Apologetic Of Belief In Jesus John

Author

The inspired writer of this letter is the apostle John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee and Salome. John was a Jew from Galilee of Palestine who was very familiar with the geography of his homeland (1:44; 2:1; 4:5,6,21; 9:7; 11:18; 18:1). As a Jew, he was very familiar with Jewish religious traditions (1:19-38; 4:9,20). Those to whom he wrote were not that familiar with Palestine or Jewish customs and religion. Therefore, John was careful to emphasize in his writing various locations of the land, Jewish customs and religion.

Though John does not specifically identify himself in the letter, Bible students have associated the "beloved disciple," who was a close companion of Jesus, to be the apostle John (13:23; 18:15,16; 19:25-27; 21:20). The early Christians knew the identity of the "beloved disciple." Therefore, John could identify himself as the author of the letter by simply referring to himself as the "beloved disciple." Since James, the brother of John, was killed early in the history of the church (At 12:2), and Peter, Philip and Thomas are spoken of in the third person in the letter, we would assume that John is the best candidate for authorship of this letter.

John was from Bethsaida. He was one of two sons of Zebedee and a fisherman by trade (Mk 1:19,20). Salome, his mother, was possibly the sister of Mary who was the mother of Jesus (Compare Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40; Jn 19:23). He and his brother James were partners with Peter and Andrew in a fishing business on the sea of Galilee. John and his brother James were called the "sons of Thunder" (Mk 3:17). John was the one who "saw and believed" in 20:8.

The name John means, "the Lord is gracious." John is known as the apostle of love because of his great writings on this subject in the New Testament. Tradition says that he died around Ephesus the latter part of the first century. It is believed that he was the last Christ-sent apostle to die.

The literary style and Greek language used in John, 1,2,3 John and Revelation link these five books to the same author. It is for this reason that few Bible students have doubted the fact that John wrote these five New Testament books.

Date

There has been much speculation concerning the date when John wrote this document. Dates