

- b. Solution #2: There were two Jerichos known to people in Jesus' day. There was the old Jewish city about a mile away from the new Jericho (a Roman city), and both were directly in Jesus' path to Jerusalem. Matthew and Mark refer to His leaving the older city; Luke refers to Him as being about to enter the newer Roman city. In between the two Jerichos, somewhere, Jesus healed the two blind men. Archaeology has confirmed this and solution #2 appears to be the most plausible (cf. *Archaeology and Bible History*, by Joseph P. Free, pg. 295, pub. Scripture Press). See our map, page 348.

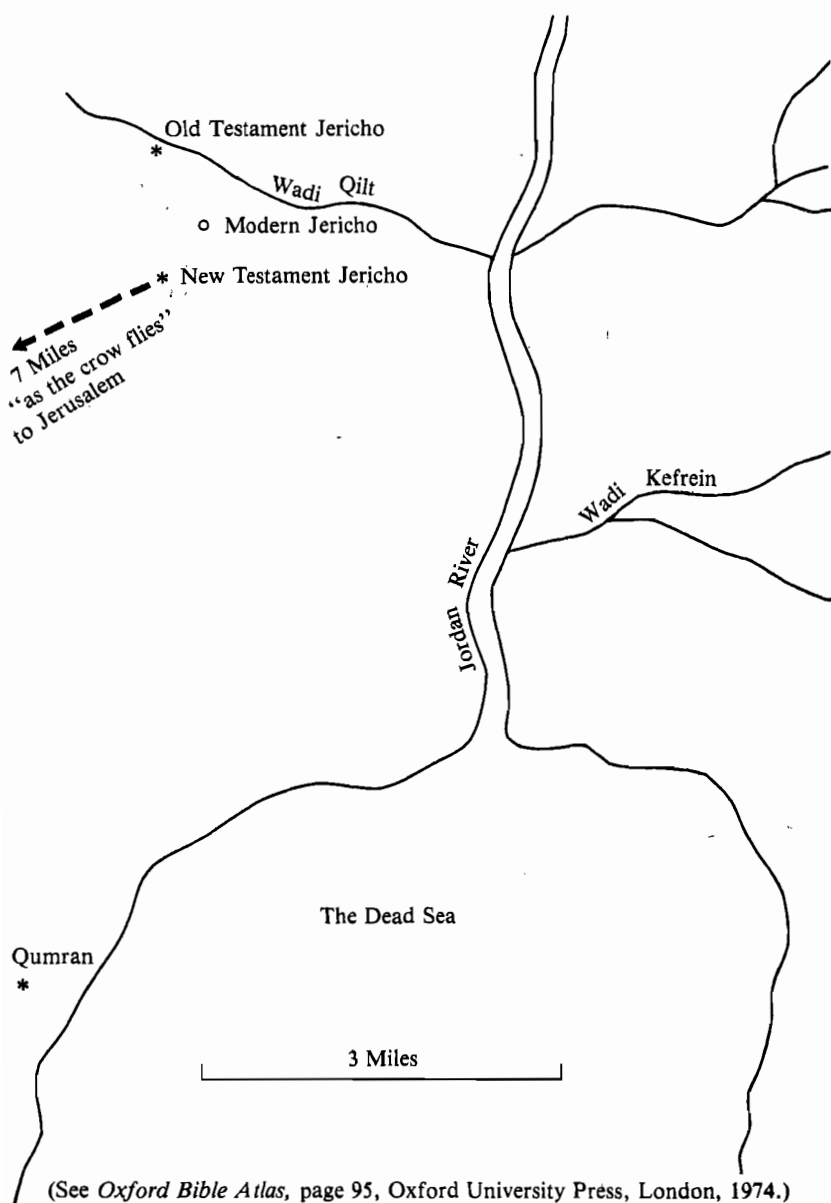
Another problem occurs when Matthew says there were two blind men (Mt. 20:30) while Mark and Luke mention only one (Mk. 10:46; Lk. 18:35).

- a. Solution #1: Remember the silence of one record is not, in itself a contradiction of what another affirms. The only way we could have the gospel writers *contradicting* one another is if they say "there was *only* one blind beggar. . . ." or "there were two blind beggars and *not* one. . . ."
- b. Solution #2: Mark and Luke mention only the one beggar because he was so forceful or singularly vocal and the leader of the two. As a matter of fact, Mark calls him by name!

Our reason for treating these details is that one of the "theories" used to "prove" that the Bible is inaccurate and therefore not inspired is called the "Two-Source Theory." In essence this theory says the gospel writers all copied from a common dual-source or from one another. Now if they copied from a common source, or from one another, why are they so different in so many details—not only here but in many other places?

Alongside the road between the two Jerichos sat the two blind men. One of them was named Bartimaeus. Hearing the multitude following Jesus passing by, he asked what was happening. When he was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing through, he shouted, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." The Greek word for "cried" in v. 38 is *eboese*, the same word used to describe John the Baptist's preaching in Luke 3:4, ". . . a voice of one crying. . . ." It describes someone shouting to gain attention. Notice the beggar believed two things about Jesus: (a) that He could heal blind people; (b) that He was the messianic, "Son of David." Jesus was apparently teaching the multitudes as He walked along the road and the man's loud yelling for attention made it difficult to hear Him. Or perhaps the blind man had staggered blindly out in front of the multitudes as they walked along side Jesus and became a hindrance to their progress and was looked upon as a nuisance. Those in front of the crowd rebuked the beggar. The Greek word for "rebuke" is *epetimon*, and means literally, "threw their weight around." They spoke contemptuously, with a high-and-mighty attitude toward this handicapped person who was in their way!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE



They told him to shut up. But the beggar cried out all the more. This time the Greek word translated "cried" is *ekradzen* and denotes a cry of great emotion, or a piercing, agonizing cry, a clamorous cry. Since the Greek verb is imperfect it means Bartimaeus kept on clamoring for Jesus to stop and show him mercy.

18:40-43 Compassion: Matthew tells us, of course, that both blind beggars were crying out to Jesus. Jesus stopped and gave instructions to bring the beggars before Him. Mark tells us that Bartimaeus threw off his cloak, jumped up, and came to Jesus (along with the other blind man). One must try to visualize the scene to appreciate the impact of this incident. Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem. He has just been speaking of the cross to His disciples. Not only have they refused to hear Him, they have audaciously sought appointments to positions of honor and power. Multitudes are pressing all around Him as He walks this Jericho road. He is concentrating on the culmination of the great, eternal plan of God's redemption about to be agonizingly worked out in His becoming sin for the whole world. He has only a very limited time left to teach the twelve apostles. Suddenly two ragged, handicapped, blind, beggars are screaming at Him, "Help us, help us, help us!" They were misfits in society, social outcasts, nuisances with nothing to contribute to His own burdens but more burden, but Jesus stops to help them. Jesus completely subordinated His own feelings—He thrust aside His own breaking heart, to help these two helpless men. No one else offered. None of the twelve spoke on their behalf! The multitudes were contemptuous of them. But Jesus saw in them a beauty and value He did not see in these others—*faith*. Jesus asked what He could do for them. Bartimaeus said, "Lord, that I may see again" (Greek *anablepso*, "see again"). Jesus ordered, "See again!" The Greek word describing Jesus' reply is *anablepso*, imperative mood, meaning Jesus gave the command, "See again." So the interruption was not really a burdensome inconvenience to Jesus after all. In fact, the faith of these two blind beggars in the midst of all the worldly-minded clamoring of the multitudes (and even of His own twelve apostles) served as a refreshing relief and spiritual encouragement to Jesus as He faced the cross. Jesus told the beggars, "Your faith has made you well." The Greek word translated "well" is *sesoke* and is from the root word which means "saved." The usual medical term used for healing in the Greek language is *therapeuo* (sometimes, *iaomai*). *Sesoke* (from, *Sodzo*) is sometimes translated, "made whole." Luke probably used *sesoke* because it is ambiguous enough to mean that the blind beggars had not only been cured physically by their faith, but also made spiritually whole, or "saved." Not only did the faith of these blind beggars give Jesus spiritual comfort, the miracle He performed for them caused the multitudes to glorify God and perhaps registered in their hearts more about His saviorhood than all the words He had been saying to them.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

These men had just this one opportunity to be made whole. Jesus would not pass that way again. They had to avail themselves of this one opportunity in the face of probably contemptuous cries of, "Shut up," "Get out of the way," "Don't bother the Master," "Who are you that He should help you?" or others. But that did not stop their pleas—their cries—for help. And when invited by Jesus to ask, they got up and went to Him. These are the only kind of people Christ is able to help.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. The world's injustices tend to make people pessimistic. What does the Christian have to overcome that? Does it work for you?
2. Is it proper for Americans to thank God they are not like all the other people in the world who worship idols? Or would it be better for American Christians to pray, "God have mercy upon us. . . .?"
3. Why couldn't the Pharisee be justified? Have you ever been tempted to feel like the Pharisee?
4. What are some stumbling-blocks people put in the way of children or "childlike" adults which keep them from Jesus? Have you put any there?
5. Why did Jesus begin with the rich, young ruler by reminding him that only God was "good"? Do you think this is where most preaching today should center?
6. Why aren't law and love contradictory? How had the rich, young ruler kept the commandments? Do you keep the "spirit" or the "letter" of the law?
7. Why should the church be honest about the sacrificial life of discipleship to Jesus?
8. Why is it hard for a rich man to enter God's kingdom? Are you rich?
9. Do you think there are other great men of God who should be rewarded more than you should be? What is God's basis for rewarding labor in His vineyard?
10. Why didn't the disciples understand Jesus' crucifixion? Do you have trouble with the idea of vicarious atonement?—someone else dying for your sins?
11. What did Jesus get out of stopping to help some beggars? Have you?

Chapter Nineteen

(19:1-48)

THE SON OF MAN SPEAKING ABOUT SALVATION

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Why did Zacchaeus think he should restore *four times* anything he had defrauded (19:8)?
2. How does the parable of the pounds correct the misconception of the immediate coming of the kingdom of God (19:11)?
3. How could “stones” cry out in acclamation of Jesus (19:39)?
4. Who are the “enemies” of Jerusalem who will cast up a “bank” (19:43)?
5. Where is it written, “My house shall be a house of prayer” (19:45)?

SECTION 1

Penitence (19:1-10)

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. ³And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it they all murmured, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” ⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.” ⁹And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.”

19:1-5 Confrontation: Jesus passed on from healing the two blind men to the Roman Jericho. Jericho at that time was largely populated by Roman tax-gatherers and priests of Jerusalem. It was an important “customs gate.” Archaeological ruins of the Roman Jericho produce a picture of magnificence with pools, villas, a hippodrome and a theater. A great civic center, of the best Roman masonry, with a spectacular facade containing statuary niches, potted plants and a reflecting basin before it, testify of the grandeur of the international culture that was Jericho’s at the time of Jesus and Zacchaeus. Jericho was an important tax collecting station because of the many caravans passing through it or near it. It was a “winter resort” place for the affluent Jews and Gentiles in Palestine at that time.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Herod had his winter residence there. Date palm trees flourished there, and balsam, from which medicine was extracted and its vegetable growing season was ideal making it a green oasis in the middle of the dry Jordan wilderness and a prosperous place to do business.

Zacchaeus was a "chief" publican (Greek, *architelones*) which probably means he was an executive of some sort in the tax-system of the Roman province of Judea. He may have been in charge of all the collections in Jericho and supervisor of a number of subordinate tax-collectors. He was rich, and influential. Tax-collectors (publicans) became rich only by extortion and dishonesty. Rome's method of collecting taxes in the provinces was to appoint certain natives of the province, assign certain tax amounts to be collected and forwarded to Rome, and then ask no more questions. The tax-collector had all the authority of Rome behind him and so if he were minded to do so he could "shake down" individuals and businesses by threats, demand more taxes than Rome required and pocket the excess. The publicans who became rich in this way were despised by their countrymen as "traitors" and "Gentiles." The financial dishonesty of government agents is reflected in John the Baptist's charge to the publicans, "Extort no more than is appointed you" (Lk. 3:13, see comments there). Zacchaeus admits he has wronged others and thus violated God's law. The Greek, *kai ei tinos ti esukophantesa*, is first person singular, first aorist indicative, and therefore a first class condition which means that Zacchaeus is saying, "On the condition that I have robbed anyone of anything, which I admit I have done. . . ." He had become rich by dishonesty and extortion. Most men who have become rich through dishonest means are men who have put their whole trust in riches and what they can buy. Riches gained by wickedness separate men from God and men from men. It is very unusual that a rich, powerful man like Zacchaeus should want to see the poor, itinerant, Galilean teacher who was violently opposed by Jewish officials. G. Campbell Morgan writes, "I am inclined to think one reason why he was glad to receive Jesus was that he was pleased to do anything that would annoy the Pharisees!" Whatever the case, Zacchaeus was *determined* to see Jesus. He had to overcome serious obstacles to fulfill his wish. The crowd selfishly pressed around him and paid no attention to him because he was "small of stature." They were not like the friends of the paralytic let down through the roof. They were the same crowd who told the blind men to shut up. Knowing Zacchaeus to be a publican and feeling safe with their numbers they probably blocked him away from Jesus deliberately. But neither the hostility of the crowd, his own secure position in wealth nor his physical impairment (small) kept him from his desire. He climbed up into a "fig-mulberry" tree. The "sycamore" tree of Palestine is *shiqmah* in Hebrew and is of the genus *ficus sycomorus*, the sycamore fig tree, bearing a fruit like the ordinary fig tree but of inferior quality.

When Jesus came to the tree He could see Zacchaeus there. Jesus would have known he was there even if he had not been visible. Jesus knew his name and there is no indication they had ever met before. The Lord said, "Zacchaeus, quickly come down from there, for in your house it is necessary that I stay this day." The Greek syntax emphasizes the *necessity*. The necessity was for Zacchaeus' benefit, not Jesus'. Jesus often accepted invitations to visit people's homes and eat with them, but this is the only recorded instance where Jesus invited Himself to someone's home. He had a compelling purpose—He saw in this "sawed-off" little government official, the possibility of repentance. Even though Jesus is bearing the heart-rending burden of the cross, His first thought is not of Himself but of "lost sheep."

Jesus risked His reputation with that crowd by calling upon Zacchaeus. He showed that He loved men even though He hated their sin. He showed that love and truth are not "cowed" in the presence of sin, power, wealth or popular opinion. Jesus took time to go into Zacchaeus' house (away from the hostile crowd) and teach the despised publican about the kingdom of God. Jesus demonstrated "the Son of man came not to be served but to serve."

19:6-10 Change: Zacchaeus came quickly down out of the tree and was almost beside himself with joy that Jesus was coming to his house. The Greek verb *hupedexato* means Zacchaeus was "hyper-receiving" Jesus. His expression of reception to Jesus' announcement was over and above normal welcoming. Add to that the Greek word *chairon* ("joyfully") and one gets a picture of Zacchaeus' excitement and joy so evident that the great crowds thronging the streets of Jericho saw it and were astonished. Many of them murmured (Gr. *diegogguzon*, "growled"), "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner!"

How we would love to know what Jesus said to Zacchaeus and how the visit went. G. Campbell Morgan writes, "I have often wondered what Jesus said to him. I am sure He talked to him courteously, but there was more than courtesy." No doubt Jesus spoke firmly about the Law of Moses and sin and repentance. Jesus undoubtedly promised the tax-collector forgiveness if he would repent and believe in His Word. Zacchaeus' first commitment to Jesus' way of life was, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." Now there are many rich men who will give half their goods to the poor—as tax breaks, as salve for guilty conscience, or as attempts to earn righteousness before God. But Zacchaeus' commitment was by way of true repentance, for his second statement was, "and if I have defrauded any one anything, I restore it fourfold." Zacchaeus was willing to fulfill his trust in Jesus' word by complying with the law of God. Exodus 22:1 and II Samuel 12:6 indicate that four-fold restitution was a requirement of repentance for stealing or defrauding. The Greek word

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

translated "defrauded" is *esukophantesa* and means literally, "a fig shower"; it is the word from which we get the English word, *sycophant* which also means, "accuse falsely, advise falsely, defraud or flatter to deceive." Jesus replied, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham." Note the following things which indicate a dramatic change in Zacchaeus' thinking and living:

- a. He accepted Jesus and called Him, "Lord." Originally he got up into the tree to "see who Jesus was"—now he acknowledges Him as Lord.
- b. He acted in accordance with his trust in Jesus' conversation with him (whatever that was). He cut himself loose from his former life of trust in his money and power. He followed Jesus in offering service to an exploited, defrauded, oppressed society.
- c. He acted to remove the barriers between himself and his fellow man. His repentance was public. He said, "To the poor I am giving now. . . ." (Gr. *didomi*, present tense), not some future date. He repented in accordance with divine revelation.
- d. Jesus' closing statement implies Zacchaeus entered into a saving relationship. Salvation came to Zacchaeus by the grace of God through his faith in the Lordship of Christ, by repentance and by obedience to covenant terms. He had lost his inheritance by sinning against the Old Covenant, he became a true descendant and heir of Abraham by faith in Christ.

SECTION 2

Persistence (19:11-27)

11 As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. ¹²He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom and then return. ¹³Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten pounds, and said to them, 'Trade with these till I come.' ¹⁴But his citizens hated him and sent an embassy after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' ¹⁵When he returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading. ¹⁶The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more' ¹⁷And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' ¹⁸And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made

five pounds.' ¹⁹And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' ²⁰Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your pound, which I kept laid away in a napkin; ²¹for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.' ²²He said to him, 'I will condemn you out of your own mouth, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? ²³Why then did you not put my money into the bank, and at my coming I should have collected it with interest?' ²⁴And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the pound from him, and give it to him who has the ten pounds.' ²⁵(And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten pounds!') ²⁶'I tell you, that to every one who has will more be given; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ²⁷But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.' "

19:11-19 Faithful: As the multitudes in Jericho heard Jesus talking to Zacchaeus about being a son of Abraham, about salvation having come to his house that very day, about seeking the lost, they must have expressed some excited anticipation of an immediate messianic kingdom. They probably were talking among themselves that when Jesus got to Jerusalem, He would begin the proceedings of establishing an earthly kingdom much like Jewish tradition pictured it then. Jesus immediately told a parable to squelch that false concept. There are three things Jesus intends to teach in this parable: (a) He is going away to receive His kingly inheritance, but He is going without having brought His kingdom to the earth in its full, glorious and final manifestation; (b) in the meantime, those who wish to come under His rule must be faithful in keeping the instructions He left behind; (c) and, finally, He will return in all His magnificent authority to call all men to account for their attitudes and actions toward His kingdom. There is a teaching on rewards for faithfulness, but that is coincidental. The main objective is to say, "I go to Jerusalem to do the Father's will, but my disciples will be disappointed because my kingdom does not come in earthly glory immediately—and my enemies will be encouraged to think they have rid themselves of My rule." Jesus says, essentially, "But, I want you to know, in spite of My death My kingdom *will* come and the faithful shall be rewarded, while the rebellious will be judged and punished." "Be faithful," Jesus says, "use what you are given to the king's advantage—rewards will certainly come when the king finally returns." Now the church Jesus established on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2, is the kingdom (cf. Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; Acts 8:12; Rom. 14:17; I Thess. 2:12; Mt. 16:18-19, etc.), but it is the kingdom functioning while the King is away temporarily, anticipating His imminent return to consummate and manifest His kingly glory when He shares His inheritance with

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

His citizens and banishes His enemies. Make no mistake about it, Jesus is now king, and His kingdom has (past tense) been established in fact. All who believe and obey Him become, in fact, citizens of His kingdom.

Some commentators believe Jesus referred vaguely to an incident in the political life of that country some 27 years earlier. Archelaus, son of Herod the Great had received the tetrarchy of Judea, Samaria and Idumea upon the death of his father in 4 B.C. But he was not satisfied with that. Leaving his palace in Jericho in 6 A.D., he journeyed to Rome to ask that he be declared "*king of the Jews*," as his father had been titled. When he went to Rome he left a man, Philippus, in charge with funds to apply to the maintenance of his "kingdom" while he was gone. But after he left for Rome, a disgruntled party of Jews sent a special deputation from his "kingdom" to inform the emperor of Rome, in no uncertain terms, that they did not wish Archelaus to rule over them. This may be so. But what Jesus says in this parable is going to come to pass just as He told it. The story of Archelaus has a different ending. Archelaus was deposed and lost his kingdom altogether. Jesus will not lose His!

Do not confuse this parable with the Parable of The Talents (Mt. 25). They are not the same. Note the following differences:

Parable of Pounds

1. Spoken publicly
2. Approaching Jerusalem
3. A Nobleman goes to a far country to receive a crown
4. Pounds are given to 10 men equally.
5. Enemies are mentioned in addition to servants.

Parable of Talents

1. Spoken privately to the apostles
2. Two days after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem
3. A man goes on a journey
4. Talents are given to 3 men unequally.
5. No enemies mentioned

Both parables, however, teach the same fundamental of discipleship—
FAITHFULNESS

Jesus sets forth the encouragement to faithfulness, diligence and persistence. His kingship is established. When He ascended to heaven, He was enthroned at the right hand of the Father. But the rewards for His citizens must await His return for them. In the meanwhile, while He is away, His citizens must put to work what He has left with them—the Gospel of Grace. Salvation, in all its rewarding glory, is yet to be. Salvation in its consummation depends upon faithfulness.

The Greek word translated "pound" is *mina*. There is a Hebrew word similar to it (*maneh*, I Kings 10:17) and the word *mene* ("weighed") in Dan. 5:25-26, may also be related. Some think the "pound" was worth about \$25 while the "talent" was worth about \$30,000. Here, Jesus chose

the smaller monetary amount because it was sufficient to illustrate His main point—faithfulness in using what had been given for the nobleman's profit. The nobleman left each servant with one pound to test the capacity of the servants to receive the promotion he had in store for them at his return. Some Christians, at first reading this parable, are confused about its very clear teaching on a difference in rewards. There is nothing inconsistent about there being a difference of rewards in heaven. In fact, such a difference would seem to be the inevitable result of differences in individual capacities developed. Jesus did not deny that there would be chief seats in the kingdom (Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:35-45). He simply said they were not His to give at that time; they would be given later by the Father. Jesus did emphasize that those who think they should be first may be last and vice versa (Mt. 20:1-16). The parable of the Talents (Mt. 25:14-30) infers rewards will differ according to faithful stewardship of differing abilities and opportunities. Paul indicates (I Cor. 3:5-15) there will be some works burned up and some survive. Ultimately, reward will be based on faithfulness and dispensed by an Absolutely Just and Omniscient God! No human being converted to Christ's image will have reason or desire to complain. Note in this parable, the man who had gained five pounds was *praised* as warmly as the one who had gained ten, even though the reward was different in extent. Perhaps the servant who gained ten, had more opportunities and privileges. What would have happened to him, with all his opportunities and privileges, had he been slothful and gained only five? He would have been condemned! You see, the focus is on faithfulness—not numerical success.

19:20-27 Fearful: "Another" of the servants entrusted with a "pound" from his nobleman made no use of it at all. He did not spend it. He did not fling it away. He did not lose it accidentally. In fact, he congratulated himself that he had preserved it by hiding it. When presenting the one pound he had so carefully preserved, he gave the reason for hiding it his fear of the austerity of his master. The Greek word *austeros* is usually applied to unripe fruit and means, "sour, bitter, harsh." This servant believed his master was demanding more than his servant was able to render and therefore, more than he had a right to demand. The servant believed he knew better than the nobleman how to be a good steward of the gracious gift of the pound.

Study carefully the nobleman's reply. He does not admit to such an unfaithful characterization. As a matter of fact, his actual conduct shows this to be a false charge. He was gracious, trusting, more than fair and just. But the nobleman judges the faithless servant on the basis of the servant's own false charge. He says in effect, "If this was your evaluation of my character, that I would be rigid, firm and even severe, you would have been smart to have made much better use of the pound I gave you."

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

If you fully expected me to require more of you than normally required, you certainly have no right to complain if you are judged by the standards you expected. That is how I will judge you!" The least the fearful servant could have done was put his "pound" out to the money-lender's tables (Gr. *trapezan*, "table"—not bank), so it could earn interest. But he was afraid even to do that. Every Christian is a steward of (a) the grace of God in the Word of God (I Cor. 4:1); and (b) the grace of God in personal talents or abilities (I Pet. 4:10; Rom. 12:4-8). Every Christian must do something to invest as much of the Word as he has in him and as much of his abilities as he has that it may bring a return for his King. No Christian is without something to invest. No Christian should think Christ will demand more than he is able to produce—Jesus is not unjust or unfair. He is gracious, trusting and completely fair. The nobleman in the parable did not rebuke the one who had made five because the other had made ten. Both were given the same but produced differently. It is not how much, but whether! His only rebuke is to the one who *did* nothing. Censure is for the one who was afraid to do anything and then tried to put the blame on the nobleman. The Christian servant never need be afraid to invest God's Word. It will always prosper. His Word will not return unto Him void (cf. Isa. 55:11) but will accomplish His purpose. His Word is living and active and will penetrate even to the thoughts and intents of men's hearts (Heb. 4:12-13). So put it to use!

When the nobleman took the one pound from the fearful servant and gave it to the one who had gotten ten, those standing by appeared to object. They wanted to know why the man with ten pounds should have his reward increased at the expense of the man who had only one pound. The principle of the nobleman's actions is this: The one who proves the most faithful in his stewardship is the one who can be trusted most with what has never been put to use while the one who proves altogether unfaithful cannot be trusted with anything. It is a principle running through the whole fabric of life. To every man a "pound," use it or lose it!

G. Campbell Morgan cites Paul's dissertation on each man's work being tested by fire (I Cor. 3:5-15) to illustrate his belief that the servant "was still a servant, but he had neglected his opportunity." In other words, Morgan believes the servant who produces nothing will be saved but he will lose his reward—his "wood, hay and stubble" will be burned up with fire.

We have difficulty with this interpretation, because of the Lord's following judgment. Jesus said, "But as for these enemies of mine. . . ." and the Greek word for *enemies* is *echthrous* and means literally, "those who hate." Jesus also said, ". . . who did not want me to reign over them. . . ." and the Greek words for *did not want* are *me thelesantas*, literally, "are not willing." Certainly the unfaithful steward despised the nobleman because

he considered him unfair and tyrannical. The unfaithful servant was not willing to be ruled by the nobleman or he would have obeyed instructions. Furthermore, Jesus pictures the nobleman calling the unfaithful servant a "wicked servant" (Gr. *ponere doule*, evil slave). Apparently, the servant who does nothing with his pound is accounted as an enemy and an evil servant and is slain along with the rest of those who are unwilling to have the nobleman rule over them. After all, every person is a servant of God and every person has been given a "pound." Those who try to save their lives shall lose them and those who lose them for Christ's sake shall save them. The reference to the enemies of the nobleman being slain (Gr. *katasphaxate*, "hewn to pieces") is a cryptic warning to the Jewish nation which will soon demonstrate rebellion against the Messiah and be destroyed. This is very much on the mind of Jesus as He faces the cross. In one week He will be humiliated and murdered, and the uppermost thing on his heart is the ruin his murderers are bringing upon themselves (Lk. 19:41-44).

SECTION 3

Praise (19:28-40)

28 And when he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village opposite, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat; untie it and bring it here. ³¹If any one asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this, 'The Lord has need of it.' " ³²So those who were sent went away and found it as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their garments on the colt they set Jesus upon it. ³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their garments on the road. ³⁷As he was now drawing near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, ³⁸saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

19:28-34 Creation: John's gospel account tells us that Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover of His last week on earth (Jn. 12:1). Bethany was on the eastern side of the Mt. of Olives, about two miles from

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Jerusalem. Jesus apparently stayed in the home of Lazarus and his sisters (Martha and Mary) Friday night and Saturday night and left early Sunday morning to enter the city of Jerusalem (cf. Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9; Jn. 21:1-8). About a mile down the road toward Jerusalem, lay the village of Bethphage. The word Bethphage in Hebrew means "house of unripe figs"—it was in the vicinity of Bethphage that Jesus cursed the fruitless fig tree (cf. Mt. 21:18-20; Mk. 11:12-21). It was from this little village that Jesus began what is called His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

This passage exudes divine authority. The reader cannot escape the implication that everything is done by foreknowledge and by divine schedule. When Jesus sent the two disciples (probably Peter and John) into Bethphage for the colt, there had been no prearrangements so far as the record goes. The description of the animals, where they were to be found and the reply to be given the owners all indicate the disciples were sent not by prearrangement but on the basis of the foreknowledge of Jesus. The same kind of foreknowledge was displayed by Jesus (undoubtedly for the benefit of His disciples) when the room for the last supper was obtained (cf. Mt. 26:17-19; Mk. 14:12-16; Lk. 22:7-13). If the action of Jesus here seems presumptuous, that is because it is! He intended this whole event (entry into Jerusalem) to be one of triumph. He would now affirm His lordship over all creation. He intended to receive the praise of all creation as due Him. The earth and all that is in it belongs to Him. The owners of the colt were doubtless disciples of Jesus; the animals were only borrowed for a time and then to be returned or reclaimed. The two sent for the colt were to furnish the explanation, "The Master has need of it," if they were challenged. Actually, they brought two animals—the colt and its mother (cf. Mt. 21:2), undoubtedly necessary to get the colt to come willingly.

Jesus might have walked into Jerusalem that Sunday morning, A.D. 30 but He rode on the colt of an ass to lay before the city (especially its rulers) a graphic, symbolic claim to be the Messiah. It was predicted by the prophet Zechariah (Zech. 9:9) that the King of the Jews would come to them humble and lowly, riding on the foal of an ass. Earlier, thousands would have *made* Him "king" according to their earthly aspirations (Jn. 6:15). Now, He announces He *is* King according to the Father's pre-ordained plan. He enters royally. He enters freely, not as a prisoner or victim. He did not hide or hurry. He acted deliberately and purposefully. The time has come for the great struggle—for the showdown. The time has come for the world to either acknowledge its ruler or to renounce Him. Not only was He announcing His kingship, He was announcing the nature of His kingship. He did not claim kingship as the Gentile world would expect (cf. Jn. 18:33-38). He did not ride in on a white stallion with a troop armed with swords. He rode on a beast of burden. His "army" was an unorganized mob; a multitude of shouting, conquered shepherders and farmers. John records

that His disciples did not understand at first the mysterious or unique action of Jesus in riding upon the colt—but after He was “glorified” they remembered that this had been written of the Messiah in their prophets. This event which is said to be a *fulfillment* of the prophecy of Zechariah concerning the Messiah’s first coming, gives the careful Bible student a clear key for understanding the many other highly figurative and symbolic prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and His kingdom. The whole context of Zechariah 9:9-17 is about the Messiah. Barnes thinks the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 was “always, by the Jews, applied to the Messiah.” We have not found that to be so. In fact, one modern Jewish Bible encyclopedia, in its article on the prophet Zechariah, attributes Zechariah 9-11 “to the final days of Jeroboam, son of Joash, to the beginning of the Assyrian conquest.” Only the part of Zechariah’s imagery depicting the coming king as a “triumphant and victorious” one “commanding peace to the nations” would fit apocryphal aspirations. It is evident even from the New Testament that few Jews would accept (not even Jesus’ own disciples) a “humble, lowly” messiah.

19:35-40 Crowds: Even before Jesus’ arrival at the home of Lazarus, the crowds of Passover pilgrims were awaiting His coming to Jerusalem (see Jn. 11:55-57). Passover was the most significant national memorial of the Jews with all its overtones of deliverance from foreign oppression and divine intervention in history. The pilgrims were already engaged in religious rites of purification so they could participate. Josephus estimates some three million pilgrims jammed into Jerusalem and its suburbs at Passover time. People renewed old acquaintances, met cousins and other relatives for the first time in years, gossiped, talked politics, taxes and the state of the religious *status quo*. Popular opinions of the great, new Prophet and Rabbi (reputed to be a miracle-worker) versus the official pronouncements of the rulers concerning Him were discussed.

There were thousands of pilgrims already inside the city of Jerusalem (cf. Jn. 12:12-13) and these came out to meet Him (Jn. 12:18) as He approached. In addition, there were thousands of pilgrims still coming toward Jerusalem surrounding Him as He rode on the colt (Mt. 21:8-9; Mk. 11:8-10; Lk. 19:35-38) accompanying Him toward the city. This whole multitude was expecting Jesus to come to Jerusalem and make good on His promises to set up God’s kingdom as they perceived God’s kingdom (cf. Mk. 11:9-10). This multitude was in a state of frenzied euphoria remembering all the “mighty works” they had seen the Prophet of Galilee do. The thousands began to throw their cloaks down in the path of the colt upon which Jesus rode. Many of them climbed palm trees and cut off branches to throw down for the colt to walk upon, (Mt. 21:8; Mk. 11:8; Jn. 12:13). Some waved the branches back and forth. The palm branch was an emblem of victory and restoration of peace (cf. I Macc. 13:51; II Macc. 10:6, 7; Rev.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

7:9). They all shouted with loud roaring (Gr. *phone megale*, "voice, great"), joyfully, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Some shouted "Hosanna" (Mt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9; Jn. 12:13) which is an Aramaic word meaning, "Save now, we pray!"

The common pilgrims are shouting, "King!" But His garment is not a royal robe; it is homespun and seamless. His "charger" is a dumb, beast of burden, not yet old enough to be ridden. His "court" is of fishermen and hated publicans. His cavalcade is a mob of Galileans. Yet no pageant that ever passed through the streets of imperial Rome has so impressed the centuries as this one. The triumphal entries of Roman emperors have all but been forgotten, but this one, in every detail, is known and retold year after year, century after century.

As He moved toward the city He was creating a great "stir" (Mt. 21:10) (Gr. *seismos*, "quaking, trembling"). He was creating an "earthquake" of emotional excitement, but that is about all it amounted to with most of the thousands. The most striking characteristic of Judaism, of that century, and one which set it apart from all other religions of antiquity was its messianic fervor. The Jews looked for their "golden age" in the messianic *future* and not in the past like Greece and Rome. The Messiah of the Jews was supposed to usher in:

- a. Perfect happiness and peace.
- b. Super-abundance of materialism.
- c. Power over the whole world, politically.
- d. Destruction of all enemies.
- e. Supernatural renovation of the natural order.

The rulers were also "quaking" but from a different emotion—envy and hatred. They had already given orders for Jesus' arrest (see Jn. 11:53-57). Now they are wringing their hands in frustration and fear (Jn. 12:19; Mt. 21:10-16) because they want to kill Him but they do not dare while the cheering, jubilant thousands are acclaiming Him as their king. A confrontation is about to take place in one of the remote and despised frontiers of the Roman empire which will have cosmic repercussions. Men charged with teaching and administering the Word of God and His covenant are preaching to kill a Man who has already raised three people from the dead! They are even planning to kill one of those He raised from the dead (Lazarus, Jn. 12:10-11).

There were even Pharisees in that clamoring, shouting multitude with Jesus that Sunday morning as He approached Jerusalem. They knew very well that the Tower of Antonia was fully garrisoned with Roman troops with orders from Pontius Pilate to subdue with swift and ruthless force any signs of rebellion or sedition. The Roman procurator always reinforced

his troops in Jerusalem at Passover time. Sentries were placed on the roofs of all the great colonnades like Solomon's Porch and others. Many of the soldiers, off-duty, roamed the streets and shops of Jerusalem. When the great roars of "Hosanna," and "Blessed is the King. . . ." went up just outside the city walls and echoed across the Brook Kidron it sent "shivers" up the spines of the Roman soldiers. It would signal to their way of thinking, rebellion, riot, fighting and bloodshed. Many such skirmishes had already occurred within the city of Jerusalem between "hot-headed Jews" and Roman soldiers. Roman patience was wearing thin with the Jews. The Pharisees knew this well. They wanted to keep their political positions and their city from devastation by these powerful conquerors. So Pharisees curtly admonished Jesus, "Rabbi, rebuke your disciples." They demanded that Jesus quiet the crowd and put an end to all the praise lest some very serious blood-letting result from it.

Jesus' answer was a refusal to even try to silence the shouting. He could not do so (except by miraculously suspending their voices or some other supernatural intervention over human free will). If He should try to suppress such spontaneously strong emotions, they would find some other way to express what is being shouted. "Even the stones would cry out," would not seem to be intended literally, but figuratively. Although there is a sense in which "the things which have been made" (nature) cry out in testimony to God when men refuse (cf. Rom. 1:18ff.)! It is impossible to extinguish praise to God by hard repression. The Pharisees were soon to find that out! The Pharisees were trying to save their nation by repressing Messianic praise; Jesus knew that praising and acknowledging the Messiah would be the only way to save it.

SECTION 4

Peace (19:41-44)

41 And when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it, ⁴²saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes. ⁴³For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, ⁴⁴and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you; because you did not know the time of your visitation."

19:41-42 Weeping: The crowds were clamoring, almost in hysteria, shouting loudly, "Peace in heaven. . . ." They were apparently oblivious to the Lord Himself so taken were they with their own emotions. As He rounded the crest of the Mt. of Olives and the thousand-year-old capitol

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

city of the Jews came into view, He wept. The Greek word *eklausen* is translated "wept" but it means much more than tears; it suggests that His whole body was heaving with sobbing. It is the kind of deep, soulful sobbing the human body suffers at the death of a loved one. None of the crowd seemed to notice except perhaps one of His disciples who gave Luke this eyewitness account later. It is interesting that this particular incident is recorded only by Luke.

Jerusalem (Hebrew, *Yerushalom*) means, "Righteousness - Peace." They were shouting "Peace in heaven. . . ." but they had no idea of what it meant. Peace (in the Hebrew language, *shalom*) means, "soundness, wholeness, well-being." Peace as it relates to God may be experienced by man even in the midst of earthly conflict (cf. Jn. 14:27; Isa. 26:3). Jerusalem was the City of Peace and yet it represented the center of all that stood in opposition to the God of peace. Its people, for the most part, did not know the way of peace—not then, not ever. Isaiah condemned the nation in his day because it did not know the way of peace (cf. Isa. 59:8). This is the city of God's presence but the frivolous, materialistic-minded mobs, and the self-righteous rulers have taken the kingdoms by "violence" for themselves. The attitudes of the Jews toward Jesus are so vividly like those of the Jews toward God and His prophets in the days of Jeremiah (cf. Jer. 6:16ff.) that one should not be surprised at the terrible devastation predicted by Jesus here. Peace, true peace, is not the absence of struggle, discipline or conflict; it is the result of reconciliation and surrender to the will of God by being "in Christ" (cf. Eph. 2:11-22). This is what the inhabitants of Jerusalem rejected.

19:43-44 Warning: Jesus gives a somber and gruesome prediction in a general way here of what will happen to the Jews because of their soon rejection of the Prince of Peace. Later He gives in great detail the same prediction (Lk. 21:5-32; Mt. 23:37—24:35; Mk. 13:1-31). We will deal with this prediction fully in Luke 21:5-32. Jerusalem's enemies (the Romans) would "cast up a bank" (siege wall) around the city and "hem" them in. Thousands would starve to death, other thousands would fight and kill one another. Then the Romans would "dash" many to the ground, including infants as they slaughtered the besieged Jews. Josephus documents the literal fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in 66-70 A.D. in his history of the Jews. Titus Vespasian razed Jerusalem so that it looked like "a plowed field," and not one stone was left upon another. The crowds seem unaware of this shocking prophecy. His prediction, if heard, would have been considered outrageous and completely out-of-place. Even His own disciples later (Mt. 23:37—24:35) could not believe that "not one stone would be left upon another" in their beloved Jerusalem. When Jesus said that so they could hear it later, they thought He was talking about the end of the world. To a Jew, the destruction of Jerusalem would be "the end of the world."

But, as incredible as it seemed, it came to pass to the very letter of the prediction just 40 years after Jesus said it.

All this was to come upon them "because they did not know the time of their visitation." The Greek word *episkopes* means literally, "to look upon, care for, exercise oversight." It may be used to denote a "visitation" from God in judgment (Isa. 10:3 in the LXX *episkopes*) or a "visitation" by the Son of man with mercy and redemption (Lk. 1:68, 78; 7:16; Acts 15:14; Heb. 2:6). God "visited" man in the Person of His Son, as Man, to exercise oversight for the purpose of accomplishing man's redemption. The prophets of the Jews predicted God would visit man as Man (Isa. 7:14; Micah 5:2ff.; Isa. 9:6ff.; Isa. 11:1-9; etc.). But when that Man came and claimed to be God in the flesh (Jn. 1:14, 18) they accused Him of blasphemy (Jn. 5:18) and plotted to kill Him. He invaded history in a fashion quite contrary to the human concept of how God would come. God's chosen people had been manipulating the written Law of God, His temple, His priesthood and His creation so long they thought they could manipulate Him. But God in the flesh, Jesus, would not be manipulated. When they rejected Him, He rejected them. They did not know Him because they did not know God (Jn. 5:30-47; 8:19; 8:42-47; 10:31-39; 14:8-11, etc.). "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not . . . He came to his own home, and his own people received him not," (Jn. 1:10-11). Tragedy—tragedy—tragedy! And in spite of documentation by eyewitnesses of the historical reality of visitation by God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, most of the world today does not acknowledge with any personal obligation and responsibility—not even of praise—that He has visited to bring peace. What is left then for those who pass from this life into the next without personal recognition and responsible commitment to that "Visitor"? The opposite of peace—eternal rebellion, fragmentation and torment. It is important to notice here Jesus' pity never led Him to compromise the truth. In spite of the deep grief which made His whole body shudder with sobbing, He pronounced the terrible truth of Jerusalem's doom. Had He known it and kept it to Himself no sane person could call Him compassionate! Pity alone never saved anyone; the compassion which elicits truth spoken and acted is what saves.

SECTION 5

Prayer (19:45-48)

45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, ⁴⁶saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer'; but you have made it a den of robbers."

47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

the scribes and the principal men of the people sought to destroy him; ⁴⁸but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people hung upon his words.

19:45-46 Temple Purged: Apparently Jesus and the Twelve entered Jerusalem each morning for four successive days and went out to lodge in Bethany each night. He entered Jerusalem Sunday morning for the Triumphal Entry and returned to Bethany that night, doing the same on Monday, Tuesday and probably Wednesday (cf. Mk. 11:11; Mt. 21:18; Mk. 11:19-28; Lk. 21:37-38). Thursday He entered the city to keep the Passover (Mt. 26:18-20), was arrested that night in the Garden of Gethsemane, put on trial all night long and crucified on Friday. On Sunday He merely entered the Temple precincts, looked around at the despicable commercialization and exploitation of the Temple and its worshipers and departed for Bethany with the Twelve since it was late in the evening (cf. Mt. 21:10-17; Mk. 11:11).

As He returned toward Jerusalem the next morning (Monday), He cursed the unproductive fig tree (Mt. 21:18-19; Mk. 11:12-14. After entering the city on Monday He went to the Temple and taught and healed. Children shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David" and Jesus cautioned the indignant Pharisees, ". . . Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought perfect praise. . . ."

The incident of the cleansing of the Temple in our text took place on that same Monday, (see also Mt. 21:12-17; Mk. 11:15-19). The Temple of Jesus' day was magnificent. Herod the Great initiated grandiose plans in 20 B.C. for remodeling the Temple Zerubbabel had finished about 516 B.C. This remodeling was not completed until 64 A.D. (only 6 years before it was totally destroyed in 70 A.D.). Workers and materials were scattered about the Temple which Jesus knew. Ten thousand workers were employed in its remodeling. With nearly 3,000,000 people in Jerusalem at Passover time, and most of them coming to the Temple at least once a day, it was a very packed and busy place. Jesus was there probably every day of this last week. He would naturally gravitate to the Temple because of the teeming masses of people there at Passover time. He would have not only somewhat of a captive audience, but one with its mind concentrating on spiritual things. There also, were the rulers and religious leaders of the whole nation. This last week is the nation's "moment of truth." This last week will be the "crisis of the cosmos" (see comments on Luke 21). No longer will He keep a "low profile" on His Messiahship. Now is the time the issue is to be faced openly, thoroughly and plainly. There must be no lingering doubts about how much authority Jesus claims. The logical place for that authority to be claimed is the Temple. In addition to all this, the Temple, and its services, will provide immediate, vivid symbolism and

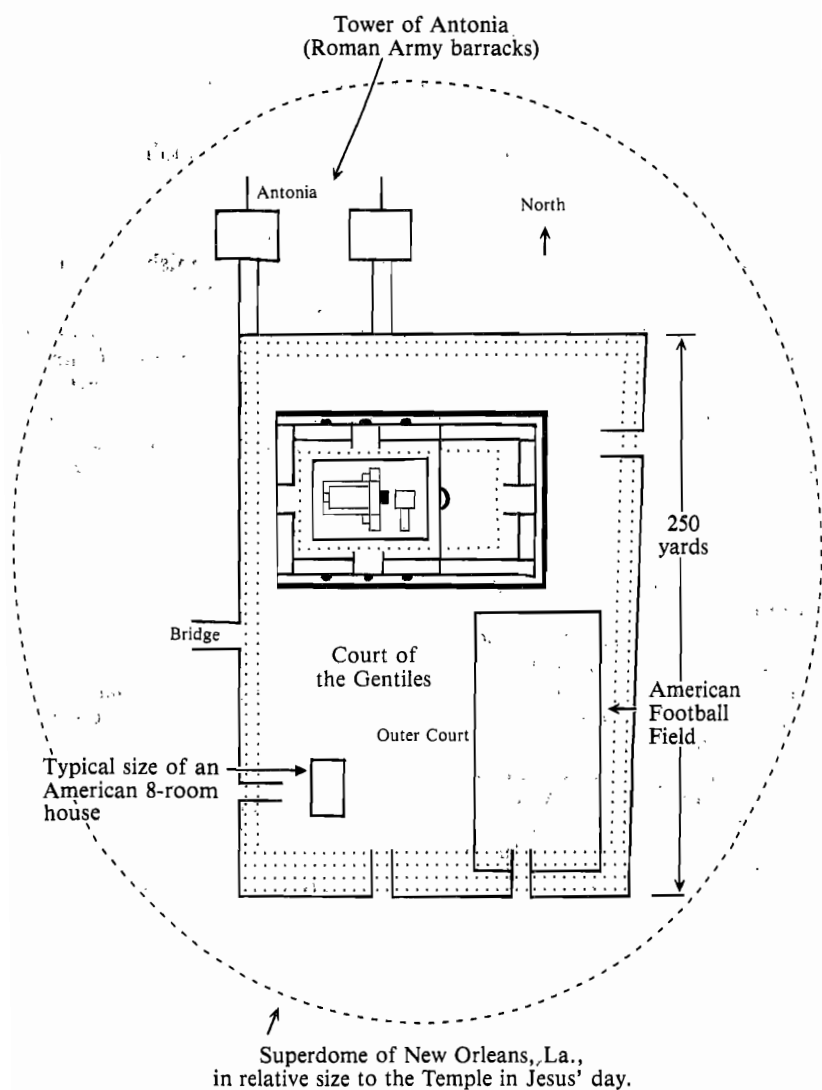
typology for Him to relate His redemptive work to the Old Testament of the Jews. Thus, He entered the Temple,

The Court of the Gentiles was called the "Bazaar of Annas" because the family of the High Priest made their fortune from the "markets" there. The Court of the Gentiles was a public place very much like the Forum in Rome or the Agora in Athens where anyone could go, including infidels, heretics, excommunicated Jews or unclean Jews. It was always crowded like a modern "Farmer's market" with people gossiping, buying, shopping, strolling around and selling. Merchants from all over the world were allowed to set up booths in it to hawk their wares. Along the walls, the huge colonnades (sheltered walk-ways) were gathering places. Roman soldiers walked along the roofs at Passover time patrolling the Court. It was "big business." Over \$1,000,000 a year was cleared by the family of the High Priest. The Roman general, Crassus, plundered the Temple of \$30,000,000 himself. The family of the High Priest had a "corner" on the market of "kosher" animals and "kosher" money for sale to Passover pilgrims. Jewish worshipers came from all over the Roman empire. Many of them could not bring a Passover lamb or Jewish shekels for their offerings. Nothing else was acceptable. Furthermore, all the priests had to do was pronounce any lamb that had been brought, unsuitable, and another one had to be obtained before the worshiper could observe the Passover. Often prices at the great feasts went up as much as fifteen times over the usual price of a lamb or a shekel. People were being exploited and defrauded in the name of religion.

Jesus was angry about this. He entered the Temple courts and began to drive out those who sold. The Greek word translated "drive out" is *ekballein* and means literally, "throw out." It is a word of action. Matthew records that He "overturned" the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of the merchants. The meek and mild Jesus vents His anger. There is a righteous magnificence to His roughness. He is demonstrating by actions what the prophets said so many times about the zeal of the Messiah for justice and relieving the oppression of the poor (Isa. 9:7; 11:1-5; 42:1-4; 61:1-4). As long as there was corruption in the Temple and its priesthood, there would be corruption in the whole nation. Where there is corruption in the religious leadership of any nation it will filter down and permeate the whole citizenry.

God never intended His "house" (covenant family) to become a marketplace where men buy and sell, exploit the weak and powerless, and worship the god mammon. Isaiah predicted that God's "house" (the church) would be set aside to evangelize the "foreigner" and call all who would to come into covenant relationship and worship (prayer), (Isa. 56:1-12). Jeremiah told the people of his day the Lord was going to remove them from their land and take His presence from them because they made His house a "den

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE



of robbers.” There is, in Jesus’ reference to both these prophecies, a direct claim to deity and messianic authority. He vindicates His actions by claiming the divine authority of messianic prophecy.

19:47-48 Teaching Popular: Jesus, in this action on Monday, excited a whole spectrum of emotions that lasted for several days as He taught in the Temple.

- a. The rulers were indignant (Mt. 21:15) and sought to kill Him (Lk. 19:47-48).
- b. The sick flocked to Him to be healed (Mt. 21:14).
- c. The children shouted Biblical praises, (Mt. 21:15-16).
- d. Most of the multitude watched and listened in astonishment, awe and appreciation, “hanging on His words” (Lk. 19:48).

For one brief moment the Temple was what it should be—beautiful, holy and spiritual. It was untidy and noisy, but lovely. For one brief moment the Temple was no longer a market-place that made you feel dirty and ashamed for having been there. It was a house of prayer and glory to God. For one brief moment Jesus revived in the minds of the worshipers the spiritual ideals and atmosphere of the Temple and turned them from their crass materialism.

The rulers were filled with rage and would have killed Him on the spot but they were afraid to do so. Jesus did something which was very popular with the multitudes. It warmed their heart to see anyone with enough courage to take action and overturn money tables and drive the merchants out. With only a slight provocation, the crowds would have joined Jesus against the rulers. Furthermore, the rulers were guilty and they knew they were guilty. What Jesus was doing was right and their consciences told them so. Guilty consciences have made many powerful men cowards. Finally, although they were filled with rage, they were also calculating. They knew the expedient thing to do was wait for the right moment and hope for an opportunity to make Jesus appear to be the criminal. Then they knew they could win the popularity of the multitudes to their side.

The church, made of “living stones,” is God’s temple today (Eph. 2:11-22). He wants it to be His house of prayer and evangelism. He is angry when it prostitutes itself before the gods of materialism, false teaching and sensuality. Some of the last admonitions of the New Testament are for the church to purge itself—to repent—lest He come and take away its light (cf. Rev. 2-3). Let the church know what happened to the Temple (Mt. 23:37—24:35; Lk. 21:5-33), and repent.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. Would you risk your reputation to visit in the home of a “traitor” to teach about God’s kingdom if invited? Jesus did!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

2. Is the "religious experience" of Zacchaeus (his salvation) an accurate example for salvation now?
3. What does the Parable of the Pounds do for your concept of rewards in heaven?
4. What do you think about faithfulness as the divine criterion for reward versus *amount* of work accomplished? Can you think of other teachings in the N.T. along the same line?
5. Have you ever been tempted to think of God as austere and too demanding? How do you overcome it?
6. Do you believe the Master has given you a "pound" to invest? What is it? Have you invested it?
7. What do you think you would have thought had you been a Roman soldier stationed in the city of Jerusalem the day Jesus rode in on the colt? What do you think you would do today if He rode into your town in an old, broken down automobile, followed by an entourage of common laborers, farmers and alleged traitors, claiming to be President of the United States?
8. Have you ever wept over the impenitence of your home town? Have you ever grieved over all the lost people who live there?
9. How many people do you know who have never acknowledged that Jesus was God in the flesh, visiting mankind? Have you ever talked to them about this?
10. Are there religious leaders making God's house (the church) a den of robbers today? How does Christ feel about this? What about your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit—is there anything in it that Christ might want to "drive out"?

Chapter Twenty (20:1-47)

THE SON OF MAN SPEAKING TO THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF LIFE

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Was Jesus dodging the issue of His authority by asking about John's baptism (20:1-8)?
2. Why did Jesus ask the Jews to interpret the parable of the wicked husbandmen (20:9-18; cf. Mt. 21:33-46; Mk. 12:1-12)?
3. What are the things a follower of Christ must "render to Caesar" (20:25)?
4. If there is no marriage in heaven, what kind of personal relationships will there be (20:34-40)?
5. Who is "my Lord" of David's Psalm (20:42)?

SECTION 1

Revelation and God (20:1-8)

20 One day, as he was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up² and said to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is that gave you this authority." ³He answered them, "I also will ask you a question; now tell me, ⁴Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" ⁵And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' ⁶But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us; for they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷So they answered that they did not know whence it was. ⁸And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

20:1-4 Summons: Luke's chapter 20 documents part of the longest day recorded in the entire ministry of Jesus. Matthew gives more of the details of this Tuesday in Jerusalem than any of the other evangelists; almost one-sixth of Matthew's whole Gospel is taken up in recording this day. It is in Matthew 26:1, 2 we come to the end of Tuesday when Jesus says, "... after two days the Passover is coming," or, "... day after tomorrow the Passover is coming." Consider the following list of events which took place on this Tuesday:

- a. Jesus' Authority Challenged (Mt. 21:23-27; Mk. 11:27-33; Lk. 20:1-8)
- b. The Parable of the Two Sons (Mt. 21:28-32; Mk. 12:1a)
- c. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Mt. 21:33-46; Mk. 12:1b-12; Lk. 20:9-19)

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- d. The Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son (Mt. 22:14)
- e. Catch Question About Giving Tribute to Caesar (Mt. 22:15-22; Mk. 12:13-17; Lk. 20:20-26)
- f. Catch Question About the Resurrection (Mt. 22:23-33; Mk. 12:18-27; Lk. 20:27-39)
- g. Catch Question About the Greatest Commandment (Mt. 22:34-40; Mk. 12:28-34; Lk. 20:40)
- h. Christ's Questions About David's Lord (Mt. 22:41-46; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44)
- i. Warning to His disciples (Mt. 23:1-12; Mk. 12:38-40; Lk. 20:45-47)
- j. Sevenfold warning to the Pharisees (Mt. 23:13-36)
- k. Lamenting over Jerusalem (Mt. 23:37-39)
- l. Commending a Poor Widow's Gift (Mk. 12:41-44; Lk. 21:1-4)
- m. Reflecting About the Coming of the Greeks (Jn. 12:20-36)
- n. The Sinful Unbelief of the Jews (Jn. 12:37-43)
- o. Jesus Summarizes His Own Message and Mission (Jn. 12:44-50)
- p. Discourse on the Destruction of Jerusalem (Mt. 24:1-34; Mk. 13:1-30; Lk. 21:5-32)
- q. Discourse on the End of the World (Mt. 24:35-51; Mk. 13:31-37; Lk. 21:33-36)
- r. More about the End of the World and Judgment (Mt. 25:1-46)
- s. General statements as to His death (Mt. 26:1, 2; Mk. 14:1; Lk. 21:37, 38; Jn. 13:1)

The physical and, especially, the emotional stress of such a day was no doubt exhausting to even a strong person like Jesus. It was a day when the political and religious leadership of the nation threw at Him all the pressure and craftiness they could muster to trap Him in some mistake by which they might turn the multitudes against Him. It was a day when the weight of His knowledge of the terrible future of His people pressed heaviest upon His heart. It was a day when the exasperating ignorance of His own disciples had to be patiently dealt with again. It was a day when He was vividly reminded of His vicarious atonement for the sins of the whole world when the Greeks sought Him. It was an emotionally charged and intellectually exhausting day.

The day started with an official summons by the chief priests, scribes and elders that He should produce some credentials for the authority He had assumed the day before in driving money-changers and merchants out of the Temple! Furthermore, He is challenged to give reason why He should have acquired such a massive following of people praising Him as the Son of David, etc. This challenge of Jesus' authority is not an honest one. As the religious leaders of the nation they were obligated to honestly challenge any desecration of the Temple or violation of the laws of Moses. But Jesus had done neither. The chief priests and scribes were the guilty

ones. The timing of this challenge from the authorities betrays the fact that it was not an honest effort to protect the sanctity of God's house but a scheme to discredit Jesus motivated by envy and hatred. Jesus had cleansed the Temple three years earlier (Jn. 2:13-22) and for three years had been demonstrating His authority (by miracles and fulfilling prophecies) to do so. There had been three full years of publicly demonstrated authority by which they should have accepted Him as Lord of the Temple—if the authorities had been asking an honest question, they had the answer. There was, in fact, no need for the question to be asked!

The real reason for the challenge was the way in which Jesus' righteous actions had intimidated and humiliated these so-called guardians of the faith in the eye of the public. They could not defend their exploitation of the house of God and to "cover up" they tried to turn the attack upon Jesus. Jesus put the onus right back upon them by recalling their ridicule and defiance of John the Baptist. They had "rejected the baptism of John" and thus rejected for themselves the counsel of God (Lk. 7:30). In a master stroke Jesus exposed their dishonesty by answering, "I also will ask you a question; Now tell me, was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?"

20:5-8 Silenced: These rulers immediately recognized they were on the horns of a dilemma. That, in itself, betrayed them as hypocrites. They knew how they *should* answer, but were grasping for a way to hide their dishonesty. If they answered: "John's baptism was from God. . . ." they acknowledged the revelatory nature of John's message and condemned themselves as opposing God's testimony through John the Baptist that Jesus was the Messiah. If they answered "John's baptism was not from God. . . ." they alienated the populace which had acclaimed John a "prophet of God." So, they said, "We do not know." But that answer did not solve their dilemma—it only exposed their guilt. Their answer was really a confession that they were in opposition to John's message and mission. If they could have proved John the Baptist was *not* from God they would have declared it. To stand there in the presence of the righteous Jesus, with all their knowledge (they had investigated the ministry of John the Baptist many times, Jn. 1:19ff.; 3:25ff.; Mt. 3:7ff.; Lk. 7:24-35), and say they "did not know" showed them to be either the dumbest people in Israel or the most blatant liars!

Jesus specifically asked these rulers about John's authority for immersing (baptizing) people rather than John's teaching because of the uniqueness of the act of immersing people in water unto repentance for the forgiveness of sin (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3). There could be no quibbling or hedging with this question. Baptism was a concrete, vivid impressive *act*. No one could say, "What teaching?" Immersion of the entire individual in water for the remission of sins was doctrinally innovative. The law of Moses proscribed animal sacrifices for atonement. The issue was crucial—what

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

right had John the Baptist to add to the Old Testament law such a commandment for the remission of sins? He had the right only if his commission came directly by revelation from God! The Jews knew nothing of the practice of baptism as John initiated it (see our discussion in Luke 3:1-6). The only logical and honest conclusion was either to accept John's ministry and message as a divine revelation from God or prove John to be an imposter. These rulers refused to take a stand either way and thus proved themselves to be imposters.

They were dishonest about John; they were dishonest with Jesus. Jesus refused to declare Himself to men incapable of honesty. What good would it have done? Jesus refused to declare Himself to these men because:

- a. This approach (letting the logic of His challenge about John speak for itself) lets the crowds see more clearly the hypocrisy and dishonesty of their leaders. The multitudes could not hope to save themselves until the stranglehold of these rulers over their thinking was broken.
- b. Jesus had already forced them to answer their own question. John the Baptist had testified Jesus was the Messiah. They would not discredit John (could not), so they actually were forced to admit Jesus had authority to cleanse the Temple and teach what He taught.
- c. They were not asking for information, but for evil purposes—they did not deserve to have the truth just to pervert it and use it for wickedness. If they were blind to the evidence of John's credentials, they would be blind to Jesus' credentials. It was wilful blindness and dishonesty—Jesus treated it as such—it was useless for Him to do otherwise.

Jesus proceeds to teach three parables in which He condemns their methods and their motives. These parables focus on the disobedience of the Jewish religious leaders. Only one of the parables is recorded by Luke—the parable of the wicked husbandmen, Lk. 20:9-19. The other two, the parable of the two sons and the parable of the king's marriage feast for his son are recorded in Matthew's account only (Mt. 21:28-32 and Mt. 22:1-14).

SECTION 2

Responsibility to Grace (20:9-19)

9 And he began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country for a long while. ¹⁰When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, that they should give him some of the fruit of the vineyard; but the tenants

beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹And he sent another servant; him also they beat and treated shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. ¹²And he sent yet a third; this one they wounded and cast out. ¹³Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be they will respect him.' ¹⁴But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' ¹⁵And they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶He will come and destroy those tenants, and give the vineyard to others.' When they heard this, they said, "God forbid!" ¹⁷But he looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner'?

¹⁸Every one who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on any one it will crush him."

¹⁹ The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on him at that very hour, but they feared the people; for they perceived that he had told this parable against them.

20:9-15 The Parable: The figure of a vine and a vineyard to portray God's chosen people was well known to the Jews. The Old Testament is rich in such imagery (cf. Ps. 80:8-18; Isa. 5:1-10; Jer. 2:21; 6:9; 8:13; 12:10; Ezek. 15:1-8; 19:10-14; Hosea 10:1). The grapevine was considered by some Jews to be the symbol of the Jewish nation. Herod had an ornate and expensive golden grapevine embossed on the great and beautiful gate of the Temple. The grape was the most important crop in the land of Palestine and the entire Mediterranean area at that time. The vineyard was usually planted on a hill; protected from animals and thieves by hedges, rock-fences and watch towers. Wine was the chief by-product of the grape harvest and wine presses and vats were built right into the vineyards and there the juice was squeezed out by the ancient method of human feet tramping on the gathered grapes. Often Jewish farmers merely rented or "share-cropped" the vineyards. While the farmer did all the labor, he was obligated to pay the owner of the vineyard a fixed amount, usually one-third or one-fourth whether the harvest was large or small. Jesus was using an illustration here in the realm of Jewish literature, of everyday life, and relating to the symbol of their national life. This parable is also recorded in Mt. 21:33-46 and Mk. 12:1-12. It should be plain that the owner of the vineyard is God; the tenants are the Jewish people; the three servants the owner sent to collect some of the fruit of the vineyard represent the prophets of old; the heir is Jesus Christ, the Son. Jesus infers in this parable that the Jewish people (especially the religious and political leaders) recognized the "heir" well enough to decide to kill Him!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

20:16-19 The Point: This parable tells about some tenants or stewards who took things into their own hands as soon as the Landlord left them alone, and when the Landlord sent servants to collect the rent, the tenants showed their rebellion by treating the servants shamefully. When the Landlord sent His Son, they killed Him. Redding says: "This skit has caught man red-handed in his most characteristic crime—playing God." The parable of the two sons teaches or exposes the hypocritical disobedience of the Jews; this parable of the wicked husbandmen foretells the fierce wrath of God upon disobedient tenants. This parable is really a tragic conclusion to Isaiah's vineyard parable (Isa. 5:1-11). The Jews had many opportunities and privileges following Isaiah's exposé of Israel's disobedience—even the Son of the vineyard's Owner had now come—but the workers still were disobedient. This parable re-enforces Jesus' manifestation of authority over the Jewish nation in the cleansing of the Temple by its declaration that He has come to *demand* fruit from them (repentance), and that He is the Son.

The Jewish nation had been blessed above all the nations of the earth, not because they deserved it, but because of God's sovereign grace. He blessed them for a purpose—that purpose was that they might produce a people (harvest) of righteousness (cf. Amos 3:2; Deut. 26:19; 28:9-10, etc.). But they wanted to have what God gave them for themselves and produce nothing for Him. There is strong emphasis in this parable on the grace, and long-suffering of God. The most touching picture of God's love is the sending of His Son to plead with these criminals. But these wicked workers wanted the whole "vineyard" for themselves (Mt. 21:38; Mk. 12:7; Lk. 20:14). It is true to life every day that man undertakes to take possession of his own life and the whole universe and tries to cast the Owner out. God is Owner, never forget that! (Ex. 19:5; I Chron. 29:14; Psa. 24:1ff.; 50:10-12; Jer. 27:5, etc.). He cannot be cast out!

Matthew notes that Jesus asked His audience, "When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to Him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits of their seasons." Luke adds, "When they heard this, they said, God forbid." How masterful the Great Teacher's method: He compels them to come to the only right and just conclusion and thus to judge themselves. As the truth of it all began to destroy the facade of their pretensions, they said, "Let it not be!" The Greek text has *Me genoito*, "God" is not in the original text—it is an English translation.

No truth is more plain in the Bible: The patience of God can be exhausted with impenitent men. There is a limit even to Divine grace. After the wicked husbandmen refused to acknowledge the Son and killed Him, no more

mercy could be shown. Why? Because God has reached the limits of what He can do and still leave man a free moral being. If men will kill the Incarnate Word, what else can God do? Man committed the greatest of crimes against God by rejecting Jesus Christ, His Son. The Jews, Jesus said, "filled up the measure of their fathers" (Mt. 23:29-39) and "finished the transgression" (Dan. 9:24), and were guilty of all murder from Abel to Christ.

Jesus had led this audience to the inexorable logic that God was going to reject the "wicked husbandmen." They knew who these husbandmen were! They cried out, "May it never happen!" Jesus then plainly declared that the wicked husbandmen were the Jewish nation which would reject its Messiah. Their rejection of the "corner stone" had been predicted by the Old Testament. Jesus quoted Psalm 118:22. In its original context the verse refers to the covenant nation, the Jews. God had chosen them to be the *typical* corner-stone in His preliminary redemptive program—but the heathen world rejected that. And while this Psalm had typical and symbolic application to the nation Israel, its ultimate reference, even when it was written, was to the Messiah Himself. The prediction of Isaiah the prophet (Isa. 28:16) indicates that it was not the nation Israel which was the ultimate "stone . . . the builders" would reject, for it would be the "builders" themselves (the rulers of Israel) who would reject the "precious cornerstone." God was laying by prophecy and type that stone even in Isaiah's day. Who else could that be but the Suffering Servant whom they would despise (Cf. Isa. 52:13—53:12). It may be, as Hobbs says, some Jewish scribes interpreted Psalm 118:22 as teaching the Messiah would be rejected by the builders and later become the stone which would join together two walls, but most modern Jewish interpretations of this verse applies the "stone" to national Israel, *only*. *Socino Commentary* (Jewish) on Psa. 118:22: ". . . Israel, despised by neighborly peoples, has been appointed by God to have an essential function to discharge in the construction of His kingdom on earth." cf. *Isaiah, Vol. III*, pgs. 277-280, by Paul T. Butler, College Press for notes on Jewish interpretation of the nation as the Messiah.

The "builders" (rulers of Israel) had been "rejecting" the messianic concept all the time God had been "laying" it! They rejected God's messengers, the prophets. These prophets kept insisting that a personal, humble, righteous, atoning, but suffering Messiah would come to rule in the minds and affairs of God's covenant people. The leaders of Israel kept on rejecting that teaching and those who taught it. They even killed some of the prophets who predicted such a Messiah. However obscure this passage may have been to the Jewish mind (more because of their own prejudice than its vagueness), Jesus fully expected the Jews of His day to have read it and understood it as applying to the Messiah. Matthew writes that Jesus said

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

here, "Have you never read in the scriptures: The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. . . ." It is significant that there is no text of the Old Testament more frequently quoted (6 or 7 times word for word) or paraphrased in the New Testament. That the Messiah (Jesus Christ) was God's "key-stone" is thoroughly documented in the Bible (cf. *Psa.* 118:22; *Isa.* 28:16; *Zech.* 4:7; 10:4; *Isa.* 8:14; *Acts* 4:11; *I Pet.* 2:6, 7; *Eph.* 2:20; *Rom.* 9:33). The "key-stone" of man's relationship to God is a Person, Jesus, not a religious system.

The term, "head of the corner" is an interesting term. The "head of the corner" is the "key-stone" to an arch. In olden days, the procedure for building an archway out of stone was to construct the two sides first and the final, critical stone to be placed into the arch was last, at the very center or apex of the rise (much like the great metal Arch was constructed in St. Louis, Missouri, a few years ago). This is the stone which is absolutely necessary for the completion of the "corner" or arch. Without this stone being put in place the whole archway falls. The arch was a fundamental architectural support for buildings, aqueducts, bridges and other construction of that day. The Jews cast the key-stone out and their building collapsed and The Stone destroyed them. When they cast off the crucial Stone to their becoming God's "building," they both stumbled over Him to their own destruction (cf. *I Cor.* 1:18-25) and He fell on them and crushed out their existence (cf. *Dan.* 2:44, 45; *Lk.* 21:5-33). Jesus plainly told this audience that the kingdom of God would be taken from the Jews and given to a *nation* producing the fruits of it (cf. *Mt.* 21:43). This "nation" would be the *new Israel*, composed of both Jew and Gentile, which would listen to the messianic message and believe (cf. *Acts* 13:46-48; 28:28). The new Israel would be a "new creation" (cf. *Gal.* 6:15, 16; *II Cor.* 5:11-21). The Jewish people had been offered the grace of God through the promised Messiah, but they killed their Messiah, and spurned God's grace. God had given them the privilege to work in His vineyard as husbandmen, but they felt no responsibility or gratitude to His graciousness and greedily schemed to take over God's vineyard for themselves. There is a great lesson here for all who have now been called by grace into the *new Israel*. Let no Christian presume to take over God's vineyard. His kingdom (the church) belongs entirely to Him. No men have ever been enthroned to rule over His kingdom. All men are servants—some faithful and some unfaithful. "Wild olive branches" grafted into the Tree, may as easily be broken off and thrown away as the natural branches were, if the wild ones become proud and arrogant (cf. *Rom.* 11:17-24). Indifference to the grace of God extended in Jesus Christ will be punished eternally. This is a fundamental issue of life.

There was no doubt in the minds of the chief priests and scribes as to the object of Jesus' condemnation. And He had condemned them from

their own Scriptures! They “perceived” that He had told this parable “against them.” The word against is *pros* in Greek and means “toward, at.” In other words, Jesus told this parable and it pointed directly at the rulers. Instead of contrition, repentance and seeking forgiveness, they tried to lay hands on Jesus right there. Apparently they made some overt move to take Jesus bodily and were prevented from doing so by the threats of the crowds listening intently to Jesus’ searching parable. These crowds had just proclaimed Jesus “the Son of David.” They would have assaulted the scribes and chief priests had they tried to arrest Him there. The rulers, afraid of the people, craftily postponed temporarily what they fully intended to do later. And in the meantime, they decided to confront Him with hard, “catch” questions which they hoped would destroy His image before the people. They planned to trap Jesus into giving an answer to a political or theological question which would make Him appear to be a seditionist, a traitor or a blasphemer. If they could do this, they could sway the multitudes into joining them in demanding His crucifixion.

SECTION 3

Religion and Government (20:20-26)

²⁰So they watched him, and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might take hold of what he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. ²¹They asked him, “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. ²²Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?” ²³But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, ²⁴“Show me a coin. Whose likeness and inscription has it?” They said, “Caesar’s.” ²⁵He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²⁶And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him by what he said; but marveling at his answer they were silent.

20:20-22 Subtlety: Jesus told the parable of the marriage feast (Mt. 22:1-14) before the Jewish rulers could regain their composure enough to start questioning Him. Soon after He finished this parable, they were ready with their question. The Pharisees had gone to discuss among themselves (Mt. 22:15) and join with the Herodians (Mt. 22:16; Mk. 12:13) to devise a plan of attack upon Jesus. The “Herodians” were influential men who were politically aligned with the Herod family in its campaign to retain the Jewish throne and to Romanize the Jewish culture. The Pharisees, of course, were philosophically in direct opposition to the Herodians. But they were true pragmatists when it came to any threat to their own

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

popularity. Jesus posed a crucial threat to Pharisaic influence, so the Pharisees would compromise their vows and convictions and join with the hated Herodians to destroy Jesus. All three gospel writers positively state the motives of the questioners in this first question as "entrapment," in order to get Jesus indicted by the Roman governor (Procurator). Matthew uses the Greek word *pagideusosin* which means literally, "that which grips, binds or snares," (Mt. 22:15). Luke says they sent "spies" (Gr. *egkathetous*, "those who hide in the bushes awaiting their prey"). They were probably some Pharisees they thought would not be recognized by Jesus. This group pretended (Gr. *hupokrinomenous*, "play a part, act, pretend" or "hypocrite") to be sincere (Gr. *dikaious*, "just or righteous"). What they said flatteringly about Jesus' honesty and candidness was true. No doubt they said it grudgingly, but they also said it with malice aforethought. They intended to seduce Him with flattery. Flattery is a dangerous thing both for the flatterer and the recipient. Flattery ". . . works ruin" (Prov. 26:28); "it does not help the flatterer" (Prov. 28:23); it is "exploitative" (Dan. 11:21-34; Prov. 29:5; Jude 16). Flattery should never be a part of Christian methods! (I Thess. 2:5). Jesus did not succumb to it.

This group was sure they had the perfect trap for Jesus. They asked Him one of the most loaded questions they could have asked at that time. It had both political and theological ramifications. They asked, "Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" Luke uses the Greek word, *phoron*, which means literally, "something brought to" Caesar, or a monetary tribute. Matthew and Mark use the word *kensos* from which we get the English word *census* and meant in Jesus' day, "poll tax." There were many taxes the Jews had to pay. Taxation, and especially by a foreign oppressor, was a very sensitive subject. The Jews paid the following taxes in Jesus' time:

1. Tributum Soil - Roman land tax
2. Tributum Capitis - Roman poll tax
3. Annona - Grain and cattle for Roman military
4. Publicum - Customs, sales and salt tax for Roman government
5. Temple Tax - Jewish tax for support of Temple
6. Synagogue Tax - Jewish religious-education tax
7. Herod's Tax - Taxation for Herod's public works

At first Rome permitted the Jews to coin all their own money without the image of Caesar on it. But Herod Antipas forced the Jews to strike a coin with Caesar's image upon it as an act of political flattery to the Emperor. Patriotic Jews resented this bitterly as forced humiliation and as a sign of the erosion of their national sovereignty. It was also a theological question as to whether any faithful Jew should pay taxes to a government attempting to paganize Jewish culture. The issue was highly volatile! The silver denarius was the tribute required of every Israelite by Rome. The inscription on

this coin read: "Tiberius Caesar, Emperor, Son of Divine Augustus, The Illustrious High Priest." When the Law of Moses was given there was no such circumstance for the Jews and so the Law said nothing about this. The Jews did pay tribute to foreign governments many times (cf. II Kings 17:3; 18:13-16; 23:33; II Chron. 28:21) before their captivities. They certainly paid taxes to the foreign governments in whose lands they dwelt during their captivities. And the Biblical record also documents that they paid tribute to foreign governments after their captivities and their return to Palestine (cf. Ezra 4:13). They certainly did not like it—they detested it. But tribute to Caesar was nothing new!

20:23-26 Skill: Jesus does not fall into the trap of flattery. He demonstrates the very wisdom and courage they tried to use as flattery. He does not allow Himself to be impaled on the horns of their supposed dilemma. They think if He says, "Yes, pay tribute to Caesar" they will be able to justly indict Him for being a traitor to His own nation. They think if He says, "No, pay no tribute to Caesar," they will be able to get Him indicted as a seditiousist against Rome. They apparently hoped He would say "No," because at His trial they accused Him (by lying) of forbidding to pay tribute to Caesar (Lk. 23:2). Jesus knew their malicious intentions and very skillfully corrects their question. They said, "give" (Greek, *dounai*); Jesus said, "pay" (Greek, *apodote*). Taxes to government are *paid* for the value of services received. Taxes are "dues" (Rom. 13:7) for services of enforcement of law and order and protection of inalienable human rights. There are two fundamental, inalienable (non-revocable) human rights granted by the Creator to all human beings: the sanctity of human life and the right to own property. These are sanctioned by the Bible itself from the very beginning. God had ordained the structures of human governments to protect those two basic rights by enforcement of restraint or capital punishment or restitution on evil doers and the approval of right-doers (cf. Rom. 13:1-7). No real conflict existed at the time of Jesus between the obligations of the Jews to God and Caesar since the Roman government permitted the Jews complete freedom to worship God as God had revealed and the Roman government maintained proper sanctions (laws) against murder and theft and enforced them. Thus Rome was carrying out, relatively, what God had ordained human governments to do—maintain law and order. The Romans had even allowed the Jews liberal measures of self-government. Jesus' answer, "Pay the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God," is perfect—broad enough to meet the need of any circumstance in which the believer may find himself.

Old Testament political theory and practice is more liberal than the traditions of the scribes. It may be summarized as follows:

- a. The Jews were obligated by the Law of Moses to support their theocratic government by offerings and taxes (see Leviticus and Deuteronomy).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- b. God decreed the Jews would have to support their demanded monarchy with taxes and military and civil service (I Sam. 8:9-18).
- c. The Old Testament prophets make it clear that God held all human governments (even pagan ones) responsible for maintenance of law and order, certain standards of morality, integrity to international treaties and sanctions (Isa. 10:5-19; 13-23; 36-39; Jer. 27:1-11; Dan. 4:27; 5:17-23; Amos 1:3-15, esp. 1:9; Obadiah 11-14, Esther, etc.).
- d. The Jews were told by the Lord to be subservient and not rebellious when they dwelt in the land of foreign people (Jer. 29:1-7). In fact, they were told to "seek the welfare" of those pagan lands in which they dwelt, and to pray for emperors and rulers (Ezra 6:10).
- e. Many Jews became important and influential officials in human governments (even in pagan ones), collecting taxes for pagan kings; Daniel and his three Hebrew companions; Nehemiah; Esther; Mordecai.
- f. Jews were commanded by the Law of Moses to enforce all kinds of sanctions, from capital punishment to personal restitutions for destruction of property. They had standing armies; fought wars against aggressors; assisted other nations in maintaining international law; and had a social welfare system built right into their religious and political structure.

The New Testament political theory and practice may be summarized as follows:

- a. In the New Testament Romans 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13-17; I Tim. 1:8, 9; 2:1-4; Titus 3:1, 2 are the outstanding passages on the Christian and human government. In Romans 12, Paul discusses the "rendering unto God" that which belongs to Him. And in Romans 13:1-7, Paul discusses rendering unto "Caesar" that which belongs to him. The New Testament *commands* (not merely suggests) that Christians obey governments which fulfill the functions outlined in the references cited above. The two main functions of human government are the protection of human rights by the maintenance of law and order; public works for the common good of society.
- b. Rationality itself insists there must be structured governments for the very existence of human social order.

(1) Axioms:

- (a) Law and its enforcement is necessary to the maintenance of social structure (cf. I Tim. 1:8, 9). If you doubt this just universalize anti-social behavior such as murder, robbery, rape, etc. What if there were no laws against these acts of social anarchy at all?

- (b) Where there are no sanctions (penalties) and where penalties are not executed (speedily), there really are no laws. Laws without penalties being executed are merely writings on paper (cf. Eccl. 8:11). This same principle applies to international laws!
- (c) Punishment must fit the crime. To sustain the majesty of the law against murder, there must be capital punishment (cf. Ex. 21:12).
- c. Revelation from God in the Bible commands that there shall be human governments:
 - (1) Government in general:
 - (a) Is ordained by God (Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13-17; Titus 2:15—3:2; Ezra 7:26; Ex. 22:28; Prov. 24:21, 22; Jer. 27:5-7).
 - (b) Is originated for God to execute His wrath on evil doers (Rom. 13:3, 4); to restrain the lawless (I Tim. 1:8, 9); to provide peace and tranquility so the world may come to know God's truth (I Tim. 2:2-4). The very first commandment God gave Noah by which to start the human race all over again after the flood was the order for capital punishment as the penalty against murder (Gen. 9:6).
 - (2) Government on international level:
 - (a) Nations which stand for peace, justice and tranquility, must arm themselves and ally one with the other against aggressive invasions of powerless peoples—even by declaring and fighting war if necessary.
 - (b) There are no specific New Testament scriptures to this effect, except the example of Paul appealing to the government of Rome for protection against the Jewish countrymen who wanted to kill him unjustly. But there are many Old Testament scriptures—and God does not change His principles (cf. Gen. 14:21-24; Josh. 8:1-29; I Sam. 30:1-31; Eccl. 3:8; Jer. 48:10; Dan. 5:17-28; Obadiah 10-14; Amos 1:9).
 - (c) There were a number of individuals serving in human governments even as law-enforcers who were Christians in the New Testament: Cornelius, Sergius Paulus, Caesar's own household, Erastus, the Philippian jailor. John the Baptist told certain soldiers not to extort, but he did not tell them to resign from the army to please God.

Any discussion of Jesus' reply to the question of "tribute" usually brings up the problem of civil disobedience. Our clearest Biblical examples of civil disobedience are found in Acts 4:19-20; 5:20; Daniel 1 and 6; and Exodus 1 and 2 (Jochebed). It is clear that Paul and Jesus did not acquiesce in the face of illegal treatment (Acts 23:1-10; John 18:19-23). Paul's attitude

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

toward governmental authority is indicated in his appealing to his Roman citizenship for *protection*, (Acts 16:37-40; 22:25-29; 26:32). Paul was so conscientious to maintain the proper structure to social order through human government he even advocated capital punishment for himself if it could be sustained that he was guilty of a capital crime (Acts 25:10-12). *Civil disobedience must not be taken lightly!* It is a desperate act to be taken only when all other means fail. The Christian is bound to say that the law of God takes precedence over the law of man, *if the two are in clear, unequivocal conflict*. But the Christian must be very certain that there is an irreconcilable conflict before he takes the drastic step of disobeying civil law—whether he lives under a pagan ruler like Nero or one who espouses Christianity. The devil would like nothing better than to create civil anarchy in the name of Christian civil disobedience! Jehovah is a God of order, peace, discipline and obedience. He does not condone anarchy and social disorder (I Cor. 14:33) and especially so in His own kingdom, the church! Of course, God does not condone compromise of His commandments, either. God has instituted the authority of the home, the church and the state. Man's individual feelings do not supersede any of these. They are not to be violated on the authority of man, but can only be superseded by the higher law of God. What about "turning the other cheek" (Mt. 5:38-45)? That is forbidding *individual* retaliation. No man, especially a Christian, has the right to hand out individual vengeance. God has ordained human governments to meet out vengeance on His behalf (cf. Rom. 12:18 through 13:7). Why did Jesus tell the disciples to get swords (Lk. 22:35-38)? Two swords were enough to allow the disciples to *defend* themselves against the imminent mob-violence, but not enough to start a war of vengeance on Jesus' enemies. What about Peter's use of the sword in the garden of Gethsemane (Jn. 18:10-12; Mt. 26:51-54)? Jesus answered three ways: (a) I must drink the cup appointed Me; (b) If this were the time for power against My enemies I could call legions of angels; (c) Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword: Jesus meant to teach Peter not to take the law into his own hands and to predict that the murderous Jews would soon perish by Roman swords. God does a better job of avenging through His use of human governments than the individual could ever do.

A great amount of human speculation has been done on the question of religion and government. Jesus answered the Pharisees and the Herodians skillfully and succinctly. His very concise answer infers He expected His Jewish listeners to know there was a precise Biblical answer. He knew that God had revealed Himself thoroughly on the subject in the Old Testament scriptures. They should know exactly what belonged to Caesar and what belonged to God without any further details from Him! We also believe that the Bible is clear enough and thorough enough that any believer may

know what his responsibility is to both Caesar and God. There can be no equivocation on this great issue of life by the Christian. The Christian can have only one conscience about church and state—that is the one which the Bible delineates! For more discussion on this subject see the special study, “The Christian and War,” *Isaiah, Vol. 2*, by Paul T. Butler, pgs. 72-82, College Press.

In Christ’s brief answer, He laid the foundation for the principle of the separation of Church and State. Neither should replace or control the other. They may and do have mutual obligations. The State should maintain a peaceful and tranquil society in which the Church is free to do its work. The Church should produce the kind of character which will mean good citizenship. One sharp dividing line exists: neither should control the other or meddle in its affairs. When that prevails, society is blessed.

Not only could the Pharisees not trap Him into some *faux pas* and turn the multitudes against Him, they were so astounded and amazed at the truthfulness and skill of His answer they were dumbfounded—they were silenced! They dared not pursue the subject further. What Jesus had said was complete.

SECTION 4

Resurrection and the Grave (20:27-40)

27 There came to him some Sadducees, those who say that there is no resurrection, ²⁸and they asked him a question, saying, “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies, having a wife but no children, the man must take the wife and raise up children for his brother. ²⁹Now there were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and died without children; ³⁰and the second ³¹and the third took her, and likewise all seven left no children and died. ³²Afterward the woman also died. ³³In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had her as wife.”

34 And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; ³⁵but those who are accounted worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶for they cannot die any more, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him.” ³⁹And some of the scribes answered, “Teacher, you have spoken well.” ⁴⁰For they no longer dared to ask him any question.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

20:27-33 Rationalizations of Humanism: The next group coming to try to destroy Jesus' image with the people were the Sadducees. They also had a "catch" question which they believed would be unanswerable. They fully expected to destroy Jesus' reputation as a teacher in the eyes of the people. Their question dealt with the most crucial issue of human life: Is there life after death?

The sect of the Sadducees were the humanists of the Jewish religious hierarchy. Most Sadducees were priests and their sect likely originated with Zadok, the famous priest of David's day (cf. II Sam. 15:24; I Kings 1:32; Ezek. 40:46; 43:19; 44:15; 48:11). Their name probably comes from the Hebrew word *tzaddikim* which means literally, "righteous ones." It may have been a sarcastic nickname given to them by others or a boastful one given by themselves. They believed in preserving the nation by intelligence, diplomacy and prudence. They asserted Jews need keep only the "essential" parts of the Mosaic Law (the so-called 613 great principles) and in everything where Moses did not speak they might act according to "the requirements of the time." They were pragmatic toward the attempts of the Seleucid (Syrian) conquerors to Hellenize the Jewish culture during the Maccabean era (300-100 B.C.). Sadducees were wealthy, controlled the Temple and its services, but were in direct opposition in almost every issue with the Pharisees. In Jesus' day, though they secretly hated the Romans, for the good of their nation they believed it was better to make the best of their situation and go along with most anything the Romans demanded. They were the aristocratic party; they did not believe in Divine providence, miracles or angels. They did not believe in a resurrection from the dead (cf. Acts 23:7, 8). They were suspicious of one another and had no group loyalty like the Pharisees had. They renounced all the traditional interpretations and practices of the Pharisees; accepted only the Pentateuch; they insisted on a rigidly literal application of Mosaic Law which led to judicial severity without mercy and made themselves unpopular with the common people.

The Sadducees came to Jesus with a hypothetical question which was probably one of the stock arguments they used against the Pharisees who undoubtedly had a great deal of difficulty providing an answer to it. They proposed the riddle of a woman married to seven husbands who all preceded her in death without ever giving the woman a child. The woman eventually died also, of course. The poser no one was able to answer was, "Whose wife will she be in the resurrection, since she had seven husbands." The Sadducees started, of course, with the *a priori* that the doctrine of immortality was an absurdity and then made up an absurd illustration to prove it. The careful student will note the Sadducees arranged their story so all the woman's husbands were brothers making it conform to the Levirate law (Deut. 25:5, 6). They probably thought this would give the added impact

of inferring the Law of Moses denied immortality because the Law made life after death an impossibility. If a child had been born in the illustration to one of the husbands, it might have solved the question as to whose wife she would be in heaven—craftily they omit children.

20:34-40 Revelations from Heaven: Both Matthew and Mark record Jesus' first words in answer to this challenge as: "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God" (Mt. 22:29; Mk. 12:24). All humanists make the unforgiveable mistake of *a priori* rejection of the scriptural record as unworthy of consideration in the subject of life after death. The Bible claims to be an accurate documentation of historical events. It demands to be tested. If its historicity can be established by all the accepted canons of historical verification, it deserves to be studied and believed. The Sadducees were either innocently ignorant or deliberately ignorant of what the Old Testament said about life after death. They were probably like those people described by Peter who "deliberately ignored the facts" concerning the flood (II Peter 3:5). The Old Testament says this about life after death:

- a. There are actual, documented cases of resurrection from death in the Old Testament (cf. I Kings 17:22; II Kings 4:35; 13:21).
- b. There are documented cases of "translation" from this life to the next life without the experience called death (one in the Pentateuch) (cf. Genesis 5:22-24; II Kings 2:11).
- c. There is one case, well documented by eyewitnesses, of the reappearance of a man (Samuel) after he had died (I Sam. 28:12-19).
- d. There are many declarations in the Old Testament of immortality and eternity: (cf. II Sam. 12:15-23; Psalms 16:8; 23:4-6; Isaiah 53:10-12; Ecclesiastes 3:11; 12:5-14; Job 19:25, 26; Exodus 3:6).
- e. The statements in Genesis concerning the patriarchs who died and were buried, and were "gathered to their people" (cf. Gen. 25:8; 35:29) infer immortality. This term is constantly distinguished from death and burial and denotes the reunion in Sheol (place of departed spirits) with family and friends who have gone there before.

Jesus also told the Sadducees they were ignorant of the power of God. This becomes a problem at times even for those who have accepted the historicity and integrity of the Biblical record. The Christians in Corinth to whom Paul wrote two letters had this problem. They said, "Since we have no earthly experience by which to determine what kind of body we will have in the resurrection we have doubts that there will be a resurrection." Paul told them, essentially, just what Jesus said here; God has the power to do in the next life what He has never done in the earthly life. The fundamental ignorance of man is his presumption that the life after death, if there is one, would have to be like this life. That is because man wants to reject anything outside his own experience lest he find out he is

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

not his own sovereign. Man does not want to admit there is another Sovereign beyond himself able to do things he himself is not able to do. An all-powerful, all-wise, supernatural God has power to transcend and overcome all the inadequacies and incongruities of this existence by creating another existence, different and everlasting, yet incorporating the best of this one. This was what Jesus tried to convey in His answer to the Sadducees.

Jesus said there would be no marriage or sexual intercourse in heaven. Procreation will not be necessary to the survival of the human race there because those worthy to attain to the resurrection from the dead will be immortal, never dying, like the angels. If we may trust what God has revealed (however little and dim it may be) concerning the next life, we know life and personal intercourse in heaven will be much more thrilling and sensational than any fleshly sexual intercourse could ever be in this life. The apostle Paul was convinced that the next life would be "very far better" than any experience in this life (cf. Phil. 1:21-23). C. S. Lewis wrote some of his opinions about life after death. Here are some excerpts from *The Joyful Christian*, by C. S. Lewis—we think they are appropriate to this text:

Resurrection of the body: What the soul cries out for is the resurrection of the senses. Even in this life matter would be nothing to us if it were not the source of sensations. . . . Memory as we know it is a dim foretaste . . . of a power which the soul . . . will exercise hereafter. At the present we tend to think of the soul as somehow inside the body. But the glorified body of the resurrection as I conceive it—the sensuous life raised from its death—will be inside the soul. As God is not in space but space is in God. . . .

Intercourse in the Afterlife: Our present outlook of the absence of physical, sexual intercourse in heaven is like that of a small boy who, on being told that the sexual act was the highest bodily pleasure, should immediately ask whether you ate chocolates at the same time. On receiving the answer, "No," he might regard the absence of chocolates as the chief characteristic of sexuality. In vain would you tell him that the reason why lovers in their sexual raptures do not bother about chocolates is that they have something better to think of. The boy knows chocolate. He does not know the "better" thing that excludes it.

We know the sexual life; we do not know, except in glimpses, the "better" thing, which in heaven, leaves no room for the lesser sensation.

In denying that sexual life, as we now understand it, it is not necessary to suppose that the distinction of sexes or personalities will disappear. . . . What is no longer needed (sexual distinction) for biological purposes may be expected to survive for splendor.

Heaven: Dance and game *are* frivolous, unimportant down here; for down here is not their natural place. Here, they are a moment's rest from the life we are placed here to live. But in this world everything is upside down. That which, if it could be prolonged here, would be a truancy, is likeliest that which in a better country is the End of Ends. *Joy* is the *serious* business of Heaven. . . . At the resurrection of the body . . . once again the birds will sing and the waters flow, and lights and shadows move across the hills, and the faces of our friends laugh upon us with amazed recognition.

For these reasons, and many more sublime than even C. S. Lewis might imagine, Jesus rebuked the Sadducees for not believing in the power of God to make the next life far beyond the limitations of this one. It is significant that in answering the Sadducees Jesus did not refer to Pharisaic traditions, Greek philosophy, nor even to His own authority (as He did in the Sermon on the Mount), but to the Scriptures! He, of course, was God in the flesh and author of the Scriptures. His deity was, at that point, an excusable stumbling to the Jews. He had every right to insist they believe in life after death merely on His "say-so," but giving them the benefit of the doubt about His identity, He appealed to the divine record. They could have no excuse for rejecting the Old Testament—its divine origin was the accepted basis for their existence as a nation and all their hopes for a future messianic relationship to God. Its historicity and integrity had been established by thousands of years of supernatural demonstration to their ancestors. So Jesus cited the Pentateuch itself as the authority for believing in life after death. At the burning bush Moses quoted God as saying that He *is* the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:6). All of these patriarchs had been dead for centuries before Moses, yet God said they were living presently with Him. God is not the God of the annihilated or dead—but of the living.

There are still humanists today denying life after death. The *Humanist Manifesto* of 1933, updated 1973 and called *Humanist Manifesto II*, says, "We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural. . . . Humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves. Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. . . . The universe is self-existing and not created. The mind or soul does not exist apart from the body. . . ." Avowed humanist, Corliss Lamont, wrote in the magazine, *The Humanist*, March-April 1980, "Humanists live for actions, ideals on this Earth in our one and only life. Heaven must be built in this world or not at all. . . . While we're here, let's live in clover, for when we're dead, we're dead all over."

This is still the most crucial issue in the life of finite man—life after death. Upon the answer to this issue depends true love, morality, meaning,

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

purpose and every human relationship. The only viable answer continues to rest upon the historical integrity and credibility of the Bible for it claims to be the only and final revelation of God concerning this life and the *next*! One need only compare the after-life concepts of the religions of human origin with that of Christ to appreciate the Biblical revelation. The Buddhist "nirvana" is an alleged state of non-existence; the Hindu after-life involves an endless cycle of re-incarnations into this world of imperfection and tribulation; the Islamic "paradise" is a place of sexual promiscuity and fleshly indulgence. Even orthodox Jews today believe that "some day a Jew will appear who will announce the end of the world as we know it and the establishment of the kingdom of God, in which finally the lion will lay down with the lamb. This Jew, and he will be a person, not an incarnation of God, as if such a thing were possible, is called *Mashiach*, or Messiah. When he arrives there will be a resurrection of the dead, called in Hebrew, *T'chiat Ha-metim*, and all the resurrected of the Jews will gather in Israel, there to live forever. *Mashiach* will be a descendant of the house of David and will be announced by Elijah the Prophet. . . . Nevertheless, if one were to say, 'While not denying what the sages have said, I have no belief concerning any aspect of the life after death or the world to come; all I believe is that my soul is in the hands of God and my faith is in Him' such a Jew would not be considered a heretic, even by the most pious. Much more important than speculation about the afterlife is the acceptance of the revelation of the Torah, which is entirely concerned with life and the living." *Living Jewish*, by Michael Asheri, pub. Everest House, pg. 196. The gospel of Christ is as relevant for the Jews today as it was when Jesus pointed out to the Sadducees that the Torah teaches life after death as a fact and a fundamental tenet of true faith in God. For more information on Old Testament teaching on life after death see special study, "The Future Life," *Isaiah, Vol. II*, by Paul T. Butler, College Press, pgs. 287-299.

The Lord's reply to the Sadducees destroyed the last "stronghold" of His enemies. And even the scribes, personally taking pleasure in His humiliation of the Sadducees, dared not ask Him any more questions. They were at least wise enough to see that from then on every trap laid for him would only give Him another opportunity to manifest His divine wisdom and destroy their pretensions. They give up this method of attack.

SECTION 5

Rationale of Christ's Glory (20:41-47)

41 But he said to them, "How can they say that the Christ is David's son? 42 For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,
'The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand,

⁴³till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.' ⁴⁴David thus calls him Lord; so how is he his son?"

45 And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶"Beware of the scribes, who like to go about in long robes, and love salutations in the market places and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁷who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

20:41-44 Lord: Immediately after hearing Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, a lawyer (also a Pharisee) came to Jesus with a sincere desire to know the greatest commandment in the law. Matthew and Mark record Jesus' answer (Mt. 22:34-40; Mk. 12:28-34), but Luke omits it and goes on to record the question Jesus put to the Pharisees concerning the identity of the Messiah.

This quotation and question of Jesus from Psalm 110 is probably His clearest claim to deity recorded by the synoptic gospels. John's gospel, of course, records quite a number of Jesus' clear claims to deity, but the Synoptists are more interested in documenting His claims to be the Messiah.

Jesus knew that He would soon be arrested and charged with blasphemy because at the beginning of His second year of public ministry the Jews became aware He was making Himself equal with God (cf. Jn. 5:18). Now, with the end of His life on earth very near, it was imperative that He prove to the Jews from their own Scriptures that if He was the Messiah—and the multitudes here at the Passover-time were unquestionably shouting that He was—He was also Lord God. His claims to be Messiah, however opaque or transparent at different times, was not what enraged the Jewish rulers. They did not, of course, concede to His messiahship since He did not fit their materialistic preconceptions about the Christ. But they never threatened Him about that—for to have done so would have agitated the multitudes against them. What the Pharisees and scribes continually threatened Him for was His claims to deity. Jewish theologians, for the most part, were never able to understand that the Messiah was to be God Incarnate, and they still do not believe it (see comments on previous text). All Jews are able to answer the first question (as Matthew 22:41, 42) Jesus asked, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?" They would all answer, "The son of David!" But they cannot, or will not, answer the second question Jesus asked, "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit (Mt. 22:43), calls him Lord. . . ." or as Luke recorded it, "For David himself says, in the book of Psalms, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet. David thus calls him Lord; so now is he his son?" In other words, How can the Messiah be both the son of David and Lord of David?

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

The thrust of Jesus' second question was to demonstrate (from David's writings) that the Messiah was to be more than David's son—indeed the Messiah was to be David's Lord God. The statement of David in Psalm 110:1 can be understood in no other way. There David represents Jehovah speaking to David's Lord (Heb. *Adonai*), who is also David's Son, enthroning Him at Jehovah's right hand (co-equal). Jesus is pleading with the Pharisees, and scribes to open their hearts to their own Scriptures and believe what God had centuries before promised. Any one of them could have grasped the revelation of God about the Incarnation from their own prophets, had they really wanted to, for some prophecies, at least, were plain enough, (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2; Malachi 3:1-3).

This was the most pertinent question, then, or ever. It went to the very heart of the animosity those Jewish rulers had for Jesus. Had they acknowledged the Messiah to be God they would not have been bothered by politics, immortality or keeping God's commandments. It is still the most pertinent question. Men must make up their minds today as to the identity of Jesus of Nazareth. Essentially, the question Jesus asked here is the same question He knew He had to have settled in the minds of the apostles when He asked at Caesarea Philippi, "Who do you say that I am"? (cf. Lk. 9:20). The book of Hebrews in the New Testament, written by the apostle Paul, a former Pharisee, gives a thrilling exposition of Psalm 110 (cf. Heb. 5:6; 7:17; 7:20-22) teaching from it both the humanity and deity of Jesus and His eternal priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek. One would expect Jewish priests and scribes to have seen this from their own scriptures, but it was not their desire to do so (see special study, this volume, *The Messianic Hope*, pages 461-466, and notes from *Isaiah, Vol. III*, by Paul T. Butler, College Press, pgs. 277-280 and pgs. 415-418).

It is significant that in Jesus' question about the identity of the Messiah, He added an answer to each of the previous questions asked of Him. To the Sadducees, who did not accept any of the Old Testament except the Pentateuch, Jesus said (as Matthew records, Mt. 22:43) that David wrote Psalm 110 by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To the Pharisees who rejected the concept that the Messiah could be God Incarnate Jesus said Psalm 110 predicts the Messiah will be David's Lord (God in the flesh). For the multitudes it is not only a revelation of His deity, but also a warning to those who are plotting to crucify Him of the terribleness of the deed.

20:45-47 Legislator: Luke now summarizes Jesus' great denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees which Matthew records in much detail (cf. Mt. 23:1-39). The details concerning Jewish scribes and Pharisees would not be of much interest to Luke's Gentile readers, and since Matthew had treated the subject thoroughly and Luke himself had documented an earlier denunciation of the scribes by Jesus (Lk. 11:37-54), he simply summarizes here.

Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees means He claims the right to judge men's motives and actions. His rationale for deity comes from scripture (Psa. 110:1ff.) and from His very evident power to actually discern the thoughts and intents of men's hearts as He does here.

"Beware," He commands, to the crowds, His disciples, and even to the Pharisees themselves, "of the scribes. . . ." Before the nation could be won to Jesus' spiritual kingdom, the false teachers and their worldliness and hypocrisy had to be exposed for what it was. He challenged His disciples and the multitudes to disown the whole false system the Pharisees had imposed on the nation. These religious leaders loved the wrong thing. The motive for everything they did was self-centered. Pride and power were the motives for their actions. They loved to go about in long robes, to be saluted in the market places as "Rabbi, Master," and the chief seats of honor in the synagogues and at feasts. Pride and lust for power always produces unmercifulness and greed. They "devoured" widows' houses, all the while making a pretense to be very religious by reciting long prayers. Josephus records that the Pharisees had especial influence over wealthy women accepting hospitality and rich presents from them, devouring their riches for their own political purposes. The wife of Pheroras, brother of Herod the Great, paid the fines of thousands of Pharisees who had been fined for refusing to swear loyalty to Caesar. The Talmud gives evidence of the plundering of widows. The Pharisees and scribes claimed a very exact knowledge of the law and a perfect observance of it. They pretended to stand for justice toward the poor, friendship for the distressed and were willing to aid those who were in financial straits. They could therefore induce widows and poor people to commit the management of their property to them as guardians and executors, and then took advantage of them and defrauded them. The Talmud records the warning given by Alexander Jannaeus (Maccabean ruler) to his wife on his death-bed against trusting any advice of the Pharisees.

These are the last recorded words Jesus ever spoke to the Pharisees and scribes (except at His trial), and they were words of judgment and condemnation. And even these words are spoken with a broken heart, hoping at the last moment to drive them to repentance. He can do no more. If they now refuse both their own scriptures and His demonstrations of deity, judgment must come and they will receive the greater condemnation for they have been granted the greater privilege and have spurned it! Truly, they "filled up the measure of their fathers" (Mt. 23:32) and Jesus was forced by their obstinacy to "forsake" them and leave them with their "house desolate" (Mt. 23:37-39).

So ended the public prosecution of Jesus. The Pharisees and Sadducees never attempted to publicly discredit Jesus again. He answered all their questions with divine wisdom and, what they thought would ruin His

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

reputation, began to work toward their own ruin. It was a tragi-comedy of trifles. The Pharisees and Sadducees and Herodians pretended to raise the fundamental issues of life. Jesus revealed that the fundamental issue of human life is to identify and surrender to the God who became Incarnate in the Son of David. Everything else in man's life is peripheral. To put anything before this is trafficking in trifles.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. Would referral to John's baptism still be a good answer to anyone (especially religious leaders) today who would challenge Jesus' identity and authority?
2. Is the parable of wicked husbandmen who refused to give the Owner his due only applicable to the Jewish nation—or could it be applied to anyone now? Who?
3. If Jesus expected the Jews of His day to have read and understood the Old Testament prophecies referring to the Messiah and to have seen their fulfillment in Him, what does He expect of Jews today? What about Gentiles?
4. Why is the "key-stone" of man's relationship to God a Person, Jesus, instead of a religious system, or "plan of salvation"?
5. How did Jesus react to the flattery of the Pharisees and Herodians? What should the Christian do about flattery?
6. How should a Christian look upon paying taxes to his government?
7. Would it be wrong for a Christian to serve in the armed forces of his country? Just what should be "rendered to Caesar" by the believer?
8. Where should the Christian stand on "civil disobedience"?
9. What is the basis upon which most unbelievers reject the idea of life after death?
10. What is the only viable evidence that there is life after death? Why?
11. If there is no marriage in heaven, how can there be any enjoyment?
12. Why should the Jews of Jesus' day have understood that the Messiah was to be God in the flesh? Why didn't they? Is that a problem for people today? How is it to be answered?

Special Study

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

by Paul T. Butler

The Old Testament made many glorious promises in connection with the Messianic hope. Isaiah, chapters 40-66; Daniel 9:24-27; Micah 4-7; Zechariah 9-14.

When the Jews returned from their captivities (cir. 536-444 B.C.) it was with this hope in their hearts. They believed Jehovah would rule the land directly through a son of David, he would enforce the Law and promote the ritual religion. Some looked for Zerubbabel to fulfill this.

Time after time their fulfillment of this hope was frustrated by some foreign (Ptolemies and Seleucids and Romans) or some home-grown (Hasmonean and Herodian) oppression.

As the physical, earthly accomplishment of this hope became less evident (i.e., accomplishment through natural events), the anticipation increased that Jehovah would intervene in a great crisis of the cosmos (see Jn. 12:31 where Jesus uses that very phrase in Greek in connection with His death on the cross) and effect a deliverance of all the righteous Jews (*not* Hellenistic Jews) and God would suddenly, secretly almost, institute the messianic age.

This hope had never been so much alive, so vivid, nor its fulfillment so urgently awaited, as it was in the first centuries B.C. and A.D.—a time of sadness and deep, tormenting, national humiliation.

There was a body of literature that arose between the Old Testament and New Testament that expressed the Jewish ideas of the expected messianic age called the Jewish Apocrypha (apocalyptic in nature). The Sybilline Oracles, Book III (150 B.C.); the Book of Enoch (164 B.C.); The Psalms of Solomon (48 B.C.) are the most graphic. The Mishna, Talmud and Targums (rabbinic writings written after Christ but expressing traditions in oral form before Christ) are also valuable for determining the messianic ideas of first century people. They testify generally that the Messiah will:

- a. Attain for the people a literalized fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament prophets (physical prosperity; physical conquest of enemies; physical restoration of Judaism).
- b. Defeat Jewish enemies and force them to serve the Jews.
- c. Restore all Jews to their "land" forever.
- d. Institute an era of Mosaic purity (as interpreted, of course, by the rabbis).

Josephus speaks of a number of men before and after Jesus who pretended to be the Messiah, obtained followers, fought Jewish enemies, and usually ended up slain in battle or executed. Josephus says "there was an ambiguous prophecy (probably referring to Dan. 9:24-27) in the Holy

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Scriptures which told the Jews that in those times a man of their nation would become the master of the world" Wars, 6:312.

Some believed in Jesus' day in a personal Messiah. This belief took *four* forms:

1. An Angel: As earthly powers continued to oppress the Jews with more intensity it was inevitable that the concept of the Messiah should become more and more transcendent. Many despaired of human deliverance and turned to hope in an angelic being coming from heaven with cosmic, supernatural power. See the Similitudes of Enoch (I Enoch, 164 B.C.) where the Son of Man is presented as a heavenly being with no prior human existence . . . his face has the appearance of a man and yet it is "full of graciousness like one of the holy angels." (46:1ff.).

Remember the devil's attempt to get Jesus to show off some supernatural, angelic power . . . "if he was the Son of God. . . ." Matt. 4:5, 6.

2. A Prophet: Some interpreted Malachi 3:1ff. and 4:5 as referring to the Messiah himself rather than the forerunner—thus he would be a prophet like Elijah. Many of the disciples of John the Baptist refused to abandon their belief in him as the true Messiah and perpetuated into the 2nd century A.D. a sect which held up John the Baptist messiahship in opposition to Jesus (The Mandaens; see Ency. Britt. Vol. 4 and 10).

The Samaritans were expecting a prophetic messiah, Jn. 4:19-26. Many of the Jews thought this also, Jn. 7:40; Mt. 16:14; Jn. 1:21; I Macc. 4:46; etc. Jn. 6:14.

3. A Priest: In later interbiblical history there appears the idea of a messianic priest. When the offices of High Priest and prince of Israel were combined in Simon the Maccabean, impetus was given to the development of such hope. But as the High Priesthood became more and more secularized and corrupted, this view seems to have found less and less acceptance. See the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (110 B.C.).

4. A King: By far the most popular view was a Messiah-warrior-king. He would appear as a political champion. Jews from all over the world would rally to his side, sweep the pagans from Palestine, subdue the world, plunder its riches, kill all idolaters and make proselytes and servants of the rest.

See this view in all the earliest Jewish apocryphal writings, and, Mt. 21:9, 15 (cf. Zech. 9:9, 10); Mt. 22:42; Mk. 13:35;

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

Lk. 20:41; Jn. 6:15; I Macc. 2:57; Psalms of Solomon 17:5, 23, etc.

Even this popular view expected the Messiah's origin to be shrouded in mystery (Jn. 7:21ff.) and His mission to be one of cosmic supernaturalisms, Mt. 12:38; Jn. 7:31.

Remember the temptation of the devil to make Jesus an earthly king.

There were many who arose pretending to be the Messiah. *Theudas* had 400 followers but he was slain (Acts 5:36; Josephus, *Antiq.* 20:97ff.). *Judas the Galilean* was also slain (Acts 5:37; Josephus, *Antiq.* 18:23). *An Egyptian* gained about 30,000 followers, (Josephus, *Wars* 2:261ff. and Acts 21:37, 38). Menachem bar-Judah and Simeon bar-Giora (*Wars*, 2:17:8; *Wars*, 4:9:7 respectively), and many others after Jesus were hoped-for messiahs.

There was great expectancy in the first century A.D., but there was also great confusion and misunderstanding concerning the Messiah and His kingdom. Jesus' most frustrating ministry was to try to *convert*, literally change, the confusion, materialism and patriotic provincialism of the messianic people into what it was really intended to be by God as predicted in the Old Testament prophets.

WHAT DID THE PEOPLE OF JESUS' DAY THINK OF THE MESSIAH? (Our *best* sources are the Gospel records themselves.)

1. Mt. 2:4-6: He would be born in Bethlehem—the scholars knew this much.
2. Lk. 2:25, 38: Some were “looking for” the “consolation” and “redemption” of Israel and Jerusalem.
3. Lk. 3:15-18: Many thought John the Baptist might be the Messiah.
4. Mt. 4:1-11; Jesus' temptations indicate the popular messianic concept.
Mk. 1:12-13;
Lk. 4:1-13;
5. Jn. 1:19-28: Jewish leaders knew a connection between Elijah and Messiah and thought John the Baptist might be one or the other.
6. Jn. 1:45-51: Nathanael did not believe the Messiah would come from Nazareth.
7. Jn. 4:5-26: Samaritans believed when Messiah came he would settle religious disputes.
8. Lk. 4:16-31: Jews of Galilee did not accept Messianic prophecies of Isaiah 61 being made available to Gentiles.
9. Mt. 9:1-8; Apparently the Jews did not think their Messiah would
Mk. 2:1-12; be God incarnate and able to forgive men's sins.
Lk. 5:17-26:

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

10. Mt. 9:10-14; Mk. 2:15-22; Lk. 5:29-39: Apparently Jewish rabbis did not think their Messiah would associate with publicans and sinners.
11. Mt. 11:2-19; Lk. 7:18-35: Messiah is called "The Expected One" (as in Similitudes of Enoch) by John the Baptist who apparently expected Him to be more militant than Jesus was.
12. Mt. 12:38: Jewish rulers insisted Jesus must show a "sign" to prove his messiahship.
13. Mt. 13:54-58; Mk. 6:1-6: People could not imagine Jesus as the Messiah because they knew his origins.
14. Jn. 6:14, 15: Messiah would be "The Prophet" and he must be crowned King.
15. Jn. 6:22-59: Jesus perceived the people wanted a bread-and-fish Messiah—one who would do a "work" to prove he was the Messiah.
16. Jn. 6:66-71: Jesus' disciples thought of the Messiah as "The Holy One of God."
17. Mt. 16:13-16; Mk. 8:27-29; Lk. 9:17-20: Disciples show that the people thought the Messiah would be Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets, perhaps. Peter would not believe the Messiah was to die Mt. 16:21-23; Mk. 8:31-33.
18. Mt. 17:10-13; Mk. 9:11-13: Elijah's coming must precede that of the Son of Man—a literal Elijah, perhaps.
19. Mt. 18:1-5; Mk. 9:33-37; Lk. 9:46-48: Disciples thought of messianic kingdom in terms of power struggles.
20. Jn. 7:2-9: Jesus' brothers expected him to prove his messiahship in Jerusalem in some public, spectacular, carnal demonstration of power.
21. Lk. 9:51-56: Disciples expect Messiah to punish those who reject him by fire from heaven.
22. Jn. 7:27: No one is supposed to know where the Messiah comes from—he is to appear suddenly—but he would perform enough signs for everyone to know him—not just the rulers.
23. Jn. 7:35: Messiah was not expected to go among the Jewish dispersion.
24. Jn. 7:40-43: Confusion about Messiah. Some thought he would be The Prophet from Galilee, others believed from Bethlehem.
25. Jn. 8:52, 53: Jewish scholars did not expect the Messiah to be an "eternal" personage.
26. Lk. 11:16: Messiah must show a sign from "heaven."

THE MESSIANIC HOPE

27. Lk. 12:54-59: Jews could not read the "signs" that their Messiah was to come in judgment upon their nation.
28. Jn. 9:13-34: Messiah must keep Sabbath according to their traditions.
29. Lk. 14:15: Jews were looking for a time of "eating" of banquets in the messianic kingdom as repayment for their troubles (cf. Isa. 25:6ff.).
30. Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:35-45: Mother of the sons of Zebedee understood the messianic kingdom to be one of position and power.
31. Jn. 12:20-36: Some believed the Messiah was to remain forever and not die.
32. Mt. 22:41-46; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44: Apparently the Jews did not conceive of the Son of David as also *David's Lord*!
33. Mt. 23:37—Lk. 24:1-4; Mk. 13:1-4; Lk. 21:5-7: Apparently the people did not think of the coming of the Messiah as a judgment upon Jerusalem and the nation. They did think of his coming as the end of the world and Jesus had to correct this view.
34. Mt. 26:51, 52; Jn. 18:10, 11: Peter thought of messianic kingdom as needing to be defended with swords.
35. Mt. 26:57-68; Mk. 14:53-65: Apparently the High Priest did not conceive of the Messiah or anyone else calling himself "God."
36. Jn. 18:28-38: Pilate understood Jesus to be an idealist—not an earthly king.
37. Lk. 23:51: Joseph of Arimathea "was looking for" the kingdom of God.
38. Lk. 24:13-32: Disciples despondent when Jesus did not "redeem" Israel according to their own hopes. Jesus, however, *expected* them to have a *spiritual* view of the Old Testament messianic promises and *rebuked* them for not having it.
39. Acts 1:6: Even after the resurrection the disciples had a somewhat earthly view of the kingdom of God.
40. Acts 6:8-15: The Jews would not accept any claimant to the messianic throne who would "change the customs which Moses delivered."

The humanistic, materialistic traditions of the Pharisees and Sadducees and others (Essenes, et al), kept the common people confused about the Messiah and his kingdom. Jesus actually did not convert a single person fully to His teaching of the Messiah and the kingdom. It was only after His death and resurrection and the Day of Pentecost that some of the Jews began to see it correctly (including His disciples). And even then, it took

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

some years before most of the Jews accepted the idea that the messianic kingdom was to be available to the Gentiles on the same basis as to Jews.

But the four gospel accounts testify to this:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, SON OF MARY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, IS INDEED THE ANOINTED (MESSIAH) OF JEHOVAH—THE PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING PREDICTED BY THE OLD TESTAMENT. AND HE IS THE MESSIAH OF ALL THE NATIONS!

For a résumé of modern Jewish messianic theology, see *Isaiah, Vol. III*, by Paul T. Butler, pub. College Press, Joplin, Mo., pgs. 277-280 and 415-418.

Chapter Twenty-one (21:1-38)

THE SON OF MAN PREDICTING THE END OF THE JEWISH NATION

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Is there any connection between Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees (Lk. 20:45-47 and Mt. 23:1-39) and His observation of those casting offerings into the Temple treasury (Lk. 21:1-4 and Mk. 12:41-44) and His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem (Mt. 24; Lk. 21; Mk. 13)?
2. Why did some speak to Jesus of the temple's noble stones and offerings (21:5)?
3. Who would come and what time would they say was at hand (21:8)?
4. What earthquakes and famines would precede the destruction of Jerusalem (21:10-11)?
5. How would armies surrounding Jerusalem "fulfill all that is written" (21:20-24)?
6. When would the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (21:24)?
7. Are verses 21:25-28 referring to the destruction of Jerusalem only?
8. What generation would not pass away (21:32)?
9. What "day" is referred to in 21:34?

SECTION 1

Presentment of Sion's Default (21:1-4)

21 ¹He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury; ²and he saw a poor widow put in two copper coins. ³And he said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; ⁴for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the living that she had."

21:1-2 Appearances: After His scathing denunciation of the Pharisees (Lk. 20:45-47 and Mt. 23:1-39) probably within the Court of Israel (where men only were allowed), Jesus walked down about 15 steps to the spacious Court of the Women and sat down near the place of the Treasury. The Greek word is *gazophylakion*, a combination of *gaza*, "thing stored," and *phylake*, "guarded." The Greek may be a translation of an Aramaic or Hebrew word *ginzaya* which also means, "treasure house." Solomon's temple treasuries were closely connected to the "porches" (cf. I Chron. 28:11). The Second temple also had treasuries (cf. Neh. 13:4ff.). In Herod's temple (the one of Jesus' day) the Women's Court was called the "treasury" because that is where the 13 bronze, trumpet-shaped boxes were placed

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

for the reception of the offerings of the worshippers. The boxes or chests were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, with their contents clearly marked on them; trumpets 1 and 2 were for the half-shekel Temple-tax for the current year and the year immediately past; trumpets 3 and 4 received the sin-offering money for the purchase of turtledoves by women who needed this particular sacrifice—the money was daily taken out and a corresponding number of turtledoves were offered; trumpet 5 contained offerings for the purchase of wood used in the temple altars, etc.; trumpet 6, offerings for the purchase of incense; trumpet 7, offerings for the golden vessels; if a man put aside a certain sum for a sin-offering, and any money was left over after its purchase, such money was to be cast into trumpet 8; and trumpets 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 were to receive any money of a worshipper left over from trespass-offerings, offerings of birds, the offering of the Nazarite, of the cleansed leper, and voluntary offerings. These chests were out in the open, accessible spaces of the Women's Court, but there was also a special treasury-chamber into which, at certain times, they carried the contents of the thirteen chests for safe-keeping. Mark's record of this incident says Jesus "watched" the multitude putting money into the treasury. Mark uses the Greek word *etheorei* (Mk. 12:41) which means His observation was not an accidental one but deliberate. He sat down purposely to observe the worshippers. What Jesus saw was a representation of the cancer of rebellion which was destroying the Jewish nation. He saw many rich putting in much—but their much was only a facade. He saw a poor, probably oppressed, widow putting in *all her living*. The many rich were only giving for appearances sake. Probably the reason the rich gave much was that the many coins would make a louder and longer sound sliding down the narrow openings of the bronze boxes and clanging into the flaring, trumpet-like bottoms. The widow put in two small copper coins. The Greek word for her coins is *lepta*; the word literally means, "peeled, fine, thin, small, light." It came to be used to designate a small copper coin, often mentioned in the Mishna as the smallest Jewish coin. Its value was about one-eighth of the Roman money, *as*, or about one-one hundred twenty-eighth of a *denarius*; one *denarii* constituted a day's wages in buying power for the common laborer then. Two "mites" or *lepta* would be worth about 60¢ in American coin today. What would 60¢ be compared to probably hundreds of dollars being cast into the treasury by the rich?

21:3-4 Actualities: If a "contributors-list" had been published in the "Temple News-letter" these two "mites" would probably be hidden in the "Miscellaneous Gifts" section, if listed at all! Yet out of the midst of all the *large* gifts by "important" people, the Son of God selected these two "mites" and held them up for all the world to see and for centuries of believers to marvel at and use to examine themselves. Contrasted with all the powerful and great people and over against all their hostility and

unbelief is this nameless widow and her insignificant coins. As God saw it, it was the most important thing that happened there on that Tuesday. The Lord's standard of values are out of this world! What Jesus said was "more" is exactly opposite from what the world says is "great." And why?—because of the motive, because of the attitude. Any amount given grudgingly, of necessity or out of coercion is an abomination before God (cf. II Cor. 9:5-8). On the other hand, "if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he has not," (II Cor. 8:12). These many rich people cast into the treasury boxes out of their abundance. The Greek word translated *abundance* is *perisseuontos* and may be translated superfluity, or, sometimes, *left-over* (see Mark 8:8). What these rich gave was what they had *left over* after they made sure their own needs and wants were secured (probably with a goodly portion also socked away in savings for "a rainy day"). It was an out and out manifestation of greed, selfishness, and, worst of all, mistrust in God's promises to supply every need. What these rich gave represented no sacrifice of self at all! There was nothing spiritual in their giving at all—it was all ritual and pretense. In giving only left-overs, even though it was *much*, they revealed their blatant disrespect for God's Law. This is the way Christ saw their offerings!

The widow put into the offering box, "more than all of them" because she gave when she was suffering privation and poverty herself. Not only did she give, she gave all she had to live on. The Greek word translated "living" is *bios* which is the word for physical life. Those two "mites" represented all that was between her and starvation! It is almost incredible that anyone would do such a thing as this widow did. If it were not in the Bible we could not believe it! This widow follows in the train of that godly widow in Elijah's day who had only a handful of meal and a little oil between starvation for herself and her son but by faith in God willingly shared it with the prophet, (I Kings 17:12-16).

What this widow did was probably scorned by the rich, but for Jesus it manifested her complete trust in the Father's word. Such a deed is evidence of belief in God like nothing else. This is the way the Macedonians gave (II Cor. 8:1-7)—"in their extreme poverty." Such faith "proves" our love (II Cor. 8:8, 24) and our obedience (II Cor. 9:13). Giving like this is "doing the work of God" (II Cor. 8:7). The widow's offering was sacrificial. Sacrifice means literally, "to slay and offer." This widow put self to death and offered self to God, totally. She gave all her living. God measures sacrifices and offerings not so much by what one gives as by what one keeps! He evaluates offerings not in terms of amount but in terms of devotion (II Cor. 8:12; 9:5, 7, 8). Her deed was altogether spiritual. She would not accept the philosophy that life consists in the things one possesses—that there is no life after death and that we live only in the realm

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

of the material existence. She put the glorification of God before her own physical life. She did so, right where she was, with what she had at that moment—not waiting until something more exciting and applaudable came along. She would never know what her last coin would accomplish—she would never be acknowledged by men or receive applause. But that was not her concern. She loved God and was grateful to God with *all* her being. She believed and trusted the First Commandment. The widow's offering shows the superficiality of the saying: "nine-tenths with God's blessing, equals more," and all those other pragmatic, materialistic motivations for tithing.

While Jesus waited and watched to see some fruit of godliness and respect for God's Law in the religious leaders of Israel in that dark and desolate hour, He saw in them only hypocrisy and contempt for God. But He did see one godly widow living in poverty, come to show there was still a small remnant of faith, real faith, in Israel. If Jesus were to write down what He sees in the church today, would it approximate what He saw in the Treasury (cf. Rev. 2:9 and 3:17)? What He saw in the Treasury indicated to Him that God's Zion, His redemptive nation, had defaulted on its call and covenant. Time was fast approaching when the terrible judgment of Jehovah must fall. They had rejected Him—He will reject them.

SECTION 2

Preliminary Signs of Destruction (21:5-19)

⁵And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, ⁶"As for these things which you see, the days will come when there shall not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." ⁷And they asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign when this is about to take place?" ⁸And he said, "Take heed that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. ⁹And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified; for this must first take place, but the end will not be at once."

¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. ¹²But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. ¹³This will be a time for you to bear testimony. ¹⁴Settle it therefore in your minds, not to meditate beforehand how to answer; ¹⁵for

I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; ¹⁷you will be hated by all for my name's sake. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your endurance you will gain your lives.

21:5-7 Predicted Catastrophe: The complexity of this text makes it imperative that the reader avail himself of a harmony of the gospel accounts as an aid to understanding it. First, it is important to know that immediately preceding Jesus' watching the widow's offering He uttered the following two eschatologically startling statements:

- a. He condemned the Pharisees, denouncing them as "sons of hell" (Mt. 23:15) and pronouncing upon them "all the blood" of the righteous shed upon the earth (Mt. 23:31-35). These were the "keepers" of the Hebrew system. Most Jews would consider their fall the end of the Jewish "world."
- b. He declared the "house" of Judaism *desolate* and *forsaken* (Mt. 23:36-39). This is terminology Jeremiah and Ezekiel used to warn their contemporaries of the Babylonian captivity and destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 19:8; Lam. 1:4; see Ezek. ch. 8-11).

After observing the widow's offering, Jesus preached the alarming sermon on Death and Life (John 12:20-50). He agonized over His own impending death (Jn. 12:27); He warned, "Now is the judgment (Gr. *crisis*) of this world (Gr. *cosmos*)"; He said the ruler of this world would be cast out (John 12:31); and He referred to the "last day" (Jn. 12:48). The statement, "Now is the *crisis* of this *cosmos*," was enough to precipitate the questions of the apostles about the destruction of Jerusalem. The word *cosmos* means "order, system, establishment." It was very plain to the apostles Jesus was predicting the destruction of the present Jewish order, involving the desolation and forsakenness of the Temple and the nation in that generation (Mt. 23:36). Matthew records that as Jesus left the temple His disciples came "to point out to him the buildings of the temple," (Mt. 24:1). Mark and Luke tell us they spoke to Him about how beautifully and wonderfully the Temple and the city was adorned with "noble stones and offerings." The inference is that the apostles were filled with incredulity and excitement in response to all these startling predictions. Some of the great stones of Herod's Temple were, according to Josephus, 25 cubits long, 8 cubits high and 12 cubits wide. Using 18 inches to a cubit one stone would be 38 ft. long, 12 ft. high and 18 ft. wide. Eight large-sized American automobiles (Ford, LTD) could be stacked

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

into those dimensions. The "offerings" were probably gold-plating on columns and the golden grape-vine decorating the huge doors of the Temple. When Jesus predicted "not one stone would be left upon another" it is not surprising that the apostles asked Him, "Tell us, when will this be? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (cf. Mt. 24:3; Mk. 13:4). The Greek word *sunteleias* is translated *close* (of the age) in Matthew 24:3—the word is more often translated, "consummation." The apostles were persuaded Jesus was talking about "the consummation of the age."

It is now necessary to comment briefly on rabbinical eschatology apparently current in Jesus' day. Jewish scribes and rabbis had divided their eschatology into three eras (more or less): (a) *Olam hazzeh*, the order then existing; (b) *Athid labho*, the age to come after that existing order; and (c) *Olam habba*, the world to come. In some rabbinic tradition, the age to come and the world to come blended into one. The *existing order* was to be succeeded by the "days of the Messiah" which would stretch into the *coming age* and end with the *world to come*. According to the rabbis, the birth of the Messiah would be unknown by his contemporaries; he would appear, carry on his work, then disappear—probably for 45 days; reappear, destroy the hostile powers of the world (notably "Edom"—symbolizing Rome, the fourth and last world empire listed by the prophet Daniel). Israelites would be brought back to Palestine from all over the world through miraculous deliverances and, according to the Midrash, all circumcised Israelites would then be released from Gehenna, and the dead Jews raised (according to some, by the Messiah). This resurrection would take place in Palestine so that those who had been buried elsewhere would have to roll underground—in great pain—until they reached the holy land of Palestine.

In the coming age, *athid labho*, the rabbis wrote that all resistance to God would be concentrated in the great war of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel, ch. 38-39), and there would be an intensification and focusing of all wickedness upon Israel in her land. Israel's implacable enemies would three times assault the Holy City to destroy it, but each time be repelled. The city would suffer some destruction, but not complete. When Israel's enemy was destroyed completely, the Holy City would be gloriously rebuilt and inhabited. The new city would be lifted to a height of some nine miles—some said it would even reach as high as the throne of God—and extend from Joppa to the gates of Damascus. The new Temple, the Messiah was to erect, would contain every glorious item which had been absent in Herod's Temple; the golden candelabra, the ark, the heaven-lit fire on the altar, the Shekinah, and the cherubim. Some rabbis insisted that the whole of the ancient ceremonies of Moses' Law plus rabbinic traditions would be practiced. More liberal ones believed that only the Day of Atonement and

the Feast of Esther (Purim), or Feast of Tabernacles, would be observed and only the thank-offerings made. Some insisted that the many stipulations concerning lawful and unlawful foods would be abolished.

The end of that age would blend right into the world to come, *olam habba*, a glorious period of holiness, forgiveness and peace. In this vast new land and Holy City (not heaven, but literal Palestine), angels would cut gems 45 ft. long and 45 ft. broad and place them in the City's gates. The walls of the City would be of silver, gold and precious gems, and precious jewels would be scattered all over the land which every Israelite was at liberty to take. Jerusalem would be as large as all Palestine and Palestine as large as the world. Every event and miracle in the history of Israel would be repeated, only on a much more magnificent scale, in the Messianic days. Wheat would grow as high as the mountains and the wind would miraculously convert the grain into flour and blow it into the valleys of the land. Every woman was to bear a child, daily, so that ultimately every Israelite family would number as many as all Israel at the time of the Exodus. All sickness and disease would pass away; Israelites would not die; some Gentiles would live hundreds of years. The Messiah was to rule the entire world from Jerusalem; Jerusalem would be the capital of the world and take the place of the fourth world empire (Rome). The time of this was among the seven things, according to the rabbis, unknown to man.

A war, a revival of that of Gog and Magog, would close the Messianic era. The nations, which had to this point given tribute to the Messiah, would rebel against him, and he would destroy them by the breath of his mouth, so that Israel alone would be left on the face of the earth. That period of Gentile rebellion was to last seven years. Then the final Judgment would commence. There seems to be no resurrection for Gentiles at all, except to immediately die again at Judgment. Gehenna, where all Jews but the perfectly righteous Jews were kept, served as a Jewish purgatory, from which they were all ultimately delivered by Abraham, to go to heaven. No such deliverance was ever considered for the heathen, or apostate Jews—they would suffer eternal torments. The final Judgment would be held in the Valley of Jehoshaphat by God, leading the Heavenly Sanhedrin, composed of the elders of Israel. After the final Judgment there would be a renewal of heaven and earth and the full implementation of *olam habba*, the world to come. Now when Jesus spoke of the judgment of the Jewish hierarchy, the desolation of Jerusalem, and the "crisis of the cosmos," the apostles concluded that such catastrophic events would be signalling the end of the existing order, *olam hazzeh*, and the ushering in of *athid labho*, the coming age, and perhaps, *olam habba*, the world to come. The apostles asked three questions which indicates how influential the rabbinic interpretations had been on them, and how confused they were trying to reconcile that with Jesus' statements. While the apostles apparently did

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

not hear the Lord's prediction earlier (Lk. 19:41-44), or it did not register on their minds due to the excitement of those moments, they were hearing Him now. We must refer to a harmonization of the Synoptists to find the three distinct questions. Their first question was: *When* will all this destruction be? (Mt. 24:3a; Mk. 13:4a; Lk. 21:7a); second, *What* will be the *sign* that *You* are coming? (Mt. 24:3b; Mk. 13:4b; Lk. 21:7b). Matthew alone mentions a third part to their questioning: *What* will be the *sign* of the *consummation* of the age (Gr. *sunteleias tou aionos*)? (Mt. 24:3c).

Recognizing the dangers inherent in their confusion, Jesus sets out immediately to reveal a number of future events and to specify that they are *not* signs of the rabbinic theories coming to pass, *nor* are they signs of the consummation of the ages. At the end of His discourse, He tells them what they are *not* to know (signs of the end of the world). But for the immediate future of these apostles and those of their generation who would become followers of the Way, He gives some very practical instructions so they would not be led astray. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish commonwealth would not take place for more than 30 years after Jesus died, was raised from the tomb and ascended to heaven (beginning in 66 A.D. and coming to a climax in 70 A.D.). The apostles have not yet understood that Jesus must "go away." When He did return to His heavenly throne, they would long to have Him back (cf. Lk. 17:22). Great persecutions were to come upon them. They must live in daily expectation of His return. They would be vulnerable to false expectations of a coming messianic age as portrayed by the rabbis, because the circumstances preceding the destruction of Jerusalem were to be similar to rabbinic messianic eschatology. So Jesus spoke His warnings.

21:8 Pseudo-Christ: Jesus warned the apostles that their generation would experience the rise and fall of many who would come in His name, saying they were the Messiah (Anointed One, Christ) (cf. Mt. 24:4-5; Mk. 13:5-6). But the first century Christians were not to be led astray by these claims—for in spite of all the excitement and troubles attending these pretenders, He was not then returning, nor was "the time at hand." Pseudo-Christ's coming to proclaim the new age would precede the desolation of Jerusalem Jesus predicted. There were many such imposters who deluded multitudes of first century Jews into following them claiming they would prove they were the Christ by exhibiting wonders and signs by the power of God (see *Antiquities*, XX, VIII, 5, by Flavious Josephus). About 44 A.D. (during the rule of Palestine by Fadus, Roman procurator) one Theudas (*not* the Theudas of Acts 5:36) gathered a large band of followers claiming he was a miracle working deliverer. And about 54 A.D. (during the reign of Felix) an Egyptian claimed to be a deliverer with prophetic powers. Such pseudo-Messiahs were plentiful. All these came to a climax 62 years *after* the destruction of Jerusalem in the great rebellion against Rome under the false Messiah, Bar Kokhba, A.D. 132-135.

21:9-11 Presaging Crises: The Greek word *polemous*, "war," is the word from which we get the English word, "polemics." It means "to fight." Rome was having increasing difficulty with civil war among Roman emperors and army generals. There was also an ever recurring necessity for Rome to defend her empire against foreign invaders. Jesus is probably predicting the increasing rebellious attitude of the Jews against Rome when He predicts "wars and rumors of wars." Herod Agrippa, given his uncle Philip's territory by Caligula, set out to revenge his uncle Philip against Herod Antipas who had stolen Philip's wife, Herodias. Agrippa spread the *rumor* to Rome that Antipas was conspiring with the Parthians against Rome and would make war, rumoring that Antipas had in his arsenal at Tiberias enough armor to equip 70,000 men. Riots broke out in Alexandria, Egypt, between the Egyptians and the Jews of that city (37-38 A.D.). A riot broke out in Jamnia (western Judea) (39 A.D.) when some Gentiles erected an altar to the Roman emperor and Jews tore it down. The emperor sent two Roman legions (12,000 men) to Jerusalem to set up his statue in the Jewish Temple. Jews vowed to resist to the last Jewish death. Some Jewish Christians in Palestine thought this impending blood-bath was a fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy here. Caligula was assassinated before this could be enforced. Claudius was forced to put down another riot in Alexandria with bloodshed (A.D. 53). We have already mentioned the Jewish rebellion under Theudas in the days of the Roman procurator Fadus. After the death of Herod Agrippa I (44 A.D.) the Roman emperor again imposed a rule of procurators upon Judea which deeply agitated the Jews. In the days of the procurator Cumanus (48 A.D.), a Roman soldier from the garrison in The Tower of Antonia, exposed his genitals to the Passover crowds which infuriated them. The Jews rioted and Roman soldiers killed hundreds of Jews in suppressing the rioting (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XX, V, 3). There were continuing frontier disputes between Jews and Samaritans—Jews and Gentiles rioted in Caesarea (cf. *Israel and The Nations*, by F. F. Bruce, pub. Eerdmans, pgs. 197-225). Wars and tumults (Gr. *akatastasia*, "confusion, instability" or literally, "falling down away from") were predicted to precede the destruction of Jerusalem. Although nations rise against one another and the world society seems to be unstable, Jesus warned His disciples they should not be "terrified" (Gr. *ptoeo*, "frightened, intimidated."). Luke records Jesus' statement, ". . . for this must first take place but the end will not be at once" (Lk. 21:9). Why the exhortation against being alarmed? Because Jesus is giving a very plain prediction of the holocaust coming upon Jerusalem and Israel. But Jesus has a work for them to do in Jerusalem and Palestine (Lk. 24:47; Acts 1:8) which will take years to accomplish. He does not want them to be terrified when wars and instability come so that they will "flee" Jerusalem before the real holocaust comes. When the actual, final destruction of Jerusalem

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

comes He will want all who are able to escape (cf. Mt. 24:15-22; Mk. 13:14-20; Lk. 21:20-24). Jesus warns them not to be alarmed when great earthquakes in various places and famines and pestilences and terrors and great signs from heaven occur because these, too, would not necessitate their fleeing Jerusalem. Even when these great disasters were "headlined" throughout the Roman empire, they were not signalling the immediate holocaust He was predicting. One famine, recorded in the New Testament (Acts 11:29ff.) occurred about 45-46 A.D. and was very severe in Palestine. Luke tells how the church at Antioch sent relief to their Jewish brethren in Palestine. Josephus tells how Queen Helena, an Adiabene convert to Judaism, also sent relief to the Jews in Palestine for the same famine (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XX, II, 5) (Adiabene is a territory east of the Tigris River).

Many destructive earthquakes have been recorded in the history of Syria (the land bordering Palestine on the north). The *Hauran* beyond the Jordan is covered with signs of violent earth-shocks, and the cities on the coast of Palestine have suffered many quakes. The New Testament documents a great earthquake in Palestine at the death of Christ (Mt. 27:51-54); one at Christ's resurrection (Mt. 28:2); one at Philippi in Macedonia (Acts 16:26). Josephus mentions one in the reign of Herod "such as had not happened at any other time, which was very destructive to men and cattle" (*Antiquities*, IV, V, 2). The records of many such earthquakes in Palestine could have been recorded by the Jews and destroyed when Rome burned the city of Jerusalem. Roman historians document numerous earthquakes which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem: (a) one occurring in A.D. 46; (b) one in Rome on the day Nero assumed the toga, A.D. 51; (c) one at Apamea in Phrygia; (d) one at Laodicea in Phrygia, A.D. 60; (e) one in Amporia, A.D. 62. Seneca and Tacitus both mention earthquakes in places like Asia, Achaia, Syria, Macedonia, Cyprus, Paphos, Crete, Italy and places already mentioned. The records of great plagues and pestilences may have been practically destroyed also. But there is at least one pestilence, mentioned by Josephus, in Babylonia (40 A.D.) which killed some 30,000 people (*Antiquities*, XVII, IX, 8), and one in Italy (66 A.D.) recorded by Tacitus.

What Jesus probably meant by "great signs from heaven" were the catastrophes of "nature" such as volcanic eruptions, cyclones, meteors or other great storms from the "heavens" which often terrify men. Josephus records the following "signs" which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem: (a) a star resembling a sword stood over the city; (b) a comet that lasted a whole year; (c) at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, during the night, a bright light shone around the altar and the Temple, so that it seemed to be broad daylight; (d) the eastern gate of the Temple, of solid brass, fastened with strong bolts and bars, which required 20 men to shut, opened in the night of its own accord; (e) chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were

seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding certain cities; (f) a great noise of a multitude, was heard in the temple, saying, "Let us remove hence"; (g) four years before the war began, Jesus, the son of Ananus, a farmer, came to the feast of Tabernacles when the city was in peace and prosperity, and began to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride, and a voice against this whole people!"—he was scourged and at every stroke of the whip he cried, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!"—this cry was continued every day for more than seven years, until he was killed in the siege of the city, shouting, "Woe, woe to myself also!" (Josephus, *Wars*, VI, V, 3). Some of these "signs" were probably the product of rumor and since we have no corroborating eyewitnesses to substantiate Josephus, we must be skeptical about some of them. But the very fact that Josephus records them indicates they were being rumored around Jerusalem. And that is the whole point of Jesus' warning here—to keep His disciples from being terrified at such rumored signs so that they might not desert their work of evangelism. Jesus counsels them that should they see unusually frightening natural phenomena or even hear rumors of such, Jerusalem's destruction is still not imminent.

21:12-19 Persecuting Countrymen: Jesus now warns the apostles that even severe persecutions to come upon His followers will not be signalling any imminent eschatological end. Up to the time of Jesus' death, there were no severe persecutions against those who followed Him. The authorities had determined to kill Jesus, but His followers were still free of such malice. But immediately after His death, their tribulation would begin. Even this should not cause them to expect the imminent destruction of the Jewish commonwealth. Even this should not terrify them into fleeing Jerusalem and neglecting to fulfill their commission to preach the gospel there first. As a matter of fact, being brought to trial in Jewish synagogues and prisons, and before Jewish rulers, would be an opportune "time for them to bear testimony" (21:13).

Jesus told the disciples they were not to "meditate beforehand" how to answer when hailed before persecutors. Luke uses the Greek words *me promeleian* which mean primarily, "have no concern prior to." The better way to translate the word is "be not anxious beforehand." In other words, Jesus exhorts those who anticipate being called to questioning before tribunals they need not distress themselves beforehand that they will not be able to endure the questioning or not have sufficient knowledge to give the testimony that should be given. What Jesus wants them to say will be given them between His prophecy here and the coming persecutions. This is *not* a promise of Jesus that they will need no preparation between these times. They will indeed be given many things to say from their own eyewitnessed experiences (primarily, Jesus' death and resurrection—which is

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

essentially what they testified to before their persecutors). Jesus did not want the apostles to let His predictions of the coming persecutions fill them with anxiety ahead of time so they might hastily decide to flee from Palestine immediately upon His death. He desired to warn them here, at this moment, they would have a testimony of historical facts which none of their adversaries would be able to contradict. They need not be afraid they would have nothing to say.

Matthew and Mark add that Jesus predicted apostasy (Mt. 24:10), false teaching (Mt. 24:11), lawlessness and indifference (Mt. 24:12) would all characterize the Jewish society in which the apostles would live preceding the holocaust upon the Jewish nation. Furthermore, the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations—then the end of Jerusalem and the nation would come (Mt. 24:14; Mk. 13:10). The hatred and persecution of Christians and Jews is abundantly confirmed by pagan historians (between 34-70 A.D.) as well as in sacred history (Acts of the Apostles), in the Pauline epistles, and in John's Revelation. The rise of false teaching and apostasy within Judaism and within the Christian Church as well as the betrayal of Christians by their own brethren is well documented in the epistles of the New Testament and in the book of Revelation (cf. Gal. 1:7; 2:4; II Cor. 11:13-15; I Tim. 1:3-7, 1:19-20; II Tim. 3:8-9; Titus 1:10-11; Jude; II Pet. 2; Rev. 1:3; Acts 15:1, etc.). Neither do we have to speculate as to what Jesus meant when He prophesied that the gospel of the kingdom would be preached to "the whole world" before Jerusalem was destroyed. We have the documentation of the fulfillment of that from the pen of the inspired apostle Paul (cf. Rom. 1:5, 8; 10:18; 16:26; Col. 1:6; 1:23). The same apostle made it abundantly clear in his epistle to the Hebrews that Judaism was doomed and "near to passing away" (cf. Heb. 8:13; 10:25; 12:25-29; 13:14).

Very alarming words had fallen from the lips of Jesus. The apostles, combining with these words their undoubted knowledge of popular rabbinical traditions of the "coming age" were startled. Jesus recognized the need to allay their anxieties lest the events which would *precede* the judgment of God upon the Jewish nation might terrify them into fleeing from Palestine before they could accomplish His purposes there. Jesus revealed to the apostles these events of history *before* they came to pass in order that they might believe and trust Him and carry out their mission (cf. Mt. 24:25; Mk. 13:23; Jn. 13:19; 14:29). These are events preliminary to the destruction of the Jewish nation.

SECTION 3

Precise Signs of Destruction (21:20-32)

20^a"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. 21^aThen let those who are in Judea

flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; ²²for these are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. ²³Alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! For great distress shall be upon the earth and wrath upon this people; ²⁴they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among 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 sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, ²⁶men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹ And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the kingdom of God is near. ³¹So also when you see these things taking place, you know that the Kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place.

21:20-21 Pagan Profanation: Jesus now lists a number of things that will be plainly observable to the generation then living. He prophesies there will be immediate signs that Judaism is "forsaken" and "desolated" and that the end has come for Jerusalem (cf. Mt. 24:15-34; Mk. 13:14-30). The first of these "immediate" signs will be when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies. Matthew and Mark call it the "desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel" (cf. Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, see our comments there in *Daniel*, College Press). Daniel predicted the desecration of the Temple and the city by Romans armies as the consequence of the Jew's rejecting their "Anointed Prince" 490 years after the restoration of the Jewish commonwealth in 457 B.C. (Dan. 9:24-27). After a series of Jewish uprisings and riots, the city of Jerusalem was first besieged in November A.D. 66 by the Roman legate of Syria, Cestius Gallus. He had marched to Judea in November, 66 A.D., with the Twelfth Legion and surrounded the city on orders from the emperor, Nero. Gallus occupied the northern edge of Jerusalem, called Bezetha, but concluded his forces were too small to take the rest of the city so he withdrew. The Jews, assuming Divine providence had intervened to spare the city, took no advantage of the opportunity to flee. In fact, many Jews living in the immediate environs outside the city fled into the city for what they thought would be protection. Meanwhile, on the way back to Syria Gallus and his forces were ambushed by Jewish insurgents in the pass at Beth-horon and the Romans suffered great losses. Christians, remembering Jesus' prophecy, fled to Pella when

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Cestius Gallus returned to Syria. Eusebius writes in his *History*, 111:5:3, “. . . the people of the church in Jerusalem, being commanded to leave and dwell in a city of Perea, called Pella, in accordance with a certain oracle which was uttered before the war to the approved men there by way of revelation. . . .”

Nero sent his general, Vespasian, with 60,000 men to Judea in the Spring of 67 A.D. Vespasian conquered all of Judea and was about to besiege Jerusalem, when he was called back to Rome after Nero's suicide. Vespasian became emperor and sent his son, Titus, to Judea to put down the Jewish revolt. July 24, 70 A.D., Titus recaptured the Tower of Antonia at the northern edge of the Temple courts. August 5, he caused the daily sacrifices of the Jewish priests to cease. August 27, the Temple gates were burned. August 29, (the anniversary of Babylonian destruction of Solomon's temple in 587 B.C.), the sanctuary itself was set on fire. While the sanctuary was burning, Roman soldiers brought their legionary standards into the Temple area and offered sacrifices to the Roman emperor there! On September 26, A.D. 70, the whole city was in Titus' hands. All during the siege and assaults on the city by the Romans, the Jews within the city had been reduced to such desperation there were atrocities the Jews perpetrated upon one another almost too horrible and gruesome to recount.

21:22-24 Terrible Tribulations and Deceiving Deliverers: Jesus specifically and categorically says of this terrible holocaust, “. . . for *these are* days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. . . .” Moses wrote that this would happen should the Jews reject The Prophet (cf. Deut. 18:15-18; 28:15-68); Daniel prophesied these things would come to pass because the Jews would “cut off” their “Anointed One,” (cf. Dan. 9:24-27); Jesus proclaimed they would “Fill up the measure of their fathers . . . that upon them would come all the righteous blood shed on earth. . . .” (Mt. 23:31-36) because they were going to kill the Son of God. Luke records Jesus as saying: “For great distress shall be upon the earth and wrath upon this people.” Matthew and Mark record that Jesus said further: “For then will be great tribulation, *such as* has not been from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will be.” This is one of the points of the Olivet Discourse which causes major confusion. Many readers insist that such language cannot be referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, even though that event was certainly terrible in its time. First, there have been many “tribulations” since the destruction of Jerusalem much worse in statistics than that one. For example, two world wars caused more death and destruction than that. Nazi Germany killed approximately 8,000,000 Jews during World War II—that is certainly more than the estimated 1,500,000 slain and captured in 70 A.D. Then there is Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the prisons of Russian Siberia and Chinese Mongolia.

But the term, *such as*, in the description of Jesus, really does not refer to the statistical magnitude of the tribulation—it refers rather to the *kind* of tribulation. Jesus is anticipating the uniqueness of the cause and effect of the suffering and affliction—not the quantity or number who suffered. It is hardly possible for any tribulation to exceed in magnitude that of the flood of Noah's day when there were only eight survivors! We must explain what Jesus said, then, by quality or uniqueness. Perhaps these suggestions will help us understand why Jesus intended this "great tribulation" to be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem and Judaism:

- a. This tribulation involved the final destruction of what once had been God's holy nation. This had never happened before. God rescued a remnant from captivity and restored their nationality. It will never happen again, since the Church of Christ is now God's holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9) and it will never be destroyed (Mt. 16:18; Dan. 2:44).
- b. The circumstances of the Jews trapped in Jerusalem was unique in all of history. God had withdrawn His presence. They were abandoned to their own evil. The residents turned on one another in hatred and panic, and inflicted on themselves atrocities more horrible than even the Romans could invent!
- c. It was a tribulation suffered only by those Jews who had rejected Christ. Those who believed Jesus (especially this prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction), were saved from the disaster of 70 A.D.

Still, how can we accept this statement that there was never such tribulation before or after 70 A.D.? Consider the following possibilities:

- a. The Bible was written for all time—the "atomic age" as well as that of bows and arrows. For Jesus to try to compare the tribulation of Roman warfare with Hiroshima would mean nothing to the apostles. So, Jesus is simply saying, "In the frame-of-reference of what you apostles know and can visualize, Jerusalem's suffering is going to be the greatest." This is no contradiction of Jesus' omniscience. He is, in fact, condescending to the human limitations of the apostles. He did this at other times. He told them a few hours later, "I have many things to say to you which you are not presently able to bear" (Jn. 16:12f.).
- b. The holocaust of 70 A.D. was unique in the way Jews tortured, murdered, and despised their fellow Jews. Jerusalem was really self-destroyed. Titus, the Roman general, made every effort to spare the people, the city and the Temple; but the Jews were implacable in their intentions to never surrender to the Romans again. Titus eventually could wait no longer and went into Jerusalem, killing and burning.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- c. It may be that this great tribulation which began with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., has continued with more or less intensity up to the present time! The Jews, since 70 A.D., have, in many lands and many centuries suffered great tribulation.

Matthew and Mark add, "And if those days had not been shortened, no human being would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, those days will be shortened" (Mt. 24:22; Mk. 13:20). Titus first thought to build a siege wall and starve the Jews all to death or let them all die of disease. But then, with pressing business back in Rome beckoning, he stormed the city, killed, burned and took thousands of Jews captive. Thus many thousands of Jews were saved alive who would have otherwise perished (cf. Josephus, *Wars*, I:12:1).

Luke records that Jesus specifically predicted the great tribulation would involve the death of many Jews, but many would also be "led captive among all the nations." Jesus then makes a statement, recorded by Luke alone, which has been the focus of much confusing comment by alleged students of eschatology. Jesus said, ". . . and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Lk. 21:24b). By the word "until" Jesus is indicating that the desolation of Jerusalem would continue as long as God sees fit. That is the question—how long will that be? There is a passage in Romans 11:25-26 which should provide a clue. That passage says, ". . . a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in, and so all Israel will be saved. . . ." This passage makes it clear that at the time all Israel has been saved, the full number of the Gentiles ("the times of the Gentiles . . . fulfilled") will have come in. So the question really focuses on *all Israel's salvation*. It is plain from the New Testament that "Israel" is the church of Jesus Christ. Paul says in Romans 9:8 ". . . it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants. . . ." Paul writes in Galatians 3:29, "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." The "until" then points to a time when God will have "grafted" into true *spiritual Israel*, all that through faith in Christ and obedience of that faith shall be saved. That is the end of time. Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles until the end of the world. The Jews had their time. They were allotted 490 years from the reestablishment of the Jewish commonwealth (457 B.C. to fulfill their messianic destiny and bring the Messiah into the world and complete God's redemptive program (34 A.D.) (cf. Dan. 9:24-27, see our comments there in *Daniel*, College Press). They rejected the Messiah and crucified Him. So the kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to others (cf. Mt. 21:43). God gave His kingdom to a mixture of all races and tribes and languages which would produce the fruits of repentance. In this kingdom neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but a new creation. Those who walk by this rule *are the Israel* of God

(cf. Gal. 6:15-16). God has not absolutely rejected the Jews, neither have the Jews totally rejected Christ—a hardening has taken place only in part. There are still Jews coming to God through Christ today. But that is the *only* way God will accept anyone (cf. Jn. 5:23; 14:6; Heb. 10:10; 10:12-14, etc.), from now until the end of time. Genetic Jewishness counts nothing with God—never did, never shall (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; 4:9ff.; 9:22-26; Gal. 3:6-9, etc.); it has always been faith that made anyone a child of God. When the Jews were given their allotted time and when the apostles had completed the first part of Jesus' Great Commission and had taken the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (Acts 1:8), and they had, for the most part, rejected it, then the gospel of the kingdom was delivered to the Gentiles (see Acts 13:46). The time allotted for the Gentiles (and any Jews who will now believe in Christ, for they are no longer His chosen but are as the Gentiles) is until Christ delivers up the kingdom to God after destroying every authority and power (cf. I Cor. 15:23-28), and that is the end of time.

Until the end of time Jerusalem will be "trodden down by the Gentiles." Geographical Jerusalem and national Israel will be characterized as "Gentile" so long as the present world exists. So long as a Jew will not come to Jehovah by faith in Jesus Christ, he is a heathen, an unbeliever, one who crucifies Christ afresh and for him there is no possibility of repentance before God unless through Jesus Christ (cf. Heb. 6:1-8; 10:1-31). There is no grace of God for anyone outside of Christ, not even in Judaism (cf. Gal. 5:2-6). Jews in Jerusalem today, outside of Christ, are as Gentile as any unbeliever practicing any form of idolatry, because God's covenant is *in Christ*!

At this point in the discourse Jesus warned that another of the signs indicating the imminent destruction of Jerusalem would be false Christ's and false prophets showing signs and wonders attempting to lead many astray, even the elect. These pseudo-Christ's would try to convince many to follow them into different places of alleged safety. But Jesus exhorts His listeners to "take heed, I have told you all things beforehand" (cf. Mt. 24:23-27; Mk. 13:21-23). Then Jesus adds, "For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man" (Mt. 24:27). What Jesus is saying is this: "Do not follow the pseudo-Christ's; their signs will be obscure, deceitful and false. When the Son of man comes in His judgment upon this city, the signs will be unmistakable. The signs which I have told you will be as clearly visible as the lightning!" This interpretation of the Son of man's "coming" in Mt. 24:27 is in harmony with Jesus' next statement, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles (Gr. *aetoi*, "vultures") will be gathered together" (Mt. 24:28). Vultures easily ascertain where deadness is and hasten to devour them. The Romans pounced on the rotting carcass of Judaism. The Jews expected a Messiah to appear from out of nowhere and deliver them from the Romans. Those Jews besieged within the walls of Jerusalem were

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

especially vulnerable to false prophets and false Christs. Jesus said this would be a sign that Jerusalem was about to be wiped out. The real Messiah did "come" in 70 A.D. with His army to destroy (not deliver) Jerusalem. The reader is referred to Matthew 22:7 where Jesus is plainly parabolizing the destruction of the Jewish nation at the hands of the "King's troops" who destroyed and burned their city (see also, Isa. 10:5-10; Jer. 27:5-7). This reference to the destruction of Jerusalem as a "coming" of the Son of man is imperative for the proper understanding of the next section of Jesus' discourse.

Before continuing with the narrative, however, it is necessary at this point to include a few brief notes from Josephus' account of the destruction of Jerusalem in his, *Wars*, Books V and VI:

1. Three different political parties of the Jews were within the city fighting one another for the three years of siege.
2. They fought one another with such malice and abandon that thousands of innocent Jews were slain in their "cross-fire." Even priests and worshipers in the Temple courts were slain in the very act of offering sacrifices.
3. These factions burned storehouses filled with food, polluted water reservoirs to keep others from having them, and thus caused the starvation of thousands of their countrymen.
4. Anyone who sought to escape the city, if caught by the Jews, was slain by having his throat cut.
5. Burial of dead bodies within the city was impossible so they simply let the cadavers rot, tramped over them, or threw them over the walls.
6. Some Jews tried to swallow their gold and escape the city, hoping to pass it after escape. Both their own countrymen, and later the Romans, caught on to their ruse. When such people were captured trying to escape, they were thrown to the ground and disemboweled alive and their gold taken from their intestines while they writhed in death throes.
7. Robbers plundered stores, homes, government buildings, torturing anyone found inside for food or other articles of value.
8. Children pulled the very morsels of food out of the mouths of their aged parents, and parents did the same to children.
9. Many Jews sold their homes, their children, anything they possessed, for *one* measure of wheat or barley.
10. One method of Jews torturing Jews was to drive wooden spikes up their "private parts" and this for no reason at all except they wished to express some anger.

11. Romans crucified Jews who escaped at the rate of 500 per day. They ran out of wood with which to make crosses so many were crucified.
12. Tens of thousands died of rampant disease and pestilences.
13. Some Jews leaped from the tops of the walls of Jerusalem, broke bones, mangled bodies, and many died. If they did survive and escape, they ate food, when they could find any, so much and so rapidly, they died.
14. Dead bodies were stacked in great heaps as high as houses.
15. Blood ran down the gutters and narrow streets of Jerusalem ankle deep.
16. Some ate from public sewers, cattle and pigeon dung, wood, leather shields, hay, clothing, and things even scavenger animals would not eat.
17. Book VI:3:4, documents the incident of a woman roasting her own infant son and eating his flesh to stay alive (cf. Deut. 28:53).
18. Many false prophets went throughout the city telling people to take refuge in the Temple. As a result, 10,000 were slain and burned when Titus burned the Temple.
19. After the woman (mentioned above) ate the flesh of her own child, "the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately" Josephus says.
20. The Romans, upon capturing the entire city, slew every living person they came into contact with—"they obstructed the very streets with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree that the fire of many houses was quenched with these men's blood."
21. Josephus records that 1,100,000 perished and 97,000 were taken captive at this destruction of Jerusalem. Some estimates go as high as a total of 2,000,000.
22. Josephus concludes, ". . . thus the city was thoroughly laid even with the ground. . . ." Only three towers and a little part of one wall was left by Titus to "memorialize" his victory over the Jews.

21:25-28 Potentates Plummeting: Luke says, "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars. . . etc." Matthew says, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days. . . ." (Mt. 24:29) and Mark says, "But in those days, after that tribulation. . . ." (Mk. 13:24). The very strong indication that this text (Lk. 21:25-28 parallels Mt. 24:29-31; Mk. 13:24-27) is a continuation of the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and Judaism may be seen from: (a) "Immediately" does not usually make room for much of a time gap—certainly not a gap of over 2000 years; (b) "When

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

these things begin to take place. . . ." (Lk. 21:28) surely is not referring to the Second Coming for there will be no signs pointing to its nearness—it will be instantaneous; (c) and the further statement, ". . . this generation will not pass away till all these things take place" (Lk. 21:32; Mt. 24:34; Mk. 13:30) undoubtedly includes the sun and moon being darkened, stars falling from heaven, perplexity and distress of nations and the powers of the heavens being shaken.

Now this section is difficult for the Occidental mind, but not for the Oriental. The careful Bible student will find much help in understanding this simply by giving attention to context, comparable passages from the Old Testament and Biblical word usage. This section is plainly couched in what is called "apocalyptic" language, similar to that of the Old Testament prophets and Revelation when predicting the "coming" of God in judgment upon pagan nations (and even upon the Jewish nation). Apocalyptic language is characterized by its figurativeness, symbolism and drama. The apocalyptic language of Jesus here should be interpreted in light of the following considerations:

- a. Sun, moon, and stars darkened or falling from heaven is often stated symbolically in the Old Testament to picture any inexpressible calamity such as an overturning of kingdoms or cities or kings or religious potentates thought otherwise to be invincible. It is clear that Isaiah 13:10; 14:12ff.; 24:23; 34:1-4; Jer. 4:23-28; 15:9; Joel 2:10; 2:30—3:21; Amos 4:9; Micah 3:6; Hab. 3:11, and others, refer to the fall of kingdoms and kings in such terms. This kind of imagery goes back at least as far as Joseph and his brothers (cf. Gen. 37:9ff.). They understood it then.
- b. Luke says, "distress of nations . . . in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves. . . ." This is picturing the distress of the wicked as these calamities of the destruction of Jerusalem roll over them like waves of the sea. Isaiah 57:20-21 uses the same symbolism. It may also refer to the overwhelming flood of the Roman army to come upon Jerusalem (see Jer. 6:23ff. describing the flood of Babylonians about to come upon Jerusalem in 606 B.C.).
- c. "The powers of the heavens being shaken. . . ." is apparently a figurative prophecy of the "shaking down" of the system of Judaism and the obsolete priesthood (cf. Heb. 8:13; 12:25-29; 13:13-14 with Isa. 14:12ff.; 24:21-23).
- d. Then will "appear the signs of the Son of man. . . ." or as Luke puts it, "And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. . . ." Jesus plainly told His apostles some of them would not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power and before they saw the Son of man coming in

His kingdom (cf. Mk. 9:1; Mt. 16:28). He is saying here that when the destruction of Jerusalem occurs it will be unmistakable evidence to His followers, at least, that the Son of man has "come" to keep His word about taking the kingdom from the Jews.

- e. Luke says "men will be fainting with fear and with foreboding. . . ." Matthew says, "then all the tribes of the earth will mourn." Jews had been scattered all over the world ever since the Babylonian captivity. These would certainly mourn and faint with fear when they learned of Jerusalem's obliteration by the Romans because they would fear the same treatment. This probably refers also to the prediction of Zechariah (12:10). There the Jews are predicted as mourning over the crucifying of their Messiah. John refers to this prophecy at the crucifixion (cf. Jn. 19:37). The destruction of Jerusalem was God's wrath upon the nation for crucifying ("cutting off") the Messiah (cf. Dan. 9:24-27).
- f. This is probably what Jesus meant when He said the same thing to the High Priest warning him of the consequences of crucifying the Messiah (cf. Mt. 26:64)—the destruction of Judaism.
- g. Matthew and Mark add the words: "And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," (Mt. 24:31; Mk. 13:27). Luke says it this way, "When these things (the signs that could be determined about the fall of Jerusalem and the release of the Jewish strangle-hold on the kingdom) begin to take place . . . your redemption is *drawing* near." Luke does not say, ". . . your redemption is *here*" in the twinkling of an eye! When the fall of Judaism is accomplished, the fruitless fig tree will have been withered, and a great obstacle standing in the way of the gospel unto the whole world will be removed (cf. Mt. 21:18-22; Mk. 11:12-14; Mk. 11:20-25). From that time God will signally build up His kingdom. It shall be fully and exclusively established and recognized when the Jewish system comes to an end. This note of Luke in 21:28, ". . . now when these things begin to take place. . . ." is *parallel* to his note in 21:31, "So also, when you see these things taking place. . . ." and both of them refer to the visible destruction of Jerusalem. Isaiah predicted that God would create a new "land" or "nation" with "one stroke . . . in one day" before the old nation had passed away (Isa. 66:7-9). But Isaiah also predicted that this new nation (the church) would "go forth and look on the dead bodies of the men that have rebelled against me. . . ." (Isa. 66:24).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

These prophecies, we believe, refer to the establishment of the New Israel, the church, on the day of Pentecost—and the subsequent destruction of the old order, Judaism, (see our comments, *Isaiah*, Vol. III, College Press).

21:29-32 Readily Recognizable: With the parable of the fig tree, Jesus was using an illustration his disciples, as outdoors men, could readily understand. As Russell Boatman says, in *What The Bible Says About The End Time*, College Press, "A budding tree, whatever its specie, is a sign that 'spring has sprung' and 'summer is nigh.' Thus He was telling His disciples that when they should see the things He had enumerated, they should know the fall of Jerusalem was at hand." The signs of Jerusalem's destruction and God's judgment of the Jewish establishment (the rule of Herod and the rule of the High Priest and the Pharisees) will be as easily recognizable as the signs that summer is drawing near. Matthew records it, "... when you see all these things you know that he is near, at the very gates" (Mt. 24:33)—Luke's parallel verse says, "... when you see these things take place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. . . ." (Lk. 21:31). When the signs were seen, Jesus' followers would know that the Son of man was at the gates of Jerusalem with His "army" for judgment. They would know that the kingdom of God had come in its power and destroyed the usurpation of the wicked husbandmen who tried to take the kingdom ("vineyard") for themselves. Paul wrote to encourage Hebrew Christians not to go back to Judaism (in the book of Hebrews), but to hold fast to Christianity, "and so much more as they were seeing the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). What "Day" could Jewish Christians see approaching? The answer is, of course, the approaching destruction of Judaism and Jerusalem—certainly not the Second Coming of Christ. Their "redemption" would be the breaking of the strangle-hold of Judaism from the throat of the infant Church, allowing it to survive the Judaizers.

"This generation shall not pass away till all these things take place," writes Matthew. Luke says, "Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place." The first thing the careful student will do is compare the same usage of the word generation in Mt. 11:16; 12:41; 23:35-36; cf. Mt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27. "Generation" does not mean "race" as some have thought. It plainly means a life-span of some 35-40 years. "All these things. . . ." refers back to all the tribulations predicted from Mt. 24:4 through Mt. 24:34, from Mk. 13:5 through Mk. 13:30 and from Luke 21:8 through Luke 21:32. Notice the significant and continued use of "these" (contemporary things) all the way through the afore mentioned sections. But after Mt. 24:34 and Mk. 13:30 and Lk. 21:32 Jesus begins using "that" to refer to His Second Coming when *heaven and earth* is to "pass away."

Summarizing, it is clear that all Jesus has predicted in His Olivet Discourse up to this point applies strictly to the destruction of Jerusalem and Judaism. Note the following points:

- a. "All these things. . . ." indicates *all* which He has said *prior* is said of the destruction of Jerusalem.
- b. Up to this point in the discourse, Jesus says everything that is to happen is to happen in those "days" (*plural*). Everything after this point (after Mt. 24:34; Mk. 13:30; Lk. 21:32) is in that "day" (*singular*). The phrase, "that day" (*singular*) is a widely used phrase in the New Testament to speak of the end of the world and judgment.
- c. The conjunction "But" in Mt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32; Lk. 21:34 is a definite word separating that which has been predicted earlier and able to be known, from that which follows the conjunction which cannot be known by signs.

SECTION 4

Portends the Second Coming (21:33-38)

³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ "But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a snare; ³⁵for it will come upon all who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. ³⁶But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man."

³⁷ And every day he was teaching in the temple, but at night he went out and lodged on the mount called Olivet. ³⁸And early in the morning all the people came to him in the temple to hear him.

21:33-36 World's End Heralded: Jesus makes a transitional statement by saying, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (21:33). The terrible destruction predicted of Jerusalem and Judaism shocked their Jewish mentality. It was as if the world was coming to an end! So Jesus is saying, "Indeed, the world *is* going to come to an end (Heaven and earth *will* pass away)—however, the destruction of Jerusalem is *not* the end of the world" Jesus is emphasizing that His words concerning the destruction of Jerusalem will not pass away—they will be fulfilled. Every promise He made, every prediction He made came to pass no matter how incredible it may have seemed to the Jewish mentality.

Then, as Matthew and Mark record, He said, "But of that day (passing away of heaven and earth) and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only" (Mt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

From that statement onward Jesus gave one illustration after another to re-enforce His warning that *no one* would be able to know when He would return to destroy both heaven and earth. If this knowledge is excluded from angels and the Incarnate Son, how do present-day eschatology experts presume to be able to figure it out from Scriptures which even Jesus and the Jews had in their day? Was Jesus, with all His wisdom, unable to interpret Daniel, chapters 7 through 12, while modern-day dispensationalists are? To say that Jesus simply did not know the year or day of the month and the exact minute, but that He did tell us certain signs to look for and then know that it is near, makes this whole context ridiculous! If Jesus knew the time of the end of the world but declared He would not (or could not) tell it, the temptation to read into His every statement some subtle prediction as to the exact time would be almost overwhelming. Not only does Jesus not predict the time of the end, He cannot because God did not reveal it to Him while He was on earth. There is no excuse for anyone trying to predict the time of the Second Coming when we understand that even Jesus Himself did not know. The most important thing about eschatology is the emphasis on the *certainty* of the end of this world and of judgment (cf. Acts 17:30-31). There are some times and seasons which God has reserved for only Himself to know (cf. Acts 1:7). *Where* and *when* the rotten universe needs dealing with, there the Lord will come and deal with it. Where it needs dealing with is all over! When it needs dealing with, only He knows. Jesus never spoke of His final coming in terms of *time* or specific *place*, but in terms of *condition*. Men will try to exploit the Word of God and the faith of believers for their own greedy ends by telling everyone they know when the time of His coming will be. For emphasis we insert here a brief résumé of the remainder of Jesus' discourse on the end of the world as recorded by Matthew and Mark:

- a. It is as if Jesus had said, "Let me illustrate. . . ." for the remainder of this entire discourse (from Mt. 24:37 through Mt. 25:46; including Mk. 13:34-37) is a series of parables to repeat the *unexpectedness* of the end of the world. Note the following emphasis:
 - (1) Mt. 24:36 "... of that day and hour, *no one knows*. . . ."
 - (2) Mt. 24:37-39 "... as the days of Noah... *they did not know*. . . ."
 - (3) Mt. 24:42 "... watch . . . for *you do not know*. . . ."
 - (4) Mk. 13:35 "... watch . . . for *you do not know*. . . ."
 - (5) Mt. 24:44 "... at an hour *you do not expect*. . . ."
 - (6) Mt. 24:50 "... when *not expected* . . . when *not known*. . . ."
 - (7) Mt. 25:13 "... you *know neither* the day nor the hour. . . ."
 - (8) Mt. 25:19 "... after a *long time*. . . ."
 - (9) Mt. 25:31 "... *when* the Son of man comes. . . ."
 - (10) Lk. 21:34 "... and that day come *upon you suddenly* like a snare. . . ."

Jesus summarizes all the warnings and exhortations to faithfulness and "watchfulness" before He gives all the parabolic illustrations. Luke records that summarization and omits the parables. Jesus said the day the world ends will "spring shut" on mankind like a trap. So He warns those who believe Him to keep themselves from excessive attention to this world as if it is all the world there is ever going to be. Let no one be "weighed down" with worldiness or they shall be caught in the trap when it is suddenly "tripped." The Greek word *kraipale* is translated, "dissipation" and means literally, "headache" or the "stupor and hangover which comes from drunkenness." The word "drunkenness" is the Greek word *methe* which in English is combined with certain suffixes and becomes, "methanol, methane, methyl, methylene," all having to do with a form of alcohol. The word "cares" is the Greek word *merimnais*. It is the same word Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 6:25-34), translated "anxious" and means "divided in mind." Jesus is saying that worry and divided loyalty is as unbecoming as revelling and drunkenness in light of the unexpectedness of the end of the world. An attitude of prayer (total dependence on God), resistance toward sin, and faithful stewardship in doing the Lord's work is the "watchfulness" Jesus says prepares the believer to "stand before the Son of man" when He finally returns. The parables of Jesus in Matthew and Mark clearly indicate the following conditions when the end comes suddenly:

- a. "As the days of Noah" illustrates the end will come at a time of normalcy, Mt. 24:37-42.
- b. Parable of the Householder illustrates God expects each human being to be doing His work, but many will be "asleep," Mk. 13:34-37.
- c. Parable of the Thief at Night illustrates God is not going to signal the world ahead of time when He is coming, Mt. 24:43-44.
- d. The Parable of the Wise and Wicked Servants illustrates that some will be ready for the Master's return because they are *always* ready, while others will believe He is delayed and continue to exploit their fellow servants, Mt. 24:45-51.
- e. The Parable of The Ten Virgins illustrates that some are always prepared for the Bridegroom's coming, while others give no concern to prepare to meet Him, Mt. 25:1-13.
- f. The Parable of the Talents illustrates the need for faithful use of the blessings God has given in proper preparedness for the end of the world, Mt. 25:14-30.
- g. The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats illustrates the way to prepare for His coming and the Judgment is to be found practicing love for the needy in the affairs of every-day living, Mt. 25:31-46.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

On the one hand there will be some who scoff at the very promise of His return and the end of the world (II Pet. 3:8-10). On the other hand there will be some who will be constantly saying they know when it will be, saying, "Lo, here, or Lo, there," (Lk. 17:23). But the true disciple of Christ will not be seduced by either miscalculation because he pays attention to what the Bible really says—no one knows, therefore, be constantly "watchful."

21:37-38 Worshipers Eagerly Hearing: Luke now summarizes the public part of the last week. Every day Jesus came to the temple to teach, great crowds of eager people came early each morning to hear Him. He taught on Monday and Tuesday, and went out every night and lodged "on the mount called Olivet" which probably means in Bethany at the home of friends (Martha, Mary and Lazarus, or, Simon the Leper). After Tuesday evening when He went out to the Mount of Olives and delivered the discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world, He probably never entered the temple as a public teacher again. Matthew 26:1-2 indicates the discourse on Jerusalem's destruction ended Tuesday evening, "two days" prior to the Passover supper. Mark 15:42 clearly says that Jesus was crucified on Friday ("the day of Preparation"), so Passover was on Thursday that week. We have no record of what took place on Wednesday. No doubt the Jewish rulers were making final arrangements with Judas to betray Jesus when they came to arrest Him. Jesus had probably retired to some place away from the busy Jerusalem—probably even away from Bethany—where He and His disciples could be completely alone. He may have taught them some of the "things not written" (Jn. 20:30-31) in the gospel records. There were probably crowds of eager worshipers sadly disappointed that Wednesday morning when Jesus did not appear.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. Why do you give to the Lord's work? Why should you give?
2. If giving only what is "left over" is not pleasing to God, what should one give?
3. Do you believe this widow gave everything she had between her and starvation? If God wanted you to do that, could you? Does He?
4. After reading the statements of Jesus prior to the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, and after reading the Jewish traditions about the Messianic age, what do you think your reaction would have been about "not one stone left upon another"?
5. If Jesus' warning about not being frightened at "wars and rumors of wars" was concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., what about all the "tribulation and rapture" literature being published today?

6. Was the gospel preached to the whole world before the destruction of Jerusalem?
7. When was the "time allotted to the Jews"? When will the times "of the Gentiles" be fulfilled? When will "all Israel be saved"? Are you an Israelite?
8. Have you read the Old Testament passages using phrases about "sun and moon" being darkened in connection with the fall of empires? Do you think this is legitimate literary vehicle? Do you think Jesus might use them about Jerusalem's fall?
9. What are the signs preceding the Second Coming and the End of the World? When is it going to happen?
10. How should the believer prepare himself for the end of the world?

ESCHATOLOGY

Non-Biblical and Biblical—A Brief

By Paul T. Butler — OBC Convention, 1977

INTRODUCTION

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Eschatology is from Greek, *eschatos*, last, and *logia*, knowledge or study. Eschatology is: a study of last things, i.e., studying what the Bible says about the end of this world and the 2nd Advent of Christ, judgment, etc.
- B. There are many differing eschatological theories in the religious world today. Postmillennialism; Premillennialism; Dispensationalism; Amillennialism; each one of these having different theories.
- C. We are going to deal with the general subject rather than with any specific theory.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

- A. A man's eschatology inevitably affects his:
 1. Hermeneutics
 2. Politics
 3. Evangelism
 4. Fellowship (Unity)
 5. And, as a result of the above, his Ethics
 6. We shall amplify this later in the study.
- B. The Bible says a great deal about eschatology.
 1. The eschatology of the Old Testament ("last things") refers mainly to the last of the Old Testament dispensation and the coming of Christ and the church.
 2. The eschatology of the New Testament refers mainly to the Second Coming of Christ.
 3. Most New Testament books have references to His Second Coming/Judgment.

DISCUSSION

I. ERRONEOUS ESCHATOLOGY

- A. The Late Great Planet Earth
 1. "The nation of Israel cannot be ignored; we see the Jews as a miracle of history . . . have survived as a distinct race . . . can trace their continuous unity back nearly 4000 years" pg. 45, etc.
Answer: Who is a Jew? (Rom. 2:28-29). Who is Israel? (Gal. 6:15-16). Jacob Gartenhaus, president of International Board of Jewish Missions, born in Austria and educated in rabbinical schools there, says: "No Jew today can trace his ancestry back beyond two or three hundred years" *Christianity Today*, 3-13-70.

ESCHATOLOGY

There are only 3 million people in Israel today and 12% of those are Arabs; 3% are Christians. There are more Jews in New York city than in Israel.

The government of Israel today cannot even decide who a legal Jew is. Is Sammy Davis, Jr. a Jew? Will Jerry Lewis take up residence in Israel? Unlikely they will do so willingly!

2. Hal Lindsey predicts the return of the Messiah in 1988. "... within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place . . ." pg. 54. He says in his booklet *Homo Sapiens, Extinction or Evacuation*, pg. 20, "You are the generation seeing these things; you are the generation which is not going to see physical death. I expect one day in my life to be physically called to see the Lord in the air, without seeing death."

Answer: I would like to have that assurance but I hesitate to jeopardize my credibility with such absolute predictions in view of so many other absolute predictions missed.

3. By 1988 the Jewish Temple and reinstitution of Jewish sacrifices will have to be accomplished (pgs. 54-57).

Answer: This contradicts the teachings of Romans, Galatians and Hebrews as to the abrogation of the Jewish system of sacrifices and the finality of the Christian system.

4. In his attempt to make Russia and Egypt the object of Daniel 11 (kings of north and kings of south) he says Cush means "black man" in Hebrew (pg. 13-14 of *Homo Sapiens*). One Hebrew lexicon (Young's) out of scores of others gives "black" as a meaning of the Hebrew word Cush. All other lexicons give another Hebrew word as the word used for "black."

Answer: Daniel 11 very evidently refers to the history of the Seleucids prior to the First Coming of the Messiah.

5. On page 112 Lindsey talks of the False Prophet he says is predicted in Rev. 13:11-18 and thinks the False Prophet will be from the tribe of Dan.

Answer: The 12 tribes of Jews in Revelation 7 which so many think apply to the restored Jews in Israel do not even include the tribe of Dan!

6. On page 139 Lindsey says I Cor. 15:50 teaches that Christians cannot inherit the Kingdom of God in the type of bodies we now have—flesh and blood. However, he says, the gospels and the Old Testament teach there will be certain people who *will* inherit for a time the Kingdom of God in bodies of flesh and blood. And this is going to be the millennial kingdom ruled over by Christ here on earth!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Answer: Does God contradict Himself? Is His Spirit the author of a confusing revelation?

7. There are *many* more exegetical and hermeneutical errors in this book and his other books. We cannot deal with them all in this study.

B. Seventh Day Adventists (*Signs of the Times*)

1. Following Ussher's chronology William Miller interpreted the 2300 days of Daniel as 2300 years and predicted Christ would return to earth in 1843. That didn't happen so they set Oct. 22, 1844. That didn't happen, so they said Christ passed from one section of heaven to another in 1844 to perform a work known as the "investigative judgment."
2. Their view of the 1000 years of Rev. 20: "During the one thousand years the earth lies desolate; Satan and his angels are confined here; and the saints, with Christ, sit in judgment on the wicked preparatory to their final punishment."

C. Jehovah's Witnesses (*Watchtower*)

1. "There is another way that helps confirm the fact that we are living in the final few years of this 'time of the end.'" (Dan. 12:9). The Bible shows that we are nearing the end of a full 6000 years of human history. . . . According to reliable Bible chronology, Adam and Eve were created in 4026 B.C.E.

4026 B.C.E. to 1 B.C.E.....	4025 years
1 B.C.E. to 1 C.E.	1 year
1 C.E. to 1968 C.E.....	<u>1967 years</u>

Total to autumn 1968 5993 years

2. "This would leave only seven more years from the autumn of 1968 to complete 6000 full years of human history. That seven-year period will evidently finish in the autumn of the year 1975." Quoted from *Awake* dated Oct. 1968.
 3. They predicted Christ came to earth in 1914, *invisibly*!
- ### C. Oswald J. Smith, in his book, *Is the Antichrist at Hand?* said:
1. "I have been studying with interest . . . the prophetic writings of . . . diligent students of the Bible. . . . Of all . . . those who have undertaken to work out the chronological forecast, there is not one who sets any date beyond 1934. The earliest suggested by these writers is 1928."
 2. "If our chronology is correct, it means that all these things, including the Great Tribulation, the revival of the Roman Empire, the reign of the Antichrist and the Battle of Armageddon, must take place before the year 1933."

ESCHATOLOGY

D. Some Other Date setters:

1. Augustine calculated the end of human history would be about 650 A.D.
2. Then eschatology buffs focused on the year 1000 A.D.
3. Then the Second Coming was predicted for 1044, 1065, and other dates.
4. I. M. Holdeman, pastor First Baptist Church of New York, said in 1911, "... the hour is ripe for the moment when the Lord shall descend and gather His Church to Himself."
5. W. E. Blackstone, in his book, *Jesus Is Coming*, printed in 1898, said, "... His coming, the rapture, is near."
6. In January, 1963, a well-known Bible teacher in So. California entitled an article "Jesus Will Come in 1968!"
7. On April 17, 1971, the Minneapolis Star carried a review of a book, *God, History and the End of the World*, in which Kenneth Aune, the author, claims that in March, 1990, will come the battle of Jerusalem, the return of Jesus Christ, and the battle of Armageddon.
8. May 10, 1974—an Israeli tour guide (see *Christian Standard*, Ed. 8-18-74)

II. EFFECT OF ERRONEOUS ESCHATOLOGY

A. Confusion and Ridicule

1. The non-christian world looks at the multitude of different predictions.
 - a. It scorns and ridicules Christianity and the Bible and the Church because every date set in the past (set by apparently sincerely convinced prophecy scholars) has been wrong!
 - b. It asks, Is there any truth to the Bible at all; if so, which religious group has the truth—they all differ on one of the most important doctrines of the Bibles, the end of time.
2. Even Christians are prompted to become disillusioned and suspicious of their Bible teachers when faced with the errors and confusion.

B. Erroneous Hermeneutics and Wresting the Scriptures

1. The theory of Premillennialism and Dispensationalism asserts that Christ came to earth for the purpose of setting up His kingdom. Quite by surprise, He was rejected by the Jews, however, and established the church instead. When He returns, He will allegedly raise only the righteous dead, after which He will restore national Israel, sit upon David's literal throne in Jerusalem and subsequently reign for 1000 years. After this, the resurrection of the wicked dead and the final judgment are supposed to occur.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

2. This violates proper hermeneutics because:

- a. It reflects upon the integrity of Bible prophecy by implying that the Jewish rejection of Christ was a miscarriage in God's plan. However, the Old Testament clearly foretold that rejection (Isa. 53:1ff.; Jn. 12:37-38; Psalms 118:22-23; Mt. 21:46, etc.).
- b. It denies plain Bible teaching concerning the establishment of the kingdom in the first century (Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:2-4; Acts 2:16-17; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:4, 6, 9).
- c. It suggests that the church was not a part of God's eternal purpose, but only an interim (parenthesis) emergency measure (Eph. 3:10; Rev. 13:8; Acts 20:28).
- d. It denies that Christ is now seated on David's throne (Zech. 6:12-13; Heb. 8:1; Lk. 1:32-33; Acts 2:30; Rev. 3:21).
- e. It denies that we are in the last days (Acts 2:16-17), and that Christ's next coming will end this world . . . (1 Cor. 15:24; Lk. 17:26-30).
- f. It teaches, contrary to the Bible, that Christ will come again to deal with sin through a Jewish economy (Heb. 9:28).
- g. It affirms, contrary to Scripture, that there will be two literal resurrections from the dead, 1000 years apart (Jn. 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).
- h. It denies the *expressed* symbolic nature of the book of Revelation by literalizing its figures (Rev. 1:1; 20:1-6).
- i. It denies that through the redemptive work of the First Coming of Christ *only*, must Jew and Gentile become "one" (Gal. 3:1ff.; Eph. 2:11-22, etc.).
- j. It denies that "Zion" of the Old Testament Prophets had its fulfillment in the New Testament church (cf. Heb. 12:22).

C. Unjust Politics

1. Oswald T. Allis in an article in *Christianity Today*, entitled, "Israel's Transgression in Palestine," Dec. 24, 1956, made an ethical evaluation of the Zionist/U.N. partitioning of Palestine.
2. The Zionists appeal to Gen. 18:18 to prove the Jews should claim sovereignty of Palestine. BUT DOES THIS SCRIPTURE GIVE THE ISRAELI A CLEAR TITLE TO PALESTINE? NO!
 - a. This promise was conditioned upon obedience. The Jews have disobeyed God from the days of Moses even to the rejection of the Messiah.
 - b. Any restoration of the Jews was conditioned upon repentance (Deut. 30:1-10).

Any return to a Jewish economy to seek the Lord would place them in a position "impossible to repent" (cf. Heb. 6 & 10).

ESCHATOLOGY

- c. The dispersion of the Jews and the taking of their place from them was a punishment from God (Mt. 21:43; 24:2; Lk. 21:24).
 - d. Jesus and His apostles predicted the end of the Jewish economy and nationalism (Jn. 4:23; Lk. 4:23-29; Eph. 3:1-13, etc.).
 - e. There is little spiritual difference between the Jews of America and the Jews of Palestine. A believing Jew is today as near heaven in the U.S., where 5 million of his fellow Israelites now live and apparently expect to continue to live, as if he were in Jerusalem. An unbelieving Jew is just as far from Heaven in Jerusalem as he would be in New York or London.
 - e. The attempt to restore the Jews to Palestine has proved to be unjust in itself and highly dangerous to the peace of the world. Palestine did not belong to the British. It did not and does not belong to the U.N. The persecution of the Jews by the Nazis and now by the Russians is unjust. But allowing the Jews to take possession of a large part of Palestine and to force hundreds of thousands of Arabs out of it is an equally grievous wrong.
- D. Division and Schism
- 1. Christians may have widely divergent views in regard to the Second Coming of Christ.
 - 2. All views must be submitted to the crucible of proper hermeneutics.
 - 3. But division comes when the particular view is overemphasized to such an extent that it becomes a "test of fellowship."
 - 4. And this continues to be made such a test of fellowship by churches, colleges, and individuals.
 - 5. It also becomes a heresy when it draws people away from the church (Armstrongism, J.W.s, etc.).
- E. Evangelism
- 1. It tends to stifle evangelism because it majors in prophecy dates, charts, signs, etc., and minors in the plan of salvation given in the New Testament.
 - 2. It tends to unethical, scare-tactic, pressure evangelism.
 - 3. Many use the "signs of the times" (the phrase is used only once in the Bible, Mt. 16:3, and referred to His *first* coming, not His 2nd) *to bring believers into line, and convert hard-case unbelievers.*
 - 4. This approach seems to say that what is really important is to be in good shape at that particular point in time when Christ appears about to return. It's the old I-don't-want-to-be-caught-in-there-when-Jesus-returns syndrome. It suggests in a veiled way

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

that the mark we get on our ethical report card is the mark we happen to receive on the pop quiz given at the Parousia rather than the cumulative grade for the entire course.

Jesus said, “. . . occupy till I come” (Lk. 19:13). He did not say, “Only be found occupying when I come.”

F. Some very extreme views connected with eschatology:

1. “Russia with all of her current satellites and all she might acquire in the future, will not be able to successfully invade Israel. ISRAEL IS INVINCIBLE UNLESS GOD IS VULNERABLE,” *Maranatha Trumpet*.
2. “Christ will not come back to the earth until the Jewish people ask Him to come back. . . . This is the basis of the Second Coming of Christ. . . . Satan knows that once Christ returns his career will be finished. . . . He also understands that Christ will not come back until the Jews ask Him to come back. If Satan can succeed in destroying all the Jews before they have a chance to ask Christ to come back, Christ will not come back and Satan will be safe. That is why Satan is in an all-out campaign to destroy the Jews. . . . The power of the Second Coming of Christ is very much in the hands of Israel.” *The Chosen People*, May 1975.
3. “This false Messiah will fool the Jews by doing miracles through the devil who will have entered his body in the middle of the 7 years. At this point in time, the Jews will look in the Bible to see if this man comes out of the predicted blood line of David. The Jews will find that this line or family tree ends with Christ (since he was killed and had no children). The Jews will also discover that the prophecies about the true Messiah fit only Christ. When the Jews have finally repented of their misconception about Christ, the world will see the appearance of Jesus Christ in person who will come in power and force to establish a Kingdom of Peace to last 1000 years on this present earth. The Jews will finally have their promised kingdom which in the final analysis, fulfills Old Testament promises to the Jews.” An unsigned paper in the author’s files.

III. ESSENTIAL ESCHATOLOGY

A. Certainty of His Coming

1. The most important thing about biblical eschatology is its emphasis on the certainty of the end of this world order, the Coming of Christ, and judgment.
2. “The Coming Judge,” by Seth Wilson, pub. *Christian Standard*, 4-12-58: “He (Jesus) is far more than a prophet in the past.

ESCHATOLOGY

He is a power in the present. And He is the most certain and significant of all the prospects for the future!"

3. There is only one way to be certain Jesus is Coming Again—that is to take His word for it. He promised it and His promises are *authenticated* by His resurrection from the dead.

"The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given *assurance* to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

THE ONLY SIGN OR ASSURANCE WE NEED THAT HE IS COMING AGAIN IS HIS RESURRECTION. THAT ASSURANCE WILL CALL MEN TO REPENTANCE.

The eyewitnessed, empirically verified, historically authenticated resurrection is *all-sufficient* testimony to His Second Coming. Human predictions about "signs of the times" are subject to all the enigma and vagary of speculation.

4. Jesus promised His return: Matt. 16:27; 24:30b; 24:37-42; 24:43-51; 25:1-13; 25:14-31; 26:64; Lk. 17:26-30; 19:11-27.
5. The angels promised His Return: Acts 1:11.
6. The apostles promised His Return: I Thess. 4:16; Acts 3:20-21; I Pet. 1:7; 5:4; II Pet. 3:3-4; James 5:7; Heb. 9:28; I Jn. 2:28; Rev. 1:7; I Cor. 1:7; 4:5; 11:26; 15:23; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; I Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:16-18; 5:1-4, 23; II Thess. 1:7-10; 2:1-8; I Tim. 6:14-15; II Tim. 4:1-8; Titus 2:13.

B. The Time of His Coming

1. "But of that day and hour *no one knows*, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only" (Mt. 24:36; Mk. 13:32-33). THE TRUTH OF THAT STATEMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN VERIFIED BY THE SPECULATORS OF THE PAST WHO WERE SURE THEY KNEW FROM THE "SIGNS OF THEIR TIMES."
2. He will come "as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:2-3; Mt. 24:27-51; 25:1-13; II Pet. 3:8-10). There will be no preliminary announcements ahead of His coming! He will come unexpectedly—suddenly!
3. *No one will miss knowing* when He comes—there will be *no secret* coming or rapture. The next time Jesus comes it will be with a shout and trumpet blast to be heard by all the living and the dead—*every eye* shall see Him (cf. Rev. 1:7; Mt. 24:26-31; I Cor. 15:52; I Thess. 4:16).
4. THE EMPHASIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IS THE NEED TO *BE READY AT ALL TIMES!* Setting dates; making lists of "signs of the end"; speculative and divisive dogmas devitalize and weaken this readiness!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

5. He is coming when people will be doing the normal things of life, "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (Mt. 24:37-38).
6. There will be no abnormal, extra-ordinary "signs" pointing to His "soon" coming. "The Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect" (Mt. 24:44).

C. Particulars Concerning His Coming

1. Seth Wilson, *ibid.*: "The Lord has revealed only a few particulars . . . of the great events which will take place when He comes. No doubt there are many things in store for us that we have not been told because we could not grasp and appreciate them now. Very likely some of the things predicted will not happen as we imagine them."
2. The dead will be raised (I Thess. 4:16; Jn. 5:28-29).
3. Those alive will be changed into bodies fitting them for their eternal destiny (Phil. 3:21; I Cor. 15:52-54; Rom. 8:23-25).
4. The redeemed will (the resurrected and changed—all together) be with the Lord (I Thess. 4:17).
5. The world and its carnal works will be burned up, melted, (II Pet. 3:11-13).
6. A crown of glory will be given to the faithful (II Tim. 4:8; I Pet. 5:4).
7. Christ, with His angels, will execute judgment upon all men (II Tim. 4:1; Jude 14-15; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Jn. 5:22-29; II Cor. 5:10, etc.).
8. Many will be rejected who thought they were saved (Mt. 7:21-23; 22:13-14; Lk. 13:25-27, etc.).
9. The opportunity for salvation will be forever closed (Lk. 13:25-28).
10. There will be grief and terror in the hearts of many because they are unprepared to meet Him (Mt. 24:30, 50, 51; 25:30, etc.).

IV. EFFECT OF ESSENTIAL ESCHATOLOGY

A. Purity of Living

1. "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting . . . for the coming of the day of God . . ." (II Pet. 3:11-12).
2. ". . . we know that when he appears we shall be like him, . . . and every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure" (I Jn. 3:2-3).
3. MORE EMPHASIS ON THE CERTAINTY OF HIS COMING AND ON THE IMMINENT URGENCY OF IT (DAILY, HOURLY URGENCY) WOULD PROMOTE MORE GODLINESS THAN ALL THE PROMOTIONAL GIMMICKS AND ENTERTAINMENT SESSIONS OF ALL THE CHURCHES PUT TOGETHER!

ESCHATOLOGY

4. *More sermons are needed on Judgment, The End of the World, The Second Coming.*

B. Encouragement For Endurance of Trials and Tests

1. ". . . we who are alive . . . shall be caught up together . . . to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord. . . . Therefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:17-18).
2. "But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed" (I Pet. 4:13).
3. CHRISTIANS WHO TRUST THAT CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN TO RIGHT ALL WRONGS, TO VINDICATE ALL COMMITMENTS, TO JUDGE ALL SECRETS . . . TAKE COURAGE AND ENDURE, CONFIDENT THAT CHRIST WILL VINDICATE THEM *PERFECTLY!*

C. Evangelism

1. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body. Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men . . ." (II Cor. 5:10-11).

THE REMAINDER OF THAT CHAPTER SPEAKS OF BEING AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST.

2. "He has commanded all men everywhere to repent, in that he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world . . ." (Acts 17:31).
3. JESUS MAY COME TODAY! WE MUST PREACH THE WORD WITH ALL URGENCY IN SEASON AND OUT OF SEASON.

EVERY MAN AND WOMAN MUST AT LEAST HEAR AND BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND!

4. "It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, *each with his work . . .*" (Mk. 13:34).

"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master *when he comes shall find so doing*" (Mt. 24:45-46).

D. Contemporaneity

1. Michael Green in an article in *Christianity Today*, 1-1-65 says: "I believe that in this biblical doctrine of the Christian hope (the Second Coming) we have an intelligible answer to the modern quest for purpose in the world."
2. Quest for Personal Identity: Man is in quest of personal identity. What is he worth? What does he matter? What is his destiny? That God is Coming Again in His Son to consummate His great redemptive work for *man* (the end of God's whole cosmic

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

scheme) in a *personal* appearance is a message that is relevant in our depersonalized age!

3. Quest for Realism: Man is skeptical in our age of any theory of regeneration or redemption of society or the cosmos which is unsupported by hard facts.

Is the Christian doctrine of a returning, redeeming Christ realistic in the 20th century? . . . Is the Christian optimism that "all will be well in the end" justifiable? Or is it a fantasy, a fairy tale like all the schemes of men?

4. The Christ who came and who will come, just because of this, IS COMING TO US DAY BY DAY, CHALLENGING US CONSTANTLY FOR AN ENTRANCE INTO OUR LIVES. . . . SEEKING OUR FELLOWSHIP!
5. God's purpose is to demonstrate NOW, in this world, this transitory world, the beauty, power, holiness, and permanence of the age to come. He who has called us out of this world is Holy. He who will come for us is Holy. In the meantime, He has given us His Holy Spirit to work out in our lives something of the character of the age to come.

CONCLUSION

- I. ERRONEOUS ESCHATOLOGY BRINGS REPROACH UPON GOD'S WORD AND HIS CHURCH: IT CREATES DIVISION: IT DISCOURAGES: IT HINDERS PRODUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY.
- II. ESSENTIAL ESCHATOLOGY DOES NOT CREATE DIVISION: PROMOTES PURITY OF LIVING: GIVES ENCOURAGEMENT: URGES EVANGELISM: FILLS THE NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY MAN.
- III. THE LORD DOES WANT US TO KNOW SOME THINGS ABOUT THE FUTURE .

He wants us to know that Christ is coming personally to this world of time and space again just as certainly as He came forth from the dead in a time-space event.

He wants us to know there is a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" beyond this world which will be destroyed completely.

Therefore let us be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord . . . for we know our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

ESCHATOLOGY

A LIMITED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES HELPFUL IN THE AREA OF ESCHATOLOGY

BOOKS

1. *Prophecy And The Church*, by Oswald T. Allis, The Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. (deals with Dispensationalism)
2. *The Time Is at Hand*, by Jay Adams, The Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co. (a commentary on Revelation proposing "Realized Millennialism")
3. *Worthy Is The Lamb*, by Ray Summers, Broadman Pub. (a commentary on Revelation from amillennial viewpoint)
4. *The Meaning and Message of The Book of Revelation*, by E. A. McDowell, Broadman Pub. (a commentary on Revelation - amillennial)
5. *Jeremiah—Lamentations*, by James E. Smith, College Press, pub. (esp. Special Study entitled "Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventy Years Prophecy." (a commentary)
6. *Thinking Through Thessalonians*, by Wilbur Fields, College Press, pub. (see all the Special Studies in this book) (a commentary)
7. *God's Prophetic Word*, by Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Gospel Advocate, pub. Out of print. (a series of lectures on dispensationalism)
8. *Prophecy & Premillennialism*, by James D. Bales, Bales, pub. (studies on New Testament fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies)
9. *Millennial Studies*, by George L. Murray, pub. Baker (an excellent refutation of basic errors of premillennialism)
10. *Daniel*, by Paul T. Butler, College Press, pub. (a commentary)
11. *Minor Prophets*, by Paul T. Butler, College Press, pub. (a commentary—see esp. Introductory section)
12. *Isaiah, in 3 volumes*, by Paul T. Butler, College Press, pub. (a commentary—see esp. Introductory section)
13. *The End Time*, by Russell Boatman, pub. College Press

ARTICLES

1. "Is the Lord's Return Imminent?," by Rodger N. Elliott, *Christian Standard*, 6-9-74
2. "Signs Of Confusion," by Earl D. Radmacher, *Moody Monthly*, May 1974
3. "Why Eternity Must Follow the Second Advent," by Wick Broomall, *Christian News*, not dated
4. "The Coming Judge," by Seth Wilson, *Christian Standard*, 4-12-58
5. "When Is Jesus Coming Again?," by Seth Wilson, *Lookout*, 3-11-56
6. "Outlines of Matthew 24 and 25," by Paul T. Butler, 3-8-81/3-15-81, Xerox
7. "A Secret Rapture Considered," by Seth Wilson, *OBC Compass*, Oct. 1973

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

(Acts 20:28-32)

By Paul T. Butler — OBC Convention, 1978

INTRODUCTION

- I. There were both true and false prophets in the first century church.
 - A. The New Testament is replete with instructions and warnings about those who are to be listened to and not listened to.
 - B. The most frightening aspect of New Testament teaching on prophecy is that the false prophets will arise from *within the brotherhood of believers!*
- II. There was a special charismatic gift of prophecy given to some in the first century church.
 - A. That was given only by the laying on of the hands of the apostles (see lesson on Paul's Power to Give Charismatic Power).
 - B. This ceased (and was intended to cease) when the perfected church arrived (see lesson from last year's convention on Gifts, Miracles, by Butler), or when the apostles died.
- III. So, we will look at the phenomenon of Modern Prophecy from these two conclusions.
 - A. Even when there were true prophets, not all who claimed to be prophets were to be followed . . . and
 - B. The New Testament indicates the miraculous gift of prophecy was to cease with the apostles deaths.

DISCUSSION

- I. Who are the Modern prophets and what are they prophesying?
 - A. Ever since the end of the apostolic age self-appointed prophets have been predicting and revealing messages from God (so they say).
 - 1. No two of them seem to agree on interpreting events or times.
 - 2. Hardly any of them agree doctrinally (except on charismatic gifts for today).
 - 3. There are hundreds of them just in the Midwest—let alone the other hundreds all over the world.
 - 4. I will deal with just a few because they are basically all alike—false!
 - B. Salem Kirban, author of *Guide to Survival*, and other books and films
 - 1. Rapture must occur 7 years before 2000 A.D., but there is a 4-year error in our calendar, therefore the Rapture is to be

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

in 1989 and the Millennium begins in 1996 (after 7 years tribulation).

2. Then Mr. Kirban states, "However, nowhere in God's word does He tell us the exact date . . . for the Rapture."

C. David Webber, Pastor of Southwest Radio Church, Oklahoma City, Okla. and publisher of *The Gospel Truth*.

1. Refers to Gorge Orwell's *1984* for the prediction that by that date a world dictator would control all nations; refers to Hal Lindsey's book and to movies with "apocalyptic warnings" like *The Birds*, *Earthquake*, *The Omen* which "testify to these things which are soon coming upon the earth."
2. Mr. Webber says, "Scripture indicts ministers and pastors who refuse to investigate the signs of the time leading to Christ's return, and warn the unsaved to prepare, as being ignorant, hypocrites, and false prophets (Mt. 16:3; II Pet. 3:3-5)."
3. Mr. Webber's time table is: 1974-78 Jewish temple rebuilt; 1981-85 Beginning of the Tribulation; Beginning of the Kingdom age 1997-2001.

D. Morris Cerullo, World Evangelism, San Diego, Calif. (produced T.V. program "Masada")

1. Ezekiel's prophecy of the "dry bones" predicted the Nazi slaughter of 6 million Jews, and the survival of modern Israel.
2. This is the "beginning" "the *exact* summer season."
3. This "generation" that sees the birth of the nation of Israel. . . . is in the "summer season" (he cites Lk. 21:29-33).
4. "I tell you, I would not trade places with Moses, with Elijah, with any of the apostles. I would rather be alive today. This is the greatest moment of history, when the trumpet of God will sound, and your Lord and mine will come. . . ."
5. "When I was only 15 years old . . . God dealt with me in a vision in which I was caught up into the heavens and I stood as close to the glory of God as when Moses spoke face to face with Him. . . . The brightness of his glory moved from the place where He had stood, there were two holes in the shape of footprints left in the heaven through which I could see countless thousands of people going to hell without Christ. . . . In the vision I moved to stand in these open footprints . . . and my feet fit exactly where His had been. . . . I knew that God had called me to go to the multitudes of this world with the message of salvation. . . ."

E. Dr. Charles Taylor, Redondo Beach, Calif., author of *Get All Excited, Jesus is Coming Soon*.

1. First predicted the Rapture in 1975

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

2. Then changed, saying, 1948 Israel established
 3. Makes "this generation" (Mt. 24:34) point of reference; a generation in the Bible is 35 years acc. to Job 42:16
 4. Thus the Rapture will be Sept. 25, 1976 (Feast of Trumpets and a Sabbath day)
 5. Millennium is to begin in 1983
- F. Joel Darby, Book Fellowship Tract, (Tract entitled, *Why All the Vultures*)
1. A new breed of vultures has appeared in Israel, a breed never seen before.
 2. They are multiplying at 3 times the normal rate in Israel.
 3. This is a sign of the end time, writes a former Rabbi Michael Esses, in his new book, *Next Visitor to Planet Earth*, pub. Logos, Plainfield, N.J. 07060.
 4. Whereas these "buzzards" normally lay one egg at a time, they are now laying FOUR!
 5. According to Reuters News Agency, Russia has bought large quantities of powerful archery equipment from the British, also draught horses from all over the world.
 6. At any rate the amazing multiplication of the buzzard population right now should warn any careless Christian to get busy and work. . . . God would not be off on His timing. . . . He would not provide for the vastly increased buzzard population NOW if the need for them was 10 or 20 years hence!
- G. Christian church people
1. *Christian Standard*, March 15, 1969, art. entitled "Crisis in the Middle East."
 - a. Applies Daniel's prophecies in ch. 11 to the Second Coming of Christ, suggesting that Armageddon may be within "the near future."
 - b. Applies Ezekiel 38-39 to return of the Jews to Palestine now and the immediate future.
 2. At a widely attended men's clinic in the late 1950's a college professor's prediction of Communist terror "Within 4 years we'll all be dead or wish to God we were!" was proclaimed.
 3. *The Exhorter*, a publication of Churches of Christ, Hammond, La., "With the amazing acceleration of human history in the last few years, we would expect to see the fulfillment of these prophecies (Zech. 14; as applied to Israel's return to Palestine, etc.) in a very short space of time." date of paper, January 1969

This is just a drop in the bucket: Billy Graham, David Wilkerson, Oral Roberts, Richard DeHahn, Pastor Pack, Bill Bright, Rev. Moon, Armstrongites, J.W.s, 7th Day Adventists, Mormons, on and on they go,

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

disagreeing both in prophecies and doctrines.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE GIVE MILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO PROMOTE PEOPLE WHOSE MAIN EFFORTS ARE SPENT PREACHING AND PRINTING SUCH USELESS VERBIAGE.

II. Why are they prophesying thus?

- A. There are some who mistakenly think such a *literal* view of the Old Testament Prophets and Revelation is equal to a fundamentalism.
 - 1. "If we believe the Bible as the infallible and inspired word of God, then we must also believe that God has set a day before the literal return of Christ to the earth in which everyone will have to worship the Antichrist as God in order to get their code and number." from *The Midnight Cry*, pub. by Dr. Wm. F. Beirnes, Shoals, Indiana
 - 2. "Numerous passages in the Bible predict the return of Israel to the land. It is difficult to find any doctrines taught more clearly or emphatically in God's word. Yet, many people have failed to accept this truth. They have either ignored these passages, or said that they were fulfilled in the return of the Jewish captivity from Babylon, or that they were figuratively fulfilled in the church." from *The Exhorter*, already cited
 - 3. "He (God) made a covenant with Abraham, promising a large portion of the Middle East . . . for him and his descendants. The covenant is unconditional. . . . and we, knowing Him who made the promise, totally support the people and land of Israel in their God-given, God-promised, God-ordained right to exist. Any person or group of nations opposed to this right isn't just fighting Israel, but God and time itself." in the New York Times over the name of the American Board of Mission to the Jews, supported by 48 named churches.
- B. Fascination with and psychological need for knowing the unknown
 - 1. This has been true of people ever since the garden of Eden.
 - 2. It was a problem with the first century church (Thessalonians, Corinthians, etc.).
 - 3. Martin Gardner, reviewer of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, says, "Long having lost faith in science and politics, millions of Americans are now longing for a mystical breakthrough from the skies which will usher in the Age of Aquarius."
 - 4. Many people are looking for God to solve the problems of the Christian who has to face an ungodly world by supernatural intervention rather than through hard, faithful discipleship.
 - a. Fascination with all these details of so-called Bible prophecies relieves people from the hard things in Christianity.
 - b. If we can believe that the main thrust of God's redemptive

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- program is going to deal with circumstances (land, armies, temples, etc.) we may hope in that as His ultimate program.
- c. BUT THE MAIN THRUST OF GOD'S REDEEMPTIVE PROGRAM IS THE CHANGING OF THE NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL.
5. The essential elements of all the dispensational, pre-millennial systems may be found in the Jewish Apocryphal writings.
 6. The New Testament tells us we do not need to know times or seasons which God has set in His own authority (2nd Coming, etc.). We do not need to know what type of resurrection body we will have. There are many things we do not need to know. . . .
 7. C.S. Lovett, *Personal Christianity*, Baldwin Park, Calif. "The Holy Spirit has given us a unique method for unlocking the deeper truths. If, for example, you were reading *Lovett's Lights on Thessalonians*, the books that offer Paul's comments on antichrist and the rapture of the church (which I strongly believe in), *you'd find your imagination set on fire. . . .*"
- C. Instant Evangelism
1. "The signs of our time indicate the days of this age are winding down, and God does not want us to be ignorant when the day of Christ's return is at hand. . . . We must be about the Father's business, urging the lost to be saved . . . before that terrible day of darkness falls upon the earth." from the *Midnight Cry* already cited.
 2. "Unlike other missions, Jewish missions is not merely evangelistic. The purpose of missions in general is to evangelize and disciple. But Jewish missions is more so. Not only does Jewish missions seek to evangelize . . . it is also a prophetic ministry. . . ." *The Chosen People*, already cited.
 3. Hal Lindsey's books appeal for urgent evangelism because "the time is short. . . ."
 4. In some way or another, these prophets seem to think they can by-pass the plain urgings of Jesus to insist that people count the cost, that Christian discipleship should be based on conviction, not emotion.
They think that all these "count-downs" and "horror pictures" will persuade people to repent.
Revelation 9:20ff. plainly says that all the terrible things symbolized by the Trumpets (judgments upon the Roman empire) did not cause the rest of mankind to repent!
 5. I was in a Christian Service Camp a few years ago (Guadalupe, N.M.) and a preacher was showing his slides of the Holy Land and preaching on the Rapture, etc., and 5 or six kids got so

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

upset they started crying and making long distance phone calls to make sure their parents were home.

D. Zionism is politically chic!

1. Some people consider it a test of your relationship to Christ that you believe the Jews have a biblical right to Palestine.
2. We have already cited the quotation in II. A. 4.
3. *Time* magazine continually prints editorials and articles on the Jews returning to Palestine "Thus Judaism . . . and Israel, have a commanding moral claim to Jerusalem . . ." *Time*, 12-27-71.
4. U. S. Presidents from Truman to the present have been forced by powerful Jewish opinion to politically support something that although politically expedient, was actually unethical!
5. What really upsets me is the fact that most of our U. S. congressmen blasted their own countrymen for trying to protect the sovereign land of S. Vietnam against invasion by N. Vietnam (agreed to by treaty), and on the other hand acclaimed the U. N. partitioning of Palestine in 1948 to the Jews, forcing Palestinians out, as right.

E. Ego-trip, fame, gather a following (III John 9).

1. The scriptures indicate this as a motive for false teachers and false prophets.
". . . from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. . . ." (Acts 20:30).
2. The indication in I Corinthians 12-14 is that people were even using *bona fide* gifts of tongues and prophecy for ego-trips.
3. There are thousands and thousands of "itching-eared" people who do not want to endure sound doctrine and accumulate to themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths (II Tim. 4:1-5). THERE ARE EGO-HUNGRY PREACHERS WILLING TO EXPLOIT THESE ITCHING EARED PEOPLE TO MAKE LUCRATIVE LIVINGS AT IT!
4. Even the *People of God*, led by Moses David, use modern prophetism to recruit and obtain members and money, Bicentennial Issue of *Que Sera, Sera* (would you help us with a donation, please!).

F. Money

1. One example; many others might be cited
2. Rex Humbard's Archives of Faith for Sinners
In anticipation of the *soon* coming of Christ, the rapture

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

and the 7 years of Great Tribulation (during which it will not be easy for those who are left).

After Humbard and all other saved Christians have been raptured only unrepentant sinners will remain on earth.

Mr. Humbard will be on video tapes to tell them how to reach salvation. Just push a button, and he'll be there. The right to record a personal testimony to a maximum length of four handwritten pages is now being offered to anyone for a donation of \$100. These microfilmed testimonies will represent a reservoir of faith for those left behind. At the archives there will be a film explaining what has happened with the rapture, etc. The first one to record a personal testimony will be Johnny Cash . . . he will not have to pay the \$100 because he has contributed liberally in the past.

The date of the rapture, according to Humbard, is uncertain, but all those who have been born again know we are on the verge of the Lord's return. While it is true that no one knows the day or the hour, there is something on the inside of each believer that tells him the Lord is soon to return.

Mr. Humbard emphasized that the inclusion of names or testimonies in the archives was not a guarantee of salvation. . . . "We're just fixing to memorialize some people who help us do the job."

3. Of course, the recent expose of the Armstrong fortunes reminds us that they got it from majoring in this kind of modern-day prophetism.

Granted, not all those who think they are prophets today are charlatans or ego-maniacs. Some of them probably would not even claim to be prophets but merely interpreters of Bible prophecies. This may be another subject for study altogether—however, it is interesting that practically all those who have claimed to receive revelations and prophesy, and those who give literal dispensational-pre-millennial interpretations to Bible prophecies AGREE on current events of history!

"And God told me to tell my partners that the moment they hear me say \$77 or \$777 or multiples of 7's, to act upon it quickly" Oral Roberts, *Abundant Life*, January 1978.

III. What God Says about Prophets

A. Biblical tests of a True Prophet

1. They speak ONLY in the name of God or Christ (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20).
 - a. False prophets may predict the future or work signs (Deut. 13).
 - b. Satan can do signs (II Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13-15).

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

- c. God may allow a prophet to be self-deceived and to deceive sinful peoples as punishment (Ezek. 14:9-11).
- d. This is not the *only* test because a false prophet may pretend to speak in the name of the Lord (Jer. 29:8-9).
- e. *In the name of*, means, *by the authority of*.
- f. We have not only the right but the obligation to challenge every alleged prophecy or prophet with the proposition that the ONLY AUTHORITATIVE WORD FROM GOD FROM NOW UNTIL THE END OF TIME IS CONTAINED IN THE 66 BOOKS OF OUR BIBLE!
- g. Even authentic prophets can be deceived! (1 Kings 13).
- 2. They speak ONLY by revelation or inspiration.
 - a. If prophets of biblical times practiced augury, sorcery, divination, they were rejected as false (Deut. 18:9-14).
 - b. Heathen magical practices were not practiced by true prophets of God.
 - c. Deceivers who prophesy lie (Ezek. 12:24; 22:28; Jer. 14:14; Micah 3:7, 11); they speak their *own heart*, not God's revelation (Jer. 23:16, 26; Ezek. 13:2).
 - d. True prophets receive *direct* revelations from Jehovah (Num. 12:6).
 - e. False prophets may claim visions and dreams (Deut. 13:1-5; Ezek. 14:9-11).
 - f. Modern day prophets appeal to soothsayers like Jeanne Dixon; scientists; military prognosticators; even to *Reader's Digest* and current events to validate their prophecies.

Examples:

The Midnight Cry (already cited): "The November 1976 *Reader's Digest* carries an interesting story related to our subject entitled 'Coming Soon; Electronic Money.' 'This (cashless society) is what both the Bible predicts and financial experts now affirm.'"

The Gospel Truth (already cited): "George Orwell in his book, 1984, predicted that by this date a world dictator would control all nations. Mr. Orwell may be proven to be a prophet with honor in this respect. . . .
 "Financial experts predict that by 1980 . . . etc.
 "A news release this past month stated . . . etc.
 "President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing of France said . . . etc.
 "Henry Kissinger said . . . etc.
 ". . . it was the consensus of scientists who worked there (Kennedy Space Center) that if man did not destroy himself by the year 2000 . . . etc.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Personal Christianity, VI. 17, No. 6, June 1977, C. S. Lovett

"Antichrist is in the world this moment! Who says so? Jeane Dixon, the well known Catholic soothsayer. She claims he will surface in the early 1980s. But do we consider her a true oracle of God? No way! Not all of her predictions come true. Nevertheless she has quite a record of accurate predictions when it comes to world rulers, such as . . ."

3. They were conscious of a definite call—they could not mistake it!

a. Moses (Ex. 4:10-12; Jer. 1:4-10; Amos 7:4-15).

b. Samuel (I Sam. 3:19-20).

c. Mrs. Oral Roberts, explaining God's calling her to:

" . . . Lord . . . I'd like to hear Your voice as Oral does. . . . So as I walked I prayed in the Spirit at length. I couldn't understand the prayer language coming over my tongue. It sounded Oriental to me . . . and the interpretation came back in my own language one line at a time. . . .

'No, you will not hear My voice as others do. . . . I speak to him (Oral) in an audible voice but I will not speak to you audibly. . . . I will speak to you out of the everydayness of your life. . . .'" (*Abundant Life*, Jan. 1978)

d. Morris Cerullo: "Theresa (his wife) excused herself to tend to some sewing but was soon fast asleep on the couch. When I noticed that she had fallen asleep, I thought, Now that's strange! We just woke up from a good night's sleep!

I soon realized that God had placed that sleep upon her, . . . so that He might prepare the way for the supernatural visitation of His presence right there in my kitchen. . . ." Then God spoke to me. . . .

" . . . while I was in the back of a bus coming from a crusade . . . God had spoken to my heart . . . so forceful was God's visitation to me on that occasion, that I left the other members of the team and went to the very back of the bus and let God speak to my heart. . . ."

It is strange that all modern day prophets get their "calls" from God when no one else can verify it!

4. True prophets did not seek the office, they were chosen by God and spoke by divine compulsion.

a. Many of them resisted (Jer. 1:4-19; Ex. 3:10-12; Ezek. 3:12-15; Jonah 1:1-3).

b. Even when Paul told the Corinthians, "desire the spiritual gifts" he also told them that the Holy Spirit distributed His gifts (miraculous) according to His will . . . and not according to the wishes of men.

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

5. The commission of the true prophet was authenticated by signs or miracles.
 - a. Ex. 4:1-21 . . . Moses
 - b. Joshua 3:7-13 . . . Joshua
 - c. I Sam. 12:16ff.
 - d. Miracles of Elijah and Elisha
 - e. Paul, Peter, and those upon whom they laid their hands.
 - f. signs and miracles may be copies or faked by false prophets
Deut. 13:1-5; Ex. 7:8-13; 7:20-22; 8:7; Mt. 24:24; Mk. 13:22; II Thess. 2:9.
6. The message of the True Prophet was always in harmony with the whole will of God which had been revealed up to that time.
 - a. Deut. 13:1-3 - could not contradict previous truth
 - b. I Kings 13 - true prophet would not have been deceived by old prophet if he had used this test.
 - c. Jer. 26 - leaders were going to kill Jeremiah because he predicted destruction of Jerusalem. Some elders remembered Micah years before predicted the same. . . . Jeremiah spared
 - d. I John 4:1-6
 - e. This harmony with revealed truth applies to all the doctrines of the Bible . . . not just predicted history.
 - f. Modern day prophets for the most part do not teach the full apostolic doctrine.

Billy Graham, for example, who interprets biblical prophecy and declares he is God's spokesman, said, "I used to believe that pagans in far-off countries were lost—were going to hell—if they did not have the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached to them. I no longer believe that. . . . I believe that there are other ways of recognizing the existence of God—through nature, for instance—and plenty of other opportunities, therefore, of saying 'yes' to God."

"Graham once believed that Jews, too, were lost if they did not convert to Christianity. . . . Today Graham is willing to leave that up to God. . . ."

"I've found that my beliefs are essentially the same as those of orthodox Roman Catholics. . . . We only differ on some matters of later church tradition." *McCalls* magazine, January 1978

7. The message of the true prophet and the prophet himself was authenticated by historical fulfillments of his prophecies.
 - a. Deut. 18:21-22
 - b. Jer. 28:17
8. The moral character of the prophet and his prophecies must agree with God's full revelation.
 - a. False prophets tend to be ungodly and preach ungodly (both morally and theologically).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

b. Jer. 23:10-17

c. Matt. 7:15-20; II Pet. 2:1-22; Jude 1-23

B. We do not need modern day prophecies and prophets!

1. There is enough prophecy in the Bible, fulfilled in minute detail (Daniel, Isaiah, Revelation) to show that God is in control of history!

2. We do not need, beyond what is revealed in the Bible, to know future circumstances—because knowing the future of earthly history has nothing to do with our covenant relationship to God (I Jn. 3:1-3).

It is not circumstances that save or destroy, it is faith or lack of faith—regardless of circumstances.

3. The Bible is all sufficient.

a. "And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

b. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:16-17).

C. Modern day prophets need to take warning from Jeremiah, ch. 23 and Ezekiel, ch. 13.

Excerpt from a Workshop on the Second Coming of Christ for the NACC, July 14, 1978, Oklahoma City, Okla., by Paul T. Butler.

ZIONISM (Restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Palestine). Modern Zionism strictly political; never intended to exclude Palestinians (*Enc. Brit.* "Zionism").

A. Some little known historical facts about Zionism and modern Jews

1. Theodor Herzl, founder of political Zionism, was schizoid, given to frequent fits of melancholy and depression and threatened suicide several times. He spent vast sums of money bribing Turkish officials in order to gain the Sultan's approval of a Jewish settlement in Palestine.

Pauline, his first child, became a drug addict, had several men who left her, wound up overdosing and dying of drugs, at 40.

Hans, his son was manic depressive, treated by Freud who diagnosed an extreme Oedipus complex. Committed suicide on the day of Pauline's funeral.

Trude, married and became a mental case, her marriage broke down and she died after being an inmate of a number of mental institutions. . . . *The Hebrew Christian*, Winter, 1977, Vol. L, No. 4.

2. What about the Falashas? 50,000 black, East Central Africans who have practiced Judaism since 600 B.C., and who claim to be

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

descendents of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. They observe all Jewish rites, sacrifices, and festivals except Hanukkah. . . . *Christianity Today*, 12-7-73, "Black Jews: A House Divided," pg. 52.

3. Most East-European "Jews" (Poles, Hungarian, Czech, etc.) are not really descendents of Israelites, but descendents of the Khazars, Caucasians who became converts or proselytes to Judaism about 900-1000 A.D. The Khazars were "Gentiles" from south Russia! . . . *The Thirteenth Tribe*, by Arthur Koestler, Random House pub., (so well documented and important a book it was reviewed by Wall Street Journal)
4. No Jew today can trace his ancestry back beyond two or three hundred years. So how do we know for sure that they are really Jews (true Israelites according to the Old Testament and from the 12 tribes)? . . . *Christianity Today*, 3-13-70, Jacob Gartenhaus, "The Jewish Conception of the Messiah." (he was born in Austria and educated in rabbinical schools there).
5. CBS, "Sixty Minutes" program, 4-10-77:
 - a. As many people are leaving Israel to come to the U.S. as are going into Israel to live each day.
 - b. There are over 200,000 Jews in N.Y. City and many have come there recently from Israel.
 - c. Some Jews who have lived in Israel from its very beginning in 1948 have recently come to the U.S.
 - d. A taxi-driver in N.Y., who couldn't make a living in Israel, has made over \$100,000 in 3 years since coming to N.Y.
 - e. Why are they leaving? 30 years of war; no exemptions from army service; not enough space; inflation rate over 35%; strikes; bureaucracy; takes 5 year wait to get a telephone; corruption in government; income tax takes 65% of wage earner's living.
 - f. 1/10 of all Israeli citizens live outside the country.
6. The present Israeli government has made it unlawful to do Christian evangelism in that land. How will the millennium ever come about?

B. Zionism and the Bible

1. Repentance and obedience to God's commandments and prophecies was the *condition* upon which God promised to give the land of Palestine to the Jews in the Old Testament.

Significantly, God gave the Jews into the hands of their enemies a number of times when they disobeyed Him. They were taken *out* of Palestine and brought back a number of times.
2. The ultimate disobedience of the Jews was the rejection of God's Son, the Messiah (cf. Dan. 9:24 ". . . to finish transgression" and Mt. 23:29-39 ". . . may come all the righteous blood shed on earth . . . and your house is forsaken and desolate"; and Luke

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- 19:41-44 “. . . because you did not know the time of your visitation.”
3. Jesus predicted the dispossession of the Jews by God in His parables in Matt. 21 and 22.
 - a. King's marriage feast for his son . . . the king sent his troops (Rome's army, Mt. 24:15, “desolating sacrilege”) and destroyed those murderers.
 - b. The householder's vineyard. . . . “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.” This is the sentence the Jews pronounced upon themselves! (Mt. 21:33-41).

Then Jesus reinforced it, “Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits thereof.”
 4. Jesus predicted the Jews would “. . . fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Lk. 21:24). The Old Testament era was the times of the Jews. The New Testament era is the times of the Gentiles. Judaism is a thing of the past!
 5. The apostle Paul, speaking of the Jews nationally, said that “God's wrath *came* (*ephtasen*, Gr. aor. past tense) upon them *to the end* (*eis telos*), or “*to completion*” (I Thess. 2:16). *Judaism cannot be revived*, although individual Jews may be saved if they accept the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). Dan. 9:27 calls the destruction of Jerusalem—the “*decreed end*.”
 6. Once the Messiah has come and completed His work, God has dispensed forever with a special *place* of worship (Jn. 4:21-24; Acts 17:24-25); any other *sacrifices* (Heb. 9:26; 10:12-14), etc.
 7. To populate Palestine with a theocracy of Judaism, reinstitute the Temple and its sacrifices, reconstitute a Jewish priesthood, would violate and contradict the very plain teaching of the New Testament that the church of Jesus Christ (composed of both Jew and Gentile on the same basis) is the primary object of God's redemptive work . . . and not the Jewish nation!
 8. The book of Galatians makes it plain that “in Christ” there are no more racial or social distinctions ever again (Gal. 3:26-29). If we are in Christ, we are Abraham's “offspring.” Or, to put it another way, a true “Jew” is one who is one inwardly, not genetically (Rom. 2:28-29). The true Israel of God is that which is a *new* creation (Gal. 6:15-16).
 9. True Zion is the church (Heb. 12:18-24).
 10. Judaism is the kingdom that was “shaken” and “removed” (Heb. 12:25-27).
 11. Christianity is the kingdom that “cannot be shaken” (Heb. 12:28).

MODERN PROPHECY EXAMINED

12. Judaism is "no lasting city" (Heb. 13:14) and to go to Christ it must be outside the camp (of Judaism) (Heb. 13:13).
13. The twelve tribes of Israel in Rev. 7:1-8 cannot refer to a literal return of Old Testament Israel to Palestine because that list leaves out the tribes of Dan and Ephraim, and inserts two tribes not originally given an inheritance—Levi and Joseph.
14. It is very significant that no New Testament writer mentions a future return of the Jews to the land of Palestine. Very obviously the return of the Jews to the land of which the Old Testament prophets spoke had already occurred in the restoration of the captivities, or, figuratively in the establishment of the church.
15. Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27) plainly teaches that *God would finish His work* for the redemption of the world *through the Jews* 490 years after the "going forth of the word to rebuild" Jerusalem. From 457 B.C. (see Ezra 7) to 34 A.D. (allowing for the 4-year mistake in our calendar) is 490 years. 34 A.D. was after the stoning of Stephen and when the gospel was initially taken to the Gentiles.
16. Isaiah predicts that God will establish a "new" nation before the "old" one passes away (Isa. 66:7ff.) and that the new will be established with one stroke (Heb. *pa'am*). A land and a nation was brought forth with one stroke before the old passed away on the Day of Pentecost, June, A.D. 30.

This does not mean, of course, that some who call themselves Jews today, will never go back to Palestine. They may even build a new Temple there some day. But it does mean that as any of them go back they do so entirely on their own, apart from any covenanted purpose to that end and entirely outside of Scripture prophecy. No Scripture blessing is promised for a project of that kind.

It may be that in years to come the Jews will possess a larger part, or even all, of Palestine. We do not know. But if they do they will secure it as other nations secure property, through negotiation, or purchase, or conquest, NOT BY VIRTUE OF ANY AS YET UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES OR BIBLICAL PROMISES. THERE ARE NO SUCH PROPHECIES OR PROMISES!

In the mean time, Zionism, premillennialism and dispensationalism must bear part of the responsibility for the evil and dangerous situation that has arisen in the Middle East, since it has encouraged Jews to believe they are rightful owners of that land and that it is divinely ordained that they are again to possess it.

The British had no ethical or political right to promise Palestine to the Jews at the end of World War I. The UN had no right to partition it. It should have legally been returned to the Palestinians. Ever since the partitioning, the Jews have extended their borders beyond those set by the UN.

Chapter Twenty-two (22:1-71)

THE SON OF MAN PREPARING HIS APOSTLES FOR HIS DEATH

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. What implications concerning the Biblical teaching that man has a free will does the statement, "Then Satan entered into Judas. . . ." have (22:3)?
2. What was involved in "preparing" the Passover (22:1-13)?
3. Was Jesus indicating He would observe the "Lord's Supper" with them at some future time when He said, "I shall not drink . . . until the kingdom of God comes. . . ." What future time was He indicating (22:18)?
4. Why, after chastizing the apostles about seeking positions of honor, did Jesus immediately promise them they would sit on thrones judging Israel (22:30)?
5. Why did Jesus, the Prince of Peace, order the apostles to buy swords (22:36)?
6. Was Jesus trying to evade the cross in His prayer in Gethsemane (22:42)?
7. After the Lord has counseled the apostles to arm themselves with swords, why did He forbid them to use them at His arrest (22:51)?
8. Did Peter deny he was a follower of Jesus because he was afraid of dying (22:57)?
9. What would the chief priests not answer should Jesus ask them (22:68)?
10. How would the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God (22:69)?

SECTION 1

Communion (22:1-30)

22 Now the feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. ²And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death; for they feared the people.

³ Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve; ⁴he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. ⁵And they were glad, and engaged to give him money. ⁶So he agreed, and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of the multitude.

⁷ Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying,

"Go and prepare the passover for us, that we may eat it." ⁹They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?" ¹⁰He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house which he enters, ¹¹and tell the householder, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I am to eat the passover with my disciples?'" ¹²And he will show you a large upper room furnished; there make ready." ¹³And they went, and found it as he had told them; and they prepared the passover.

¹⁴ And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹But behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²²For the Son of man goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" ²³And they began to question one another, which of them it was that would do this.

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them, which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves.

²⁸ "You are those who have continued with me in my trials; ²⁹and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ³⁰that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

22:1-13 Preparation: The day on which the Passover feast was to be observed was determined by the Lunar Calendar (moon phases). Passover supper was to be eaten on the 14th of Nisan (Jewish month). This was calculated to be fourteen days after the first new moon, following the vernal (Spring) equinox. Passover, therefore, was in the month we know as April. According to the Gregorian Calendar (presently in use by most

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

of the world), Passover varies as to the day because Gregorian months are not lunar. Fourteen days after each "new moon" a "full moon" appears. So Passover time was always at "full moon."

The Hebrew word *pesach* is translated Passover, and means literally, "to pass, spring over, or spare" (cf. Ex. 12:13-27). Passover day was one day out of a festival of seven or eight days duration, called in Hebrew, *hammatzsoth*, literally, "the unleavened things," (cf. Lev. 23:4ff.). So, Passover came to be called, the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lk. 22:1). The parallel accounts, which the student should read are Matthew 26:3-75; 27:1; Mark 14:1-72; 15:1 and John 13:1 through John 18:27.

Luke notes that as the Passover drew near, the chief priests and scribes were seeking how to put Jesus to death. Matthew records that at that moment Jesus was predicting, for the fifth time, His death at their hands (Mt. 26:1-2). While the chief priests and Sanhedrin were planning to postpone their efforts to destroy Jesus until after the Feast (Mt. 26:3-5), Jesus was predicting they would actually crucify Him during the Feast. Jesus not only knew their murderous scheme, but He knew they would change their plans to delay and carry them out during the Feast. So, in the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, they concluded they must arrest Jesus by "stealth" or "secretly," lest the multitudes, who were proclaiming Jesus to be the Son of David, their king, might rise up against them. Quite unexpectedly, they are presented a way to find Him and arrest Him without the multitudes knowing it until it is done.

Luke alone records, "Then *Satan entered into Judas* called Iscariot . . . He went away and conferred with the chief priests and captains how he might betray him to them," (see also Jn. 13:2, 27). Scripture indicates Judas was greedy and dishonest from the beginning of his discipleship (cf. Jn. 12:6). The point to remember here is that Satan accomplished possession or entry into Judas' heart because Judas wanted him to! Men may either "give place" to the devil or not, Eph. 4:27. Men may "resist" the devil or not, James 4:7. God only gives up on men when men refuse to have God (Rom. 1:18ff.; II Thess. 2:10-12; Rev. 13:1ff.). Judas knew of the hatred, anger, malice and subterfuge of the priesthood toward Jesus. Judas had seen and heard their desire to destroy Jesus many times. Judas was not an unwilling victim of Satan. Judas' motive, so far as the record goes, was strictly greed. There is no indication that there was anything political, ideological or theological involved at all. H. Schonfield says in his book, *Passover Plot*, that Jesus, wanting to be Messiah, plots to get Himself crucified so He can fulfill Old Testament prophecies. In doing so, Jesus tricks Judas into betraying Him by continually applying "pressure" or psyching Judas into it through pointed references to Judas as "betrayor," "thief," etc. Judas, then, having supposedly discerned that this is what Jesus wanted, decided to make a few pieces of silver from the plot. One

has only to read the gospel documents to see the absurdity of such run-away imagination. For Jesus to have carried out such a "plot" would have required more divine omniscience and omnipotence almost than even the gospel records accord Him! He would have to know with divine certainty the future movements and decisions of scores of people; He would have to have had the power to manipulate people and times and circumstances beyond any mortal's control. How did Jesus, if He were only human and not divine, even know Judas had betrayed Him? Judas did not report back to Jesus!

The day of "Unleavened Bread" was the day when the Jew searched his house for *chametz*, leaven, to purge the house of all of it. It was also the day on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed on the Temple altar. Luke indicates Jesus waited until the Feast was in its first day to prepare. He apparently did this because there would be no need to prepare sooner (except to have the lamb selected, which the owner of the "upper room" probably did), and He was extremely busy up until the very day of the Passover meal. It also gave opportunity for another demonstration of His supernatural foreknowledge of the exact place and circumstances in connection with His observance. Finally, it would keep the meeting place secret until He could assemble His disciples for a final, personal and intensive session of instructions and encouragements. Judas was thereby prevented from betraying the place where Jesus might be arrested before Jesus desired it.

Jesus appointed Peter and John to make preparations for the observance of the Passover. When they asked Him "Where?", He demonstrated once again His divine foreknowledge by predicting they would meet a man carrying a pitcher (Gr. *keramion*, from which we get English, *ceramic*) of water. It would be unusual for the *master* of a house (Gr. *oikodespote*, "the despot of the house") to be carrying a ceramic jar of water—that was the work of servants and women! But Jesus foreknew the exact moment the two disciples would reach a certain point in order to be able to find this particular householder carrying a jar of water, and that this householder would invite them to use his upper room. A literal translation of the Greek text would read: "And you will say to the house-master of the house, Says to you the Teacher. . . ." This man must have been a wealthy disciple of Jesus. The homes of the wealthy had large upper rooms as second-story guest rooms with a staircase built on the outside wall of the house. Guests could enter and leave their guest room on the second floor without disturbing the householder's family. The word *furnished* is the Greek word *estromenon* and means literally, *spread out*, as one prepares a bed or spreads out straw for a bed. The upper room was "spread out" (furnishes) especially with a table and couches for Jesus' observance of the Passover.

The two apostles went into the city and found it exactly as Jesus had told them it would be. They immediately set about to prepare for the Passover.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Wednesday evening, at sundown, would have begun the Passover when every "householder" would gather his family and they would all take lamps and search the house diligently for leaven. So many preparations were required, the actual meal itself would not be eaten until the next evening (Thursday). The ingredients for "bitter herbs" had to be gathered (horse radish, bay, thyme, majoram or mint and basil). This was all used to make the sauce or gravy called *charoseth*—the "sop" into which the unleavened bread (matza-bread) was dipped to symbolize the mortar the Hebrews had to make as slaves in Egypt. Utensils for holding the "sop," for drinking the wine, for "washing" (purification) of hands and feet, etc., had to be procured. The most important preparation was taking the lamb (which had been selected four days earlier) to the temple and slitting its throat so that its blood could be poured out on the altar. Priests and Levites collected the blood and poured it out. The blood then ran down the gutters into the Kidron valley. Even with a conservative estimate of one million worshipers at Passover, there would be 100,000 lambs slain in one day. That would average approximately 4,166 every hour or 69 every minute! The entrails and fat were thrown on the fire on the altar causing the stench of burning flesh to float over the city. The smoke, bleating of sheep, smell of warm blood, trumpets blowing and people shouting must have made a spectacle beyond imagination. The worshiper took his slain lamb home, roasted it, careful not to break a bone, and the Feast was ready. Using a bunch of hyssop, its blood was sprinkled on the lintel and door-posts of the house. All these preparations probably took Wednesday night and most of Thursday morning so Jesus and the apostles did not start supper until late Thursday afternoon. They may have slept a few hours Wednesday night, but they would not get but a few "winks" for on Thursday night they were out in the garden of Gethsemane.

22:14-30 Participation: When everything was ready, Jesus reclined (Greek, *anepese*) on a couch pulled up to the table (Lk. 22:21, Greek word for table is *trapezes*, from which we get the English word, *trapeze*). Jews of that day usually ate according to the Roman custom by reclining on couches large enough to hold three people. When the "family" had gathered to the table, a prayer was said and then everyone dipped a piece of matza bread into the *charoseth* sauce (the "sop"). *Charoseth* is a Hebrew word meaning "bondage or captivity." This was eaten and the first cup of wine was drunk accompanied by a "blessing" (the Greek word for blessing is *euchariste*, see Lk. 22:17). Then, Psalm 114 was recited telling how the Israelites left Egypt. Next, drops of salt water were drunk in memory of the tears their forefathers shed in bondage. Next, they began to eat the roasted lamb, accompanied by the "bitter herb" sauce. Two more cups of wine were drunk, passed from hand to hand, and the third cup was called, with particular solemnity, "the cup of benediction." Next, the "Hallel" (Psa. 113-118) was chanted

as a prayer of thanksgiving, and when the verse, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (Psa. 118:26) was recited, a fourth cup of wine, the last of the ritual, was passed among the family. The Passover was usually a cheerful feast, reminding the Hebrews of the deliverance of their nation from bondage. The Talmud says: "It is as savory as an olive," and, "The Hallel should burst through the roof of the house." This feast was extremely significant for Jesus! Just before they began the rituals of the Passover, Jesus announced, "I have earnestly desired to eat this pass-over with you before I suffer." He knew it would be the last Passover of any significance for these apostles. The Passover was to be superseded by the fulfilling of it in the kingdom of God (the church). Henceforth Jesus' disciples would memorialize Him (cf. I Cor. 5:6-8; I Pet. 1:19) as their "Passover" in a ceremony called, "the Lord's Supper." This is the last *Jewish* communion Jesus would have with His disciples. After this, in His Spirit, He would meet with them around His table, communing with them in *His* Supper. Paul clearly indicates that when Christians observe the Lord's Supper they are communing with Him (I Cor. 10:16) and He is participating with them. Jesus said, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," (Mt. 18:20). Jesus had much to teach these apostles before He left them to return to heaven. The Passover usually called forth the most spiritual moments in the life of a Hebrew. With all the remembering of God's atonement, God's love, God's serving and God's Spirit guiding the Hebrews in their deliverance from Egypt, Jesus anticipated this last Passover at the most opportune time to focus the hearts of the apostles on the *new deliverance*—the fulfillment of what the Passover merely typified. It is evident the apostles needed spiritual edification! The kingdom of God was soon to be established and left to their charge and they were still very much insensitive to its true nature. They were arguing and competing for places of honor and position, (22:24).

Luke apparently departs from a strict chronological account of these events, and places the institution of the Lord's Supper (22:19-23) before it actually took place. Mark's gospel places it later, after the departure of Judas (cf. Jn. 13:27-30). It seems more logical to follow Mark's chronology. When one takes all four gospel accounts into consideration here, it is evident that some omit what others record and as a result some rearrangement in chronology must be made. This, of course, does not destroy the integrity of authenticity of any of the accounts. The same omissions and anachronisms would be found in the notes of any four newspaper reporters should they report on the same incident after having talked to different eyewitnesses on different days! We skip now to Luke 22:24-30 for the sake of chronological precision.

Apparently Jesus had just poured the first cup of wine for the Passover and given it to the apostles when He noticed their contention. The Greek

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

word *philoneikia*, means "love of strife" and signifies a spirit of contentiousness. The apostles were enjoying their dispute over who would be greatest. Jesus had to interrupt this precious moment to rebuke these ambitious men. He had already rebuked them in practically the same words, just a few weeks earlier, as they walked through Perea on their way to this very Passover (cf. Mt. 20:25-28). They did not get the message then. Now they were still acting like pagans. Gentiles (unbelievers) get power over one another by bribery, flattery, deceit, favoritism or force. They do it for selfish reasons: security, fame or self-indulgence. Jesus made it very plain: "Not so with you!" They must understand what the world does not understand—the only man who really has any influence over others is the one who gets it from others who have given it willingly because he has loved them and served them. Any man whose influence over others depends on force, deceit, flattery or partiality does not really have honor, willingly, but grudgingly. That is false honor. The greatest apostle would be the one who served the most. Jesus was the ultimate example of this principle. Whereas the so-called great rulers of mankind have ruled because men gave in to them grudgingly, and partially, Jesus rules completely because men and women surrender to Him willingly and totally. Men give Jesus their minds, souls, hearts and bodies, because He demonstrated genuine, perfect love for them. He who was the greatest servant is the greatest ruler. He promised the apostles that the rewards which were to be theirs when they *served* in His kingdom would surpass any kind of fleshly reward or honor they were then dreaming about. They would receive the real rewards, the spiritual rewards, the eternally abiding rewards. They, as believers, would be allowed to sit with Him at His table in the messianic kingdom, constantly feasting on the Bread of Life and the Living Water. They, as apostles and evangelists, would be given the privilege of preaching the gospel and writing the new covenant scriptures which would "judge the twelve tribes of Israel." Jesus is not ranking the apostles in some sort of ecclesiastical hierarchy here, He is offering them the privilege of being *first* into the vineyard (cf. Mt. 20:1-16). They will be first to open the doors of the kingdom of the Messiah by preaching the gospel on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Every Jew will ultimately be judged by Jehovah according to the response he makes to the apostolic gospel, preached and written. So will every Gentile. The apostles themselves are not "the judge"—the gospel is. Whatever they proclaim will "have already been bound in heaven" (cf. Mt. 16:19 et al.).

Immediately after this rebuke, Jesus rose from the supper, laid aside His garments, and wrapped a towel around His waist. He then took a wash basin filled with water and began to wash the apostle's feet (cf. Jn. 13:1-21). This event should be chronologically inserted here.

Next, as Luke records in 22:21-23, Jesus exposed the betrayer, Judas (see also Mt. 26:21-24; Mk. 14:18-21; and John 13:22-30). A number of

Old Testament predictions were fulfilled when the Messiah was betrayed (see Psa. 41:9; Zech. 11:7-14). Jesus predicted His betrayal before it was known by others so that when it came to pass the apostles would not be caught unaware and fall into despondency. When they looked back on these events after His resurrection they would have their faith in Jesus strengthened. Jesus also made a last attempt to provoke Judas to repentance. Mainly, Jesus' prediction here was to show that what was happening to Him was within the fore-ordained plan of God. Jesus was not the unfortunate victim of circumstances. He was not powerless before the evil machinations of men. He was not killed, He chose to die. He chose when, how, and by whom. He laid down His life and He took it up again. No one took it from Him (cf. Jn. 10:17-18; 19:11). Jesus encouraged His apostles, that when they should see Him betrayed, they should not be dismayed—it was what He came for, He was in complete control, this was His mission (cf. Jn. 13:20).

The other disciples did not understand that Judas was the betrayer when Jesus announced it! Perhaps this was because He first gave a generalized statement about a betrayer. Matthew and Mark indicate the apostles began to be very depressed and question one after the other, "Is it I, Lord?" Peter beckoned to John to ask Jesus who the betrayer was (Jn. 13:23-26). Still Jesus gave an answer that could have included all or any one of them when He said, "It is he to whom I shall give this morsel. . . ." (Jn. 13:26). He probably had dipped the "morsel" for each one of them since He would be the "master" of the group. Judas was expert at deceiving his comrades. He joined right in with the chorus of "Is it I, Lord?" Jesus probably reclined on a couch with John and Judas—John at His front, Judas at His back; Peter was on a couch with two others across the table from Jesus. Jesus leaned back toward Judas and lowered His voice as He replied to Judas (Jn. 13:27-30). The other apostles, still in a state of shock and confusion, murmuring among themselves, did not observe Jesus' hushed remarks to Judas, nor did they observe Judas as he got up and slipped out into the night. Jesus aimed to expose the plot, let Judas know privately He knew who the betrayer was, and yet not cause the other apostles to mob Judas and kill him with their own hands.

Now we come back to Luke 22:19-20, and the institution of the Lord's Supper. The careful student will notice there is no verse 20 in the RSV text printed at the beginning of this lesson. After the word "body" in 22:19, the following words have been deleted from the Revised Standard Version English text:

which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. 20 And likewise the cup after supper, saying, This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

There is, however, such a preponderance of the best, most ancient, Greek texts in favor of these words as part of the original text, we choose to consider them as such and comment on them. The Greek texts called Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, Codex Ephraemi and a host of others include these words. The Greek texts which do omit them are not of the same significance as those which include these words.

During the discussion of the betrayal Jesus and the apostles continued to eat the Passover meal. "As they were eating," according to Matthew and Mark, "He took bread and blessed it, and broke it and gave to them. . . ." Luke uses the Greek word *eucharistesas* which is translated into English, "thanks." It is the word from which we get the English word, *eucharist*, often used as a synonymous title for the Lord's Supper. Jesus used two elements right out of the Passover supper itself to institute the memorial "supper." He commanded His disciples to observe forever after—unleavened bread (Hebrew, *matzah*; Greek, *azumon*) and wine (Hebrew, *yayin*; Greek, *oinos*). In the text the wine is referred to as "the cup" (Gr. *poterion*). At the Passover the "cup" contained *yayin*, a sweet wine from the grape with probably a low degree of fermentation (see Harold Fowler's Special Study, "Should Jesus Drink Wine?", in *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. II*, pg. 526-533, pub. College Press). These two elements, bread and wine, are used often in the Bible to symbolize "flesh and blood" or "life." Their symbolic significance would not be lost on these Jewish apostles.

Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." The apostle Paul tells us that Jesus also said, "Do this, *as often as you drink it*, in remembrance of me," (cf. I Cor. 11:25). Jesus did not, at this Passover supper, so far as the record goes, specify how *often* this remembrance was to be observed. However, the divine history of the early church (Acts of Apostles, 20:7), indicates the first century church observed this memorial each first day of the week. Writings of the earliest post-apostolic church leaders (Justin Martyr, cir. 150 A.D. et al.) indicate it was observed every first day of the week by the early Christians. It would certainly seem reasonable that every time a local congregation of Christians meets as a whole body for worshiping the Lord they would want to observe the Lord's Supper. It would also appear that following the precedent set by the first century church would be desirable for the church for all ages. The very fact, however, that Jesus did not specify in detail how often it must be observed, should make any Christian beware of being legalistic about the matter. Legalism in respect to frequency, whether too often or not often enough, robs it of its very essence—remembrance out of love. Jesus did not want Christians to have to be forced or coerced by human manipulation to remember Him. He wants believers to come in loving remembrance of His atonement of grace. He does not want anyone to come to His supper trusting in a ritualistic observance to attain self-justification.

The purpose of the Supper is, first, to memorialize in a new and more complete manner God's redemption of man. The Passover typified a redemption God would fulfill in the future. Christ's Supper memorializes redemption as an accomplished fact of history. It signifies that our redemption is accomplished by the Person, Christ, not by any works of our own. The Supper is *not* a "means of grace." Christians observe it as an expression of their faith in what Christ accomplished for them. It is a divinely instituted ceremony through which Christians express their love for Jesus. *Deliberate* refusal to observe it would result in being lost because that would be rebellion and faithlessness. The Supper is also for the purpose of *communion*. Jesus said it was "the new covenant in my blood." After His death, resurrection and ascension He promised He would participate with believers through this Supper. So, all Christians commune with Christ as they observe His supper. The Greek word *koinonia* (I Cor. 10:16-17) is translated communion, but means *participation*. Christians participate by faith expressed through this Supper, in the death and resurrection of Christ. But the Lord's Supper is not the only expression of faith or participation in the atonement of Christ. Peter tells us Christians are "made partakers (Gr. *koinonoi*, same word as used in I Cor. 10:16-17) of the divine nature through a long list of things, headed by "His very great and precious *promises*" (cf. II Pet. 1:3-11)! Christians also declare their participation with *one another* as one body through this Supper (I Cor. 10:17; 11:17-34). The Supper is a weekly celebration of the believer's union with Jesus and with His body, the church.

According to the apostle Paul, the Lord's Supper is also to be used as a vehicle for self-examination, for proclamation of the gospel and a testimony to His Second Coming (cf. I Cor. 11:23-32). It certainly should be a time for thanksgiving (eucharist). It is one way a believer may offer a beautiful prayer to the Lord Jesus Christ. Man is so prone to forget! The Lord's supper is an act of gracious mercy by Jesus—not a tyrannical enslavement. If He had not instituted it, we would surely be spiritually poor. What a blessing it is—impressive in its simplicity, grand in its depth. Let us love it and honor it from the heart.

Some religious people want to make the Lord's Supper a *sacrament*—a literal means of obtaining the grace of God. One form of such literalism is called *transubstantiation*. In this particular view, the Supper is called "Mass" and at a specific time in the Mass, when the "host is elevated," a bell rings, and the bread and wine are, allegedly, changed by a miracle into the *actual body* and *actual blood* of Jesus. This literalism, and many differing shades of it, are all based on an unnatural emphasis on the word "*is*" in the statement of Jesus, "This *is* my body . . . this *is* my blood. . . ." Consider the following:

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- a. When Jesus instituted the Supper His physical flesh and blood were still intact in His physical body. None of the apostles were actually chewing His flesh or drinking His blood. No miracle is said to have taken place in the upper room to make the bread and wine into His actual substance.
- b. Even if one could literally eat His flesh and drink His blood, it would *not* be profitable (cf. Jn. 6:63). When Jesus gave His sermon on the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:51ff.), many Jews did think He was talking like a cannibal, but Jesus corrected them precisely and concisely.
- c. Which bread and wine are actually His flesh and blood? If we should put the emphasis on "*This is my body. . .*" then the very bread and wine which the *apostles* consumed would be the only body and blood Jesus gave.
- d. Jesus used other things in a "representative" way and never intended them to be taken literally: "*I am the Vine, you are the branches . . .*" "*I am the door of the sheep, my sheep hear my voice. . .*"

It is faith in the heart of the believer expressing itself in obedient love that makes the bread and wine efficacious—not the ceremony, not the elements and not even the statement, alone, of Christ. If efficaciousness be in the ceremony, or the elements or even in the statement, alone, of Christ, without the faith of the believer, then the Supper provides efficacy for anyone who merely partakes. Paul makes it clear that there is a possibility of participants, with the wrong motives and attitudes, drinking condemnation unto themselves (I Cor. 11:27).

SECTION 2

Care (22:31-38)

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren." ³³And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." ³⁴He said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you three times deny that you know me."

35 And he said to them, "When I sent you out with no purse or bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing." ³⁶He said to them, "But now, let him who has a purse take it, and likewise a bag. And let him who has no sword sell his mantle and buy one.

³⁷For I tell you that this scripture must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was reckoned with transgressors'; for what is written about me has its fulfillment.' ³⁸And they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." And he said to them, "It is enough."

22:31-34 Advised: What John's gospel records (Jn. 13:31-38) precedes Jesus' warning to Peter here. So, also, do the texts in Matthew 26:31-33 and Mark 14:27-29. These three texts document the overconfident braggadocio of Peter. John's gospel indicates Jesus begins to talk about His imminent humiliation on the cross in the enigmatic statement, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, Where I am going you cannot come." Then Jesus gave the "new commandment" that all His disciples should love one another with the same kind of love He displayed so the world would know they are His disciples (Jn. 13:34-35). But Peter was not listening intently to that. He was still thinking about "going" wherever Jesus was. He was determined and confident that he could follow Jesus anywhere Jesus would go. In the Matthew and Mark texts Jesus quotes the messianic passage in Zechariah 13:7 about the "Shepherd" being smitten and the "sheep" scattering, as a warning to Peter and the other disciples, that when the time comes for Him to be humiliated, they will all scatter. Peter boastfully says, "Even though they all fall away, because of you, I will never fall away" (Mt. 26:33; Mk. 14:29). Yes, Peter was no coward when it came to physical combat. He later proved that in Gethsemane when he whipped out his sword and took a swipe at one of the mob come to arrest Jesus (Lk. 22:49-50; Jn. 18:10). And our text here in Luke 22:33 documents the fact that Peter was willing to go with Jesus to prison and to death. But there is a great deal of difference in fighting proudly for an earthly ambition than being willing to suffer humiliation and apparent failure for a spiritual goal! None of the disciples wanted to "go" with Him when, later, it appeared that He had failed to set up His kingdom and was willing to be humiliated like a common criminal on a cross. Jesus predicted they would all "fall away" that very night, and the gospel writers used the Greek word *skandalisthesesthe* from which the English word, *scandalized*, originates. The disciples were *not frightened* by the mob which came to arrest Jesus—they would have fought for Him until they died had He only asked them to do so. But they were *scandalized* by His acquiescence, His humility, and His submission to be unjustly slandered and slain with a criminal's execution—crucifixion. They were *scandalized* by what they considered His failure to be able to carry through with the establishment of the "kingdom" He had so often promised to set up.

So Jesus warns them all. They are all much too confident in the flesh. Jesus said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you all, that he

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

might winnow you like wheat. . . .” The Greek pronoun in 22:31 is plural, showing that Jesus is warning them of Satan’s designs on them all. But in 22:32 the pronoun is singular indicating that Jesus is focusing on Peter because he was in special danger, being the most impetuous of them all.

The Greek verb *exetesato* is aorist and intensive. It is translated “demand” in the RSV, however, Vine says the Greek word *punthanomai* is usually translated “demand” (see Mt. 2:4; Acts 21:33). The word *exetesato* means to “examine, seek out by intense inquiry, search out or ask intently.” G. Campbell Morgan says, “What He (Jesus) said about this is most arresting. ‘Satan hath obtained you by asking.’ That is the real force of the Greek verb. It is not merely that Satan had asked; he had obtained them by asking.” It certainly is a clear indication that Satan is always under God’s sovereign power. Satan can have nothing unless God gives it to him. Satan cannot “winnow” until he is given permission—he must ask. Satan is always “bound” to some degree by the very fact that he is creature and not Creator. There is only one Almighty and that is Jehovah and His Son.

Satan wanted to “winnow” the apostles like the farmer winnows his wheat. When a farmer winnowed his wheat in those days he took some kind of a shoveling instrument and threw the threshed grain roughly into the air, measure by measure, and let the wind blow upon it to separate the good grain from the chaff. It was a purifying process, much like putting gold or silver into a crucible to purify it and test it. Jesus “winnows” men by the truth hoping to sift all impurity and chaff away. Satan asks to “winnow” men by falsehood hoping to sift all the good wheat away so that only the chaff is left.

Jesus encouraged the apostles by saying, “I have prayed for you. . . .” The Greek word translated “prayed” is *edeethen*, from the verb, *deo*, which means, “to bind.” In other words, Jesus is saying, “I have asked the Father for you, as your Bondman—your Surety. I have asked the Father that you be bound to me.” Jesus prayed that their faith would not fail, especially Peter’s faith, for Peter would be the one needed to strengthen and establish his brethren. Jesus knew Peter’s faith would not fail, but that it would simply need redirection, turning. The Greek word *epistrepsas* is an aorist participle and might be translated, “having turned . . .” confirm your brethren. Peter believed wholeheartedly in Jesus, but he needed that heart-rooted faith redirected toward the *spiritual* and heavenly goals of Christ. After the resurrection and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, Peter did direct that deep faith toward spiritual matters and he did strengthen his brethren! Jesus plainly predicts that, in spite of Peter’s courageous commitment to die physically for his Lord, before morning comes (before the cock crows) he will *disown* (Gr. *aparnese*) or deny knowing Jesus three times. Peter is not willing to die spiritually for Christ. Jesus knew Peter’s heart then—later, Peter saw it too (cf. Lk. 22:54-62).

22:35-38 Armed: This was an evening of amazing statements by the Lord. But the next statement was one of the most amazing ever to fall from the lips of Jesus! He reminded the apostles of the time He had sent them out to do the work of the kingdom without money bags or sandals and they had lacked for nothing (Mt. 10:1-42; Lk. 9:1-6; Mk. 6:7-13). For that job, they had everything which was sufficient. Now, He had another job for them. It was an urgent one. He commanded them, "Let any one of you who has a purse, take it immediately, or a bag—and anyone of you who does not have a sword—take his outer cloak immediately and sell it and buy a sword." The Greek verbs *arato* and *polesato* ("take" and "sell") are aorist imperative and suggest that He commanded them to take and sell immediately.

The mission Jesus had for His apostles here was to protect Him against the mob that He knows had gathered and would want to seize Him for murder on the spot. Jesus knew He was going to die. He accepted the will of God, but He also knew it was God's will that He die in a particular way (crucifixion) and at a particular time. He would not surrender to the violence of a mob. Jesus was no pacifist. He always stood for law and order (see comments on Lk. 20:19-26). Jesus told the apostles to make haste, even if they must sell their coats (so necessary for keeping warm), to purchase some swords to defend Himself and them against the disorderly, anarchistic mob of Jerusalem's rabble, agitated by the murderous priesthood, coming to do violence to Him. Some have suggested that Jesus ordered the apostles to get swords to defend themselves against the persecution that came their way as they went to preach the gospel. They certainly did not carry swords as they later went out to evangelize. But very shortly they faced uncontrolled hostility and mob mentality. He and they were in peril of life and limb from a lawless mob which looked upon Jesus and His followers as "transgressors" and "insurrectionists." They needed some weapons to defend themselves. Two swords were enough for defense, but not enough to start a war. Jesus did not intend them to use swords to fight for His release, (see Jn. 18:10-11). We certainly cannot interpret Jesus' instructions here to be sanctioning vigilante action or armed aggression. Neither does He intend by this to advocate spreading the gospel by the power of the sword (as Mohammed advocated). When the apostles told Jesus they already had two swords among them, He said, "That is enough." One of these two swords appeared in the hand of Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane. He drew it and cut off the right ear of the high priest's servant. There Jesus told Peter his action was wrong (see comments, Lk. 22:50-51).

SECTION 3

Conquest (22:39-46)

39 And he came out, and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. ⁴⁰And when he came to the place

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,⁴² "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."⁴³ And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow,⁴⁴ and he said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

22:39-43 Acquiescence: Some of the tenderest words ever from the lips of Jesus were spoken between the command to buy swords and His agony in Gethsemane. They are words which show us the heart of God. These words are recorded in the Gospel of John, chapters 14 through 17. The student should read these words, so full of pathos, but so encouraging, as background for the agony in the Garden.

It appears Jesus intended to go out into the night after He spoke the words about His coming back as the Holy Spirit. He concluded that first discourse with the words, "Rise, let us go hence," (Jn. 14:31). But John's record (Jn. 18:1) indicates Jesus did not go into the Garden of Gethsemane until He had finished all the discourses (recorded by John) and had sung a hymn (cf. Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26). After this He and His apostles went out across the Kidron valley (Jn. 18:1) where there was a garden, called Gethsemane (Mt. 26:36; Mk. 14:32) on the Mount of Olives (Lk. 22:39).

After telling His apostles to "Sit" in a particular place, He told them to "pray" that they may not enter into temptation because He was going to withdraw from them, "about a stone's throw" away and pray Himself. He probably stationed eight of the apostles near the entrance to the garden as guards, armed with one of the two swords, and then stationed Peter, James and John, within a "stone's throw" from Himself, with one of the swords, as an "inner guard," (cf. Mt. 26:37; Mk. 14:33). Matthew and Mark record that He "began to be greatly distressed and troubled," and said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful even to death; remain here and watch with me," (Mt. 26:37b-38; Mk. 14:33b-34). Just two days earlier (Tuesday) Jesus said almost the same thing (cf. Jn. 12:27-36) as He anticipated the humiliation and agony of the crucifixion.

Luke says Jesus first knelt to pray (22:41); Matthew and Mark indicate the Lord fell down upon the ground (Mt. 26:39; Mk. 14:35). The Semitic religions have long practiced the custom of first kneeling, then bowing the face all the way to the ground in prayer. This is apparently the posture Jesus assumed in this moment of emotion and agony. The prayer of Jesus, "Father if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done," is one of the greatest moments in all the Bible! The whole redemptive plan of God was hanging in the balance at that moment. Hebrews 5:7-10 stresses the humanity of Jesus. So does Philippians

2:5-9. Jesus knew all along He was sent to die an atoning death on the cross. He predicted it many times. Yet all the black, horrid weight of sin upon His immaculate soul gripped Him with reality here in the garden as at no other time. If Jesus was human, and the scriptures emphasize He was, He grew in wisdom and understanding just like other human beings (cf. Lk. 2:40, 52). The impact of the cross apparently was something that came upon Him in graduating intensity until it burst upon Him in the garden like a personal holocaust. This does not deny His perfection, it only glorifies it. But in His willing assumption of the limitations of the flesh (cf. Phil. 2:5ff.; Heb. 10:5ff.) He did not come to full realization of the mortifying, oppressive harshness of it until He had to make this ultimate decision. It was no more wrong for the human Jesus to cry for release from His cross than for the human Paul to cry for release from his thorn (cf. II Cor. 12:7-10). God's grace was sufficient for both of them to drink their "cup."

It was predicted that the Messiah would be distressed and troubled (cf. Isa. 49:1ff.; 50:4-9), but victorious over His discouragement by simply committing His cause to Jehovah. This is what Jesus did. He did not distrust the Father or rebel against Him. He cried out in agony, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done." The perfect Man's struggle is on record. God bares it for all men to see and have faith. Suppose the Incarnate Son of man had simply said nothing but had, stoically, without a struggle, gone to the cross, merrily, singing and smiling all the way? What help would that have been to fleshly mortals? Either we would doubt His sincerity or scoff at the idea of His telling us how costly it was to do God's will. How then could He preach to others about cost? Or, He would have appeared as a divine being that nothing in the human circumstance could ever touch or bother. We might be awed by His divine strength and power, but we would have difficulty believing He could understand our weaknesses and frailties. There are times when human beings do not want to do the will of God—does Jesus understand that? Yes! Man must have just such a Savior and Intercessor. Jesus did not want to go to the cross. It was there God would make "Him who knew no sin, to become sin on our behalf" (cf. II Cor. 5:21). He did not deserve to be punished for anyone's sin. Justice would demand every sinner die for his own sin (Ezek. 18:5-24; Rom. 3:10f.). But Jesus was sent to the world in human form to conquer sin in the flesh (that is, to live in the flesh without ever sinning), then to die a vicarious death (separation from God) on man's behalf. Here we see Jesus, all alone, working out the great struggle of His own mind and heart in His dread of the will of God for Him at Calvary. Jesus must do it Himself. God will not and cannot decide for Him. It is Jesus' choice alone! Here we see Man as God intended him to be when He created man. Here we see Man choosing the will of God above the greatest temptation to

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

selfishness that could be thrown against man. By all that is fair, and meritorious, Jesus could have said, "It is not My cup to drink—I have done nothing that I deserve this." Virgil Hurley wrote, in *Christian Standard*, March 31, 1974:

The humanity of Jesus dreaded the cross . . . Jesus was a man, with a flesh and blood body, capable of fear, shock, sorrow, weariness, and weakness. . . . We tend to overlook this. We don't want Him to have any doubts or fears about anything, or we think He might be less than deity. . . . But there is no need to say, "Be perfect, like Christ," unless Christ had the same kind of body we have, susceptible to weaknesses and temptations; unless He lived perfectly only because He relied on God. . . . Jesus proved to be a human being in Gethsemane. . . . He also proved that humanity, devoted to God, can overcome all problems and circumstances. He proved that He, too, had to struggle to do God's will. We can understand this. We always have to struggle to do right. . . . This is the one relationship in which we see Jesus struggle, but it is enough to teach us that we can have inward conflicts without sinning. It is possible to know the right thing, to want to do the right thing, to intend to do the right thing—and still have to fight oneself to do it.

Jesus' struggle is a demonstration in human flesh of agape-love. Agape-love does what is right, what is the will of God, regardless of what one's feelings may urge him to do. Agape-love is a matter of the will, of the power of choice—not a matter of infatuation or emotions. Feelings are controlled by agape-love. This is why Jesus could say, "A new *commandment* I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you," (Jn. 13:34-35). That kind of love can be commanded. One does not have to wait until he "feels" like it to love in that manner.

There are some ancient manuscripts which omit Luke 22:43-44 (Vaticanus, Alexandrinus and Washingtonius), but some ancient and weightier manuscripts include the verses (Sinaiticus, Bezae, Cyprianus, Freerianus, Koridethi and others). The weight of textual evidence seems to favor its inclusion.

Luke alone tells us that an angel came, strengthening Jesus between His first season of prayer and the second and third. Matthew and Mark tell us Jesus prayed three times, using the same words (Mt. 26:42-44; Mk. 14:35-39). Just how the angel "strengthened" Him we are not told. We presume the heavenly being brought words of encouragement and admiration to Jesus directly from the Father as had been done before (cf. Mt. 3:16-17; 4:11; Jn. 12:27-29).

22:44-46 Agony: The Greek word *agonia*, translated "agony" is used by some ancient Greek to mean "anxiety." One commentator seems to

think the word as used by Luke has the idea of "agony of fear." If it was "fear" it was "godly fear" for the inspired comment from Hebrews 5:7-9 indicates that by the use of the Greek word *eulabeias* which means, "reverent awe, fear of God." The Greek word *ektenesteron* is translated "more earnestly," and is from a root word which means "to stretch, to make tense." The idea suggested is that of not relaxing, of being wound up tight, of being totally concentrated—fervency. This was not a matter of half-heartedness. He was pouring out His soul in filling up the cup of God. He was totally oblivious to every other thing or thought. Every fiber of His being was focused on the ultimate act God had sent Him here to do—*become sin for all mankind!* There was no reason He should—there was no justification for it. The question He must settle, once and for all, was, Did He love man enough to do this in spite of how He felt about it or how unjust it was? Yes, He did!

But He did not settle it before He cried tears and sweat great drops of blood. Literally, the Greek text would read, "And became the sweat of Him as clots of blood falling down onto the earth." The Greek word *thromboi*, is the word from which the English word *thrombosis* comes. We quote here from *The Final Week*, by R. C. Foster, pg. 180, pub. Baker:

The word translated "great drops of blood" can be rendered "blood clots." It seems to mean more than that His drops of sweat resembled drops of blood by their size and frequency; otherwise there would be no reason or force in such a comparison. "Bloody sweat" is a good translation. Plummer cites the case of Charles IX of France as reported by Stroud, *The Physical Cause of the Death of Christ* (Commentary on Luke, p. 511): "During the last two weeks of his life (May 1754) his constitution made strong efforts . . . blood gushed from all the outlets of his body, even from the pores of his skin; so that on one occasion he was found bathed in a blood sweat." Even if no such phenomenon were known today, it would not prove that such did not occur in the case of Jesus. His agony was unique. The nobler the person, the more sensitive he is to suffering of this type.

Who, among sinful men, would know the physical results of the agony of a sinless One wrestling with the will of God in such a matter as *becoming sin* when He did not have to?

After this first agony, Jesus arose from the ground, and sought the solace of His apostles. They had so confidently vowed they would stand with Him even if it demanded their death. But when Jesus came to where they had been stationed, He found them asleep. Luke says they were asleep out of (Gr. *apo*, "out of") sorrow (Gr. *lupes*, "grief"). In view of the fact that Jesus, when He was praying, cried with loud cries, agonized until

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

bloody clots fell from His body, and tears gushed from His eyes, it seems incredible that the apostles, only a "stone's throw away," could go to sleep. But they had been weighed down with all the sorrow-filled things Jesus had been saying to them about His "going away" and that they "could not go with Him." He had also said much about betrayal, death by crucifixion and the powers of Satan that night. They had been excited at first with the entrance to Jerusalem on Sunday, the power and potential Jesus displayed on Monday and Tuesday when one enemy after another was dispatched in humiliation. The Passover supper excited them to begin making plans as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom. Excitement, depression, stuffed with food, awake for long hours each day and missing many hours of sleep already this week, "the spirit may have been willing, but the flesh was weak" (cf. Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38). Indeed, every follower of Jesus needs to take warning against overconfidence. Even the great apostle Paul "buffeted his body and subdued it, lest after preaching to others he himself should be disqualified" (I Cor. 9:24-27). "Therefore let any one who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12). The apostles thought that they could stand, but they fell. It is one thing to stay awake to fight with a sword—it is another thing to stay awake to sympathize with someone who needs you.

Jesus told the apostles, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation." Jesus then withdrew a second time to pray (Mt. 26:42; Mk. 14:39). When He returned to the apostles, He found them asleep again. This time their eyes were so heavy and they were in such a stupor, "they did not know what to answer Him" (Mk. 14:40). He withdrew a third time and prayed (Mt. 26:44; Mk. 14:41); a third time He returned and found them sleeping. This time He said, "Sleep now (*katheudete*, imperative, a command, Mk. 14:41) and take your rest." Now His agony is over. His struggle is resolved. He is ready to face the mob and Calvary. But they will need their sleep. How patient He was, how loving. No rebuke, no haughty criticism, no pouting—just concern for them when they had been totally concerned for themselves. Finally, He awakened them and said, "It is enough; the hour has come; the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand" (Mt. 26:45-46; Mk. 14:41-42).

SECTION 4

Condescension (22:47-53)

47 While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to kiss him; ⁴⁸but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray

the Son of man with a kiss?" ⁴⁹And when those who were about him saw what would follow, they said, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" ⁵⁰And one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. ⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

22:47-51 Conspirator: Jesus knew all along that Judas Iscariot would conspire with His enemies to betray Him in some secret place, away from the multitudes. Three other gospel accounts combine to document the careful preparations by His enemies to arrest Him; (cf. Jn. 18:1-12; Mt. 26:47-56; Mk. 14:43-52):

- a. Soldiers, Temple police and "a great crowd armed with clubs and swords" to take care of any resistance whether by Jesus' disciples or some "wonder" He might perform.
- b. Having soldiers along gives the incident a "seal" of legality.
- c. Torches were carried to light the way and to search the dark corners of the garden.
- d. Cords or chains were brought to bind the prisoner lest He overpower them (a crowd with swords and clubs?).
- e. A guide to direct them to the place where He might be found away from the multitudes in the person of one of His disciples.
- f. A pre-arranged sign of betrayal which hopefully would catch the victim unawares, an embrace!
- g. Priests, officers and elders led a huge mob to make sure that previous failures are not repeated (cf. Jn. 7:32, 40-44; Lk. 22:52).
- h. The High Priest remained in his palace rehearsing bribed witnesses in what they must say to make the false accusations sound legal (cf. Mt. 26:59).

We are also indebted to these other three gospel accounts for a harmonization of the order of events at the arrest. Luke has the briefer account and omits some of the details included by the others. The order of events are:

- a. As Jesus was rousing the apostles from sleep the great crowd entered the garden (Mt. 26:47; Mk. 14:43; Lk. 22:47).
- b. They were being led by Judas Iscariot and searching for Jesus.
- c. Jesus stepped forward asking, "Whom do you seek?" When they said, "Jesus of Nazareth," He replied, "I, even I am He!" (Jn. 18:4-5).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- d. Taken completely by surprise and half afraid He might do a miracle, those in front stumbled backward and some fell down. The mob was not prepared for such awesome honesty and docility (Jn. 18:5-6).

There is no indication in any text that Jesus caused these people to fall miraculously. They went out to slip up on Him, knowing they were being led by a traitor, and they were completely surprised and shamed and so, stumbled backward over one another!

- e. Jesus surrenders Himself and requests that His disciples be allowed to "go away from" (Gr. *hupagein*) the same fate (Jn. 18:8-9).

Apparently the mob, at first, honored Jesus' request for the disciples, but later (Mk. 14:51-52) tried to seize one of His followers.

- f. Then Judas confirms Jesus' identity with the pre-arranged sign—the embrace (Gr. *kataphilesen*, "effusive embracing" Mt. 26:49; Mk. 14:45), and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" Jesus answered, "Friend (Gr. *hetaire*, "Comrade") why are you here?" Jesus is reminding Judas of the baseness of betraying "comradeship" (Mt. 26:48-50; Mk. 14:44-46; Lk. 22:47-48).

- g. The soldiers came and "threw" (Gr. *epebalon*) hands upon Jesus and seized Him. It was a scene of rough, coarse and violent action.

There has been no warrant presented for Jesus' arrest, sworn to by witnesses. There has been no "inquiring diligently" (cf. Deut. 17:2-5; Lev. 5:1) into the accusations of blasphemy made about Jesus prior to His arrest. All this, instigated by the priests and Pharisees, has been done illegally.

Luke records that Jesus' apostles asked if they should fight with the swords (Gr. *machaire*, "short, dagger-type sword," copied by the Romans from the Greeks) they had. Peter did not ask (Mt. 26:51; Mk. 14:47; Jn. 18:10); but drew his sword and struck a servant of the High Priest, named Malchus, and cut off his right ear. Since Peter was not defending himself or the other apostles, Jesus told him to put up his sword because taking the law into one's own hands (without due process) leads to anarchy. Force is self-destructive. The only kingdom that lasts will be the one of love and persuasion. The "cup" which the Father gave, Jesus "must" drink. Peter's action is at variance with God's will (Jn. 18:11). The world must know that His kingdom is not of this world. If Jesus had wished to defend Himself He could have called thousands of angels (Mt. 26:53). What was happening, Jesus declared, was in perfect agreement with the Old Testament prophets concerning the Messiah (cf. Mt. 26:54; Ps. 22; Isa. 53, et al.).

Luke alone tells us that Jesus healed the servant's severed ear (22:51). The Greek phrase here translated, "No more of this!" might literally be rendered, "Allow ye it thus far. . . ." meaning, probably, "Let me reach

far enough to touch his ear." Thus is documented clearly one healing by Jesus where there is a definite absence of faith in Him, and no indication that Jesus tried to elicit faith from the one healed. Jesus could heal even the enemies of the faith. His mercy and compassion probably squelched what might have quickly turned into a bloody riot.

22:52-53 Cowards: Luke notes that the "chief priests" and "captains of the temple" and "elders" were among this illegally operating gang of people. Jesus rebuked and shamed the mob for treating Him as if He were a gangster or highway robber (Gr. *lestes*, from the root word *leia*, "booty" and different from the word *kleptes*, "thief"). He had always taught peace and had never done anything criminal (in fact He tried to clean the criminals out of the Temple). They had plenty of opportunities to see His conduct and know that He was not a violent man (like Barabbas, Lk. 23:18-19).

They could have arrested Him in the Temple. But they were cowards. They had been afraid to take Him while the multitudes thronged about Him. The multitudes knew He was innocent and they would have attacked these chief priests and elders had they tried it then. Cowards and criminals operate in the darkness. They must have the protection of night and falsehood. God is allowing the power of darkness to have its "hour" and now it has come. Satan, and all those aligned with him, are to be allowed to exercise the ultimate wickedness. But the forces of darkness are to be "cast out" and judged (cf. Jn. 12:31; 16:11).

The apostles all forsook (Gr. *aphentes*, "took off, pardoned, excused") Him and fled (Gr. *ephugon*, "shrank away from with aloofness, shunned") from Him (Mt. 26:56; Mk. 14:50). We repeat, the apostles were not cowards. They wanted to fight for Him. But they were unwilling to share in His humiliation. Awakened by the noise, a "young man" (perhaps John Mark) leaped out of bed, covered only by a bed sheet, and ran after the mob taking Jesus prisoner (Mk. 14:51-52). The mob then tried to take prisoner this follower of Jesus.

SECTION 5

Contrition (22:54-65)

54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. Peter followed at a distance; ⁵⁵and when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶Then a maid, seeing him as he sat in the light and gazing at him, said, "This man also was with him." ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." ⁵⁸And a little later some one else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." ⁵⁹And after an interval of about an hour still another

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." ⁶⁰But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. ⁶¹And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." ⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.

63 Now the men who were holding Jesus mocked him and beat him; ⁶⁴they also blindfolded him and asked him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" ⁶⁵And they spoke many other words against him, reviling him.

22:54-65 and 63-65 Abnegation: They first led Jesus bound to the palace ("house") of the High Priest. There, according to John's gospel (Jn. 18:13-18), Jesus was interrogated by Annas. Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas who was the official high priest at that time. The "house of Annas" was the most powerful in all Judaism in that era and was detested by the common people. Annas was a Sadducee who had been appointed high priest in A.D. 7, but deposed by the Roman procurator Gratus in A.D. 14. He was able to get five of his sons appointed to the high priesthood, his son-in-law Caiaphas, and one of his grandsons. Annas was the real power behind the office-holder of the high priesthood.

Peter and another disciple (John, see Jn. 18:15-17) followed the mob and actually gained entrance into the courtyard of the palace of the high priest. These apostles were not cringing cowards. In fact, when a maid challenged Peter's identity as he was about to enter the courtyard (Jn. 18:17), Peter's reason for denying his relationship to Jesus may very well have been for the purpose of keeping himself *incognito* hoping to effect a physical rescue of Jesus should the opportunity avail itself. Both Peter and John were manifestly brave enough to sit right down with the soldiers who had just arrested Jesus!

Between the first challenge by the maid at the gate of the courtyard and the subsequent denials of Peter (Lk. 22:56-60), the gospel accounts document the details of Jesus' trials before Annas and Caiaphas (cf. Jn. 18:13-24; Mt. 26:57-68; Mk. 14:53-64). We simply comment here that in both trials, the law of Moses and all the principles of human rights were violated in these "kangaroo courts." Jesus was subjected to interrogation by Annas who was not officially authorized to assume such authority. He was interrogated at night and during a feast, which was illegal. Even the oral "laws" of Judaism (the Mishnah) stated that in capital cases (murder, treason, blasphemy) both trial and verdict must be reached in daytime. In all the interrogation by Annas there were no witnesses and no evidence presented. Even in Jewish law a man was presumed innocent until proven guilty by

two or more witnesses and by evidence. When Jesus was taken before Caiaphas there were bribed witnesses testifying falsely against Him. They contradicted one another so blatantly the high priest had to resort to demanding that Jesus, the defendant, testify against Himself. By all the principles of proper jurisprudence, a mistrial should have been declared and Jesus released. Even Pilate, the Roman procurator, would later see through the hypocrisy and shame of the Jewish proceedings, finding no fault in Jesus (Jn. 18:38; 19:4).

Apparently Luke decided to tell of Peter's anguish and contrition before finishing all the events prior to the moment Jesus "looked" at Peter. Matthew and Mark indicate that after Caiaphas had elicited a verdict of "death" from those gathered in his palace, some of the rabble, along with the "guards" began to spit on Jesus, and, having blindfolded Him, they struck Him, slapped Him and taunted Him, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who was it that struck you?" (Mt. 26:67-68; Mk. 14:65). Luke records this inhumane abuse in 22:63-64.

While this beastliness and mockery was going on, Peter was warming himself by the fire in the courtyard (cf. Mt. 26:69; Mk. 14:66-67). Luke says "a maid" saw Peter sitting in the light of the fire, Lk. 22:56. She looked at Peter and said for all to hear, "This man also was with Him." Matthew and Mark say the maid called Jesus, "the Galilean" and "the Nazarene." Peter denied (Gr. *ernesato*, "disowned") saying he did not know Jesus. A little later, someone else saw Peter and recognized him as one of Jesus' disciples, but Peter again denied being one of His followers. After about an hour, a third person said, "Certainly this man (Peter) also was with him (Jesus); for he (Peter) is a Galilean." Matthew and Mark record that Peter began to invoke a curse on himself (Gr. *katanathematizein*, "anathematize himself"), and to promise vehemently (Gr. *omnuein*) or swear that he did not know this man Jesus of whom they spoke. Luke says Peter replied that he did not know what they were talking about. Peter did not use obscene and vulgar language—he did lie and did so under self-imposed oath.

22:61-62 Anguish: Immediately (Gr. *parachrema*, lit., "with the matter or business itself,"), in other words, at the same instant Peter made his third denial, the cock crowed. It was apparently the breaking of day (dawn) when this took place. The next notation of time is "When morning came," or ". . . as soon as it was morning" (Mt. 27:1; Mk. 15:1) when they took Jesus before the Sanhedrin. Roosters crow at the first break of day which is quite some time before the sun rises. Jesus was taken before the Sanhedrin at sunrise on Friday morning—not before because the Sanhedrin could not legally meet to try capital cases before sunrise.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Why did Peter, who so often had stood with the Lord in the face of opposition and difficult circumstances, deny Him? Why do you and I deny Christ? (a) overconfidence in humanness; (b) disagreeing with God's revealed plan; (c) ill-prepared for the suddenness and subtleness of temptation; (d) repulsed at the humbleness of His way. The only power available to keep from denying Christ is a faith and trust in Him which acknowledges that His revealed will is absolutely true and good regardless of what anyone else may say.

Luke alone records that the Lord "turned and looked at Peter" (22:61). In one understanding and sad look, Jesus penetrated into the very soul of Peter, and Peter "remembered"! The "look" of Jesus revealed to Peter that he had let his Lord down and it broke Peter's heart. This "look" revealed to Peter his overconfidence and self-will was so wrong and it caused him great shame. Mark uses the Greek word *epibalōn* to describe Peter's reaction. The KJV translates the word, "... and when he thought thereon," he wept. The RSV translates the word "... and he broke down" and wept. The RSV is the better translation. The Greek word literally means, "... throwing down," or "down-cast." Peter wept "bitterly" (Gr. *pikros*, from a root word meaning, "to cut, to prick," hence, "sharp, pungent"—the word is used in the LXX of a certain "bitter herb"). Out of this experience, Peter found himself out. This soul-searching look of Jesus saved Simon Peter and gave to the world the humble, spiritual giant of an apostle. Two men betrayed Christ—Judas Iscariot and Simon Peter. Two were exposed to themselves; one killed himself, the other wept bitterly and repented. What constituted the difference? The fundamental essence so needful to character-change and spiritual growth—a love for truth and trust in God instead of self. Peter longed for forgiveness; Judas did not. Would you like Jesus to look into your soul and change you? Then let His Word (read and preached), which is able to "pierce" to the division of soul and spirit, able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:11-13) search your soul. You may weep bitterly, but if you repent and seek forgiveness, He will give it.

SECTION 6

Confirmation (22:66-71)

66 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away to their council, and they said, ⁶⁷"If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; ⁶⁸and if I ask you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." ⁷⁰And they all said, "Are you the

Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." ⁷¹ And they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

22:66-69 Adjured: Early Friday morning, Jesus was taken, still bound, no doubt, from the palace of the high priest, traditionally quite some distance from the Temple, to the meeting place of the ruling council of the Jews. Luke calls this council "the assembly of the elders of the people . . . both chief priests and scribes. . . ." The Greek word for "elders" is *presbuterion* from which the English word, *presbytery*, or *presbyterian*, comes. The word Luke used in Greek is *sunedrion* and is translated "council," and means literally, "seated together." The Sanhedrin usually met in the portion of the rooms immediately surrounding the "court of Israel," called, Gazith, or Hall of Hewn Stones. This is probably where they took Jesus for "trial" Friday at sunrise. There is no historical evidence for the existence of the Sanhedrin before the Greco-Syrian era. It seems to have been originally known as the *Gerousia* which signifies an aristocratic council of elders presided over by an hereditary high priest. During the Roman rule of procurators in Judea it was composed of 70 officials plus the Roman-appointed high priest and restricted in its power to Judea. This is probably the reason Pilate sent Jesus to Herod when he discovered Jesus was a Galilean. Herod Antipas ruled Galilee. Once Jesus came to Judea, however, the Sanhedrin, under Jewish custom, could indict Him. Its power was annulled after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. although it continued in "name." According to Josephus, the Sanhedrin was formally ruled by Sadducean high priests in Jesus' time, but really controlled by the Pharisees who had the backing of the people. Seventy-one men sat in a semi-circle in the Hall of Hewn (Polished) Stones exercising not only civil jurisdiction, but also criminal jurisdiction (under the limitations, of course, imposed upon it by the Roman emperor). It was the final appeals court for a Jew. It determined questions of peace and war. It could try high priests, kings (even Herod was afraid to disobey a summons from it) and all citizens. It had the right to pronounce capital punishment until about 30 A.D. After that it could not execute a sentence of death without the confirmation of the Roman procurator. The Sanhedrin could meet any *day* except Sabbath and holy days. They met from the time of the morning sacrifice until the time of the evening sacrifice. Twenty-three members formed a quorum. Acquittal could be pronounced by a bare majority. It took two more than a majority to secure a guilty verdict. In capital cases, judgment was pronounced on the *same day only* when it was for *acquittal*. If the judgment was "guilty" it had to wait for the next day to be pronounced. Capital cases were never tried on Friday (except in Jesus' case) on account of the above rule forcing a "guilty" verdict to have to be pronounced on Sabbath. These men are so intent upon killing

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Jesus they cast all their own rules and ethics to the winds of hate and greed. They had even decided upon a "guilty" verdict before they met and heard the case (cf. Mt. 27:1). They had decided that at the unofficial and illegal "kangaroo court" held at the home of the high priest the night before (cf. Mt. 26:66; Mk. 14:63-64). Thus far we have documented several blatant illegalities in the arrest, trial and "conviction" of Jesus:

- a. He was arrested without a warrant, by a mob, on a feast day.
- b. He was taken before someone who had no official standing and interrogated, abused and not released when He Himself called for evidence for His arrest.
- c. He was taken before an illegal gathering of Jewish officials (at night), having never been officially accused, and having no witnesses accuse him (contrary to Mosaic Law). This council, meeting illegally, had already pre-determined His guilt and sentence.
- d. Witnesses were bribed to bear false testimony.
- e. Their witness, even bribed and coached, did not agree.
- f. He was adjured to testify against Himself.
- g. All the evidence and claims He made in His own behalf were not introduced into the court proceedings.
- h. He was allegedly arrested for one charge, and, when brought before the illegal meeting of the council, was condemned for another charge.
- i. He was abused, mocked, reviled and physically assaulted in the presence of civil officials charged with law and order and humane treatment of defendants.
- j. Finally, He is brought before the Jewish council, convened on a Friday and given a guilty sentence, which was contrary to legal practice of this council.

There was no warrant for arrest, no charge, no evidence, no testimony, and no legal proceedings. There was no case. Jesus deserved to be dismissed, even on a legal basis. A mistrial should have been declared, notwithstanding the fact that He was innocent!

This morning "trial" before the council was to give the council's murderous machinations a facade of legal correctness. The council demanded, "If you are the Anointed One (Christ), tell us." Standing before Annas (Jn. 18:19-23) Jesus said, "I have spoken openly . . . I have said nothing secretly. . . . Ask those who have heard me, what I said to them; they know what I said." Next, before the council in Caiaphas' house, under oath, when asked if He were the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus replied "I am" (Mk. 14:62). Now, with the semblance of official correctness on their side, in

the morning meeting of the council, they demand again that He say He is the Christ.

Jesus' answer is a masterful exposé of their prejudice and hypocrisy. He had already told them plainly, not once, but many times. He had confirmed His claims with many miracles, some of which the men on this council saw with their own eyes. If He told them now again, they would not believe. They had their minds already made up to kill Him for their own reasons. If He questioned them and tried to discuss the matter (which they pretended to want to investigate), they would not answer—because they really did not want to know the truth. He had many confrontations with these men earlier in the week and much earlier in His ministry, but they did not answer His questions then, either, for they had determined to murder Him.

Then Jesus said a very significant thing: "But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (22:69). In this statement He is informing them that as the Messiah (Son of man is a messianic term, Dan. 7, etc.). He fully expected to survive the death they had planned for Him and to be seated forever at the right hand of the power of God. Even though they were presently judging Him, He would soon be enthroned as their Judge with all the power of God Almighty given to Him. He had said this earlier, the night before, at Caiaphas' house. There He added the implication that He would be coming "on the clouds of heaven" exercising His judgmental powers against them and their city and their nation (see comments in Lk. 21), at the Roman destruction in 70 A.D.

22:70-71 Adjudged: That statement by Jesus infuriated the council and prompted them to all cry out together, "Are you the Son of God, then?" They wanted it on the official record that this Galilean rabbi had claimed to be not only the Messiah, but that the Messiah was God's Son (that is, God in the flesh). This was the great stumbling block to the Jewish mentality. That God could ever become flesh was an impossibility to them because they judged the concept on the basis of human experience rather than accepting it as a revelation from God by faith (see comments, Lk. 20:41-44). Their interpretation of the "Shema" (Deut. 6:4-9), "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is *one* Lord . . ." was that God could never become two, or three, or four. But the real meaning of that passage is that God can never be double-minded, at variance with Himself. Jesus proved conclusively that He and God were one-minded, one in teaching, one in power, one in action—invariable and in perfect unity. Father and Son, were, One! There was nothing, "two," or "three," about them.

Jesus' answer, as recorded in Greek by Luke, is significant. Literally, Luke writes it, "You are saying that I am being I am." Jesus is saying, "You've got it! I am Jehovah." The statement, "I am being I am," is the

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

same as the statement of God in Exodus 3:14, *'eheyeh 'esher 'eheyeh*, which in Hebrew means, "I am that I am." Luke put it in Greek, *hoti ego eimi*. Jesus is claiming to be God. The council members knew it. So they shouted, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips." They did not need any further testimony. There had been more than enough evidence to substantiate Jesus' claim as true. More evidence would not have changed the council member's conclusion, because their conclusion had been made in spite of the evidence they already had.

The Jewish rulers rejected the claims of Jesus to be the Incarnate God. The apostles rejected the teaching of Jesus that their Messiah must die a humiliating death. So these last hours surrounding the Passover, the Lord's Supper, the foot washing, the discourses on the Holy Spirit (John's gospel) and Gethsemane were focused on saving and preparing the (now eleven) apostles to become heralds of the glad tidings throughout the world. Although these apostles deserted Jesus after His arrest, they were not cowards. They did not despise Jesus, nor had they wanted to exploit Him as Judas had. They were simply disillusioned because He had not fulfilled their materialistic fancies concerning the kingdom of God. They would gladly have joined Jesus in a war to bring in by force a kingdom to renovate the then present Jewish system. But it appeared to them that Jesus had become a passive victim of the system. To understand how they thought and felt one has only to read ahead the words of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus (cf. Lk. 24:17-27).

These apostles understood and acknowledged Jesus' way when they saw Him later as the Christ of *glory*, when they acknowledged, almost incredibly, that He had become victor, not victim.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. Can Satan take over a person without that person agreeing to it? What do you think about all the modern motion pictures portraying people being innocently victimized by Satan?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose the Passover time to institute what is called, The Lord's Supper? Wouldn't some other time have been equally appropriate?
3. How could these apostles be so insensitive to these hours of pathos in Jesus' personal life as to be arguing among themselves about being greatest? Why hadn't they accepted this matter as having been settled long ago by Jesus?
4. Is the Lord's Supper a "sacrament"? In what way is the Lord's Supper a "participation" for the Christian? Do you really believe Jesus is communing with you every time you partake? Why do you believe that?
5. Are the elements (bread and wine) of the Supper actually "the flesh and blood" of Jesus?

6. Peter was ready to die for Jesus—are you? Are you willing to live for Jesus?
7. What do you think of Jesus' command for the disciples to arm themselves with swords? Why didn't they just surrender like Jesus did? Aren't we to follow Him in this example?
8. Can you name, in order, the great discourses of Jesus (in John's gospel alone) spoken between the Last Supper and the Garden of Gethsemane?
9. Is it encouraging to you to know Jesus had to struggle with Himself to fulfill God's will in His life?
10. What does Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane say to us about our "feelings" and what the Lord has revealed about His will for us in the Bible? Have you ever had to do the Lord's will when you didn't "feel" like it? How did you get it done?
11. Did Jesus really "sweat blood"? Have you ever been in deep agony over the conflict in your soul and the Word of God?
12. Were the apostles cowards? Why did they all leave Jesus and flee at the time He was bound and arrested? Why did Peter go into the courtyard of the high priest's house?
13. Why did Peter, so willing to fight for the Lord earlier, deny knowing Jesus? Have you ever denied Him? Why? Is it something to weep bitterly over?
14. How many illegalities were there to these early trials of Jesus? Why didn't one of the council members protest? Would you have?

Chapter Twenty-three (23:1-56)

THE SON OF MAN CRUCIFIED

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Why did the Jews take Jesus to Pilate—why didn't they kill Him themselves (23:1ff.)?
2. Why did Herod want to see "some sign" by Jesus (23:8)?
3. What charges did the Jews make against Jesus to Pilate (23:14)?
4. After Pilate had declared Jesus innocent of the charges, why did he propose to chastise Jesus before releasing Him (23:16)?
5. Why did Pilate finally give in to the demands of the Jews that Jesus be crucified (23:24)?
6. What did Jesus mean in His reference to the "green wood" and the "dry" (23:31)?
7. What does death by crucifixion mean (23:33)?
8. How could Jesus promise the thief on the cross salvation if he had not been baptized (23:43)?
9. How could a Roman centurion "praise God" at the crucifixion of Jesus—which God was he praising (23:47)?
10. What is the day of Preparation? What significance has the note of the day of Jesus' crucifixion (23:54)?

SECTION 1

Indicted (23:1-25)

23 Then the whole company of them arose, and brought him before Pilate. ²And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king." ³And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." ⁴And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, "I find no crime in this man." ⁵But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place."

⁶ When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. ⁷And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. ⁹So he questioned him at some length; but he made no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the scribes stood by vehemently

accusing him.¹¹ And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then, arraying him in gorgeous apparel, he sent him back to Pilate.¹² And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

13 Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,¹⁴ and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him;¹⁵ neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him;¹⁶ I will therefore chastise him and release him."

18 But they all cried out together, "Away with this man and release to us Barabbas"—¹⁹a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder.²⁰ Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus;²¹ but they shouted out, "Crucify, crucify him!"²² A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death; I will therefore chastise him and release him."²³ But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed.²⁴ So Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be granted.²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, whom they asked for; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

23:1-5 Pronounced an Insurrectionist: Matthew records the remorse of Judas (Mt. 27:3-10) in advance of its chronological order apparently so as not to interrupt his subsequent narrative of the trial before Pilate. Judas' regret (Gr. *metameletheis*, not *metanao* which means "repent"—see II Cor. 7:8-10 where these two words are shown in contrast) must have taken place after Pilate's ratification of the Sanhedrin's sentence because they had returned to their Hall of Hewn Stones (cf. Mt. 27:3). Most harmonies of the gospel accounts place Matthew's account of what Judas did *before* the Sanhedrin's trip to Pilate's judgment hall. There is a sorrow of the world that produces death—it is a remorse or regret without the decision to change. Repentance, on the other hand, is a sorrow that is climaxed by change. It is significant that the complete innocence of Jesus could have such impact on one who was so devoted to crass materialism. Certainly if the one who betrayed Him testifies to His innocence in such a manner, he was innocent.

Pilate's judgment seat was in the Tower of Antonia, the Roman army barracks just north of and attached to the Temple courts. Pilate's permanent residence was at Caesarea on the sea coast of Palestine. Pontius Pilate, it is alleged, was the son of Marcus Pontius, a general of the Roman army in Spain during Agrippa's war against the Cantabri. He was a friend of the famous royal prince Germanicus and married to Claudia Procula, granddaughter of Augustus the emperor (see our comments on Pilate at Lk. 3:1-6).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

To understand Pilate's behavior at the trial of Jesus, one must be aware of his former dealings with the Jews and the pressures he felt from the terrifying political inquisitions perpetrated by Tiberius Caesar in his later years. Pilate had a relatively "free hand" in ruling Judea, responsible directly to Tiberius. In Pilate was vested the power of life and death for all Roman provincials. He was both final judge and governor. The territory of Judea, being under the direct rule of a Roman procurator, was not allowed to execute capital punishment even on a Jewish citizen (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* IX:1:1; Jn. 18:31). Pilate was in continual conflict with the Jews. Most procurators were. The Jews would not let them be otherwise. When Pilate first came to Palestine he wanted to abolish all Jewish laws and customs, but found this politically impossible. He brought effigies of Caesar to Jerusalem and set them up at night. When the Jews heard, they came by the hundreds and camped around his palace at Caesarea imploring him to remove them. He refused, called them to his judgment seat, surrounded them with an army in ambush, and threatened to kill them. They refused and threw themselves down on the pavement baring their necks to the sword. Pilate had to retreat. Another time he ordered an aqueduct to be built to improve Jerusalem's water supply and attempted to pay for it with Temple treasure. The Jews rioted, Pilate ordered them slain, but had to face continued hatred of the Jewish populace for having used "sacred" funds. Later, he ordered some Galileans slain as they were in the act of offering sacrifice (cf. Lk. 13:1) for some reason known only to him. This may have been the reason he and Herod Antipas were at odds with one another. Finally, about A.D. 36, a self-appointed prophet asserted that Moses' tabernacle and holy vessels were buried on Mt. Gerizim (in Samaria). A multitude of Jews, attempting to climb the hill and dig these alleged vessels up was slain by order of Pilate. Pilate was then called to Rome, banished, and, tradition says, he committed suicide near Vienne (Gaul). The relations between the Jews and Pilate were very strained. He detested them, and they hated him. The Jews were on the lookout for some cause to petition Tiberius Caesar for the removal of Pilate—and Pilate knew it. Only by yielding to the clamor of the Jews for the death of Jesus (30 A.D.) did he last until 36 A.D.

The *whole company* (Gr. *plethos*) of the Jewish council (not the "multitudes") rose as an official body and took Jesus before Pilate. The Sanhedrin began to *accuse* Jesus (Gr. *kategorēin*, from which *categorize* originates) charging Him officially with a capital crime—insurrection. They said they had found (Gr. *heuromen*, to find by investigation) "this fellow" (Gr. *touton*) perverting the Jewish nation. The Greek word *diastrephonta* is translated "perverting" and means literally, "turning through." The accusation is that Jesus has been going throughout the nation subverting, twisting, distorting and corrupting people by the thousands, teaching them to resist Caesar's taxes and claiming himself to be a king. Pilate later uses

the word, *apostrophonta*, (23:14) which literally means, “Turning away” the people. Of course, Jesus was not guilty of the charge of forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar. In fact, He had advocated just the opposite (cf. Lk. 20:21-26). And, He was not guilty of the charge of claiming to be “king” in the way the Jews intended Pilate to understand it.

Pilate did not observe the full legal procedure carried out in the courts at Rome—he was not required to. But he did imitate it to a certain extent. He had full discretion in judgment. No Jew had the right of appeal to Caesar unless he was also a Roman citizen. Roman procurators were usually content for the provincials to govern themselves provided they did nothing to impinge upon the authority of Rome. Any conviction on a capital charge had to be referred to the Roman procurator for ratification or reversal. The Jewish council could condemn but not execute (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* IX:1:1; Jn. 18:31).

When Pilate accepted Jesus as a prisoner he did not do so as a court of appeal. Jesus made no appeal. Pilate was bound to review the proceedings themselves by which Jesus had already been tried and brought before him. And that was all Pilate was bound to do. The Jews would not enter the Praetorium (Gr. *praitorion*, lit. “general’s tent” but later, “residence or judgment hall of the provincial governor”) because they believed they would be “defiled” (Jn. 18:28). It appears Pilate, by his question about “accusation” (Jn. 18:29) was going to try the case in due form of law and for some undisclosed reason the Jews had not expected him to adopt this attitude (Jn. 18:30). They act as if they had reason to suppose Pilate knew quite well why they had brought Jesus before him. They apparently thought Pilate would just do what they wanted him to do with the prisoner, assuming they had already found Him guilty! Pilate either guessed, or had advanced information, that Jesus’ Jewish trial was a farce. We are told later that Pilate knew the Jews had delivered Jesus “for envy” (Mt. 27:16). Pilate evidently saw an opportunity to agitate, belittle and “get back” at these Jewish hypocrites. Realizing Pilate was going to insist on a formal trial, the Jewish rulers began to accuse Jesus of perverting their nation in a tax revolt against Rome and making Himself a king. These accusations were lies. These rulers knew Jesus had never done any of them. They are accusing Him of what was the desire of their own hearts. The Jewish refusal to pay tribute to Caesar a few years after Jesus’ death is what precipitated the conflict ending in the destruction of Judaism (70 A.D.).

The charge of sedition made, Pilate’s next step was to interrogate the prisoner (Mt. 27:11; Mk. 15:2; Lk. 23:3; Jn. 18:33). He began by asking, “Are you king of the Jews?” John tells us Jesus first answered by asking Pilate, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” (Jn. 18:34). In other words, “In what sense do you use the word ‘king’?—as a Roman official trying to decide whether I claim to be

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

an earthly king in opposition to Caesar? Or, are you merely repeating a question put into your mouth by my Jewish countrymen who know quite well that I do not claim to be that sort of king?" Pilate replies: "I am repeating the charge of your country-men (Jn. 18:35). You and they are Jews. You must know in what sense they use the term king and you will know what they mean better than I—what then have you done, exactly?"

Jesus did not back away. He said, "My kingship is not of this world. . . ." He asserted that He did have a kingship in the sense in which He had often made the claim to Messiahship. But He would have Pilate understand that His kingship was not of this world (cf. Jn. 18:36). He made no claim to any worldly throne as the Jewish council had accused Him. Jesus said, in effect, "I am not guilty of sedition against Rome's political sovereignty."

Pilate again said, "So you are a king?" Luke and the other Synoptics record Jesus' second answer, "You have said so." Modern speech would translate that into, "You have it correct, I am the Messiah of the Jews." John records the additional statement of Jesus here, "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice," (Jn. 18:37). Pilate's soliloquy, "What is truth?" was not said flippantly—he was wrestling with his conscience. He had a premonition where this would eventually come to a head. Eventually he would have to decide either to release this idealistic, but innocent, Jewish rabbi and incur the wrath of these detestable rulers, or give in and execute Him. Truth is justice in action. Pilate knew that. Everyone knows that by instinct or conscience. Pilate also knew he had better make no political blunders with Tiberius on the throne in Rome. So, while he was being pressed by his conscience to act justly and truthfully, and with the desire to get "one up" on these antagonists of his, the Jews, and considering the practical consequences of what he would do, he philosophized on, "What is truth?" He probably asked the question to himself as much as to anyone else. The more he reflected on this question and the more he thought about Jesus, the more he was convinced that Jesus was not guilty of sedition or political rebellion against Rome.

Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes (Lk. 23:4), "I find no crime in this man." The Greek word *aition* is strictly a legal term meaning, "a crime, a legal ground for punishment." It was clearly a verdict in the judicial sense of "not guilty." Here, the trial should have been over. The highest tribunal in the land at that point had spoken. The prisoner should have been freed.

The verdict of Pilate sent the Jews into a fit of rage. Luke uses the Greek verb *epischuo* which means literally, "intensely strong" to describe their reaction. Mark says at that point the chief priests "accused him of many things" (Mk. 15:3) and Pilate asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you?" But Jesus said nothing more to Pilate not even answering one of the charges. Pilate was amazed.

23:6-12 Perverse Interrogation: Amid the shouting and tumult of the accusations of the Jews against Jesus, Pilate overheard the cry that the prisoner had been teaching in Galilee. This gave Pilate an idea. He inquired whether Jesus were a Galilean. Pilate and Herod (tetrarch of Galilee) had been political enemies for some time. Each had probably tried to court the favor of Rome by slandering the other concerning their administration of assigned portions of Palestine. Pilate did not want to intensify the estrangement and saw at once an opportunity, since this prisoner was a Galilean, to appease Herod and express his contempt for the Jewish rulers in one stroke. He would send the prisoner to Herod as a gesture of political courtesy. Herod was in Jerusalem at that moment having come to observe the Passover.

Herod had been wanting to see Jesus to make sure He was not John the Baptist returned from the dead (cf. Lk. 9:7-9). Herod knew he had blundered in the execution of John the Baptist—the deed had intensified the hatred of the populace against him; it alerted Rome to his ineffectiveness; it bothered his conscience. Rome would depose him, and he knew it, if he should blunder in public favor again like he had with John the Baptist. So Herod intended to play this one “close to his vest.” He would not plunge into this without thinking. Herod besought Jesus to do some “sign” for him. Apparently Herod, too, recognized that Jesus posed no real political threat or he would have found some way to condemn Jesus to execution. Since Jesus presented no political problem, Herod decided he would not make trouble for himself where there was none. All he intended was to amuse himself with some “signs” from the Galilean prophet, talk with Him about His teachings, and send Him back to Pilate. But Jesus would do no signs nor would He talk. Herod was the “pig” and “dog” of Matthew 7:6. He wanted to see the power of the miraculous and hear about Jesus’ teachings only for carnal reasons. He wanted to be amused. He wanted to exploit Jesus, not learn from Him for any righteous reasons.

Luke alone records the details of Herod’s interrogation. Jesus’ refusal to speak to Herod shocks our sensibilities at first. It seems too out of character for Jesus to pass up an opportunity to speak to the worst of sinners about his soul. Apparently Jesus was manifesting for the record that Herod had evidence enough and teaching enough to which he might respond to God’s will should he choose to do so. Jesus’ silence is saying that any further discussion with Herod about spiritual matters would be to no avail until Herod should repent in accordance with the truth he already had. Those who have no love for the truth, but take pleasure in unrighteousness will be allowed to continue in their self-chosen delusion (II Thess. 2:10-12, etc.). Herod is the one person in all the New Testament Jesus refused to talk with. He talked with Pilate and Judas, but not with Herod.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

All the time Herod was trying to get Jesus to answer his questions, the chief priests and the scribes stood by, *vehemently* (Gr. *eutonos*, lit. "well-stretched" or "extending") accusing Jesus. They were raging beyond all boundaries of propriety for "spiritual leaders" and "judges" of the nation. Herod would not allow himself to be trapped into another *faux pas*. He refused to be swayed by the Jewish priests and pronounced no sentence. Herod was the craftier of the two governors. He ridiculed Jesus as a "nobody" and sent Him back to Pilate—perhaps with a written note of conciliation. But Herod did display his perverse and wicked mentality. When Jesus would not satisfy his curiosity with a "sign" or a word, Herod had Him mocked and physically abused. Herod and Pilate became friends (Gr. *philoî*, sometimes translated "lovers") from that very day.

23:13-25 Proclaimed Innocent: Pilate did initially what his conscience told him was right. He called together the chief priests and the rulers of the Jews and the people. He told them he had *examined* (Gr. *anakrinias*, a legal term denoting the preliminary investigation for gathering evidence for the information of the judges) Jesus and *indeed* (Gr. *kai idou*, lit. "and behold") had found Him *not guilty of any* of the charges they had brought against Him. *Eight times* Pilate would insist Jesus was innocent:

- a. John 18:38, before He sent Jesus to Herod.
- b. Luke 23:15, immediately after Jesus' return from Herod.
- c. Luke 23:20, again he tried to release Jesus.
- d. Luke 23:22, Pilate said again he found no crime in Jesus, and offered to "chastise" Jesus and release Him.
- e. John 19:4, *after* Pilate had scourged Jesus.
- f. John 19:6, when Pilate said, "Take Him yourselves and crucify him, I find no crime in him."
- g. John 19:12, after Jesus warned Pilate of his sin, Pilate again sought to release Him.
- h. Matthew 27:24, Pilate tried to convince himself he had released Jesus and was free of the criminal actions of the Jews.

Pilate also insisted to the Jews that Herod found Jesus innocent of their charges against Him.

No matter how much Pilate implored, the Jewish rulers were implacable. They would not listen to reason; they threw caution to the wind and shouted down the Roman procurator. Pilate had to find an alternative. Suddenly he thought of the Roman custom of releasing a prisoner (cf. Mt. 27:15; Mk. 15:6; Jn. 18:39) (probably a political prisoner) on festival days in the provinces. Some say Pilate was following the normal practice by offering the Jews the choice between Jesus and Bar-Abbas; not really! Matthew (27:15) says the usual custom was to let the provincials choose "whom they wanted." Pilate offered them only one alternative—Jesus or Bar-Abbas.

Pilate capitulated! All jurisprudence has been abrogated. Pilate did not insist on law. He found a way to compromise, but it was a capitulation of principle. He hoped the Jews had rather have the harmless Jesus loosed than a murdering, thieving insurrectionist and troublemaker like Bar-Abbas. About that time Pilate's attention was diverted by a note from his wife. This gave the Jewish rulers an opportunity to stir up the crowd to cry out for Bar-Abbas, (see Mt. 27:19-20). After reading his wife's note he asked again for their choice—they cried again, "Bar-Abbas!" As for the one who called himself, "Christ," they cried, "Crucify him!" Pilate insisted a third time that Jesus was innocent (Lk. 23:18-22). He then compounded his compromise and offered to chastise Jesus.

The name Bar-Abbas means, "son of the father." That may be, as G. Campbell Morgan notes, a title rather than a name. Peter's name was Simon, but he was titled, Bar-Jonah, "son of Jonah." Matthew and Mark say the insurrectionist the Jews asked to be released in place of Jesus was simply a "man" "called" Bar-Abbas. This "man" may have given himself the title, "son of the father," claiming to be the Messiah. From the time of the Hasmonean family until long past the time of Jesus many false Messiah's arose seducing some of the Jews to follow them. Bar-Abbas was not a common criminal—he was a political radical, a terrorist, who had attempted to overthrow the Roman rule of Palestine. He had been captured and imprisoned and awaited execution. Pilate, cagily, left them with only a choice between a man who had tried, by force, to set up an earthly Jewish kingdom (Bar-Abbas) or a man who claimed to be the only true Messiah but who maintained the kingdom was a spiritual relationship to God by faith and that it could exist in this world even under Roman political rule. The Jews, in demanding the release of Bar-Abbas and the crucifixion of Jesus, manifested their carnal expectations concerning God's kingdom.

Once he compromised justice by not releasing the innocent prisoner, Pilate feels like he must continue in the course at all costs. Actually, Pilate could have freed Jesus at any time. All he had to do was say the word—and suffer the consequences. When his first compromise did not work, he tried another. He offers to "chastise" Jesus and then let him go. He hoped scourging Jesus would placate the emotions of the mob. The Greek word for *chastise* is *paideusas* from the root word which means "child." The word means literally, "instruct, correct, discipline." Sometimes the "chastising" was used to "cross-examine" a defendant to see if he was telling the truth or not. Sometimes it was used as a form of punishment for one found guilty of a crime to "correct" the wrongdoer. Pilate wanted to subject Jesus to this last-resort form of "cross-examination" hoping it would convince the Jews once for all that He was innocent.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

The Roman scourge was a whip with several thongs, each loaded with acorn shaped balls of lead, or sharp pieces of bone or spikes. Stripped of his clothes, his hands tied to a column or a stake, with his back bent, the victim was lashed with these whips by six soldiers. Each stroke cut into the flesh until the veins and sometimes the intestines were laid bare. Often the whips struck the victims face knocking out eyes and teeth. It sometimes ended in death.

John's gospel tells us that at this moment Pilate took Jesus (into the procurator's judgment hall) and scourged him (Jn. 19:1-12). Pilate then brought Jesus out before the Jews and made his famous statement, "Ecce homo" ("Behold, the man"). Three more times here he tried to proclaim Jesus innocent and release Him. The third time the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend; everyone who makes himself a king sets himself against Caesar" (Jn. 19:12). Luke simply says, "And their voices prevailed" (Lk. 23:23). Indeed, their implied threat to represent Pilate as an enemy of Caesar prevailed over the voice of conscience in Pilate's heart. Up to this point he kept trying every way he knew to release Jesus and placate the Jews at the same time. But now it is Pilate's neck or Jesus'! So at 6 a.m. Friday morning, Nisan 15, 30 A.D., Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your king" (Jn. 19:14). But the Jews shouted all the more, that he should be crucified. Pilate said, "Shall I crucify your king?" But the chief priests, not being altogether truthful, said, "We have no king but Caesar" (Jn. 19:14). Pilate saw that he was not going to get by without ordering Jesus crucified—the Jewish mob looked like it was about to riot. He took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves" (Mt. 27:24-25). The mob shouted back, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Mt. 27:25). Pilate gave official (Gr. *epekrine*) "sentence" that their demand (crucifixion) should be granted. He released Bar-Abbas and gave Jesus up to their will (Gr. *thelemati*). Crucifixion was exclusively a Roman method of executing criminals. The Jewish method of execution was death by stoning. Jews considered any one crucified ("hanged on a tree") to be cursed (Gal. 3:13). They *specifically* wanted Jesus to be crucified. Such an execution would imply innocence on their part in His death and it would infer that Jesus was "cursed." Little did they know that this was God's plan for Jesus—to become a "curse" for the whole world (Gal. 3:13; II Cor. 5:21).

We would expect Jesus to be the central figure at the trials. But the more we look at the narrative, the more we are impressed with the fact that Pilate and the Jewish rulers are the focus—at least on the surface. That is because it is not really Jesus who is on trial—it is mankind represented in Pilate and the Jews. Men are "in the docks," not the Son of man. He is innocent. What they do with Absolute Innocence incriminates them!

SECTION 2

Impaled (23:26-49)

26 And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. ²⁸But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!' ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' ³¹For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

32 Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁴And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. ³⁵And the people stood by, watching; but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" ³⁶The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him vinegar, ³⁷and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

39 One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? ⁴¹And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴²And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. ⁴⁷Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, and said, "Certainly this man was innocent!" ⁴⁸And all the multitudes who assembled to see the sight, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. ⁴⁹And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance and saw these things.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

23:26-31 Empathy: As soon as Pilate turned Jesus over to the Jews with an official edict to have Him crucified, Pilate's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium, called the small band on duty together, stripped His clothes off, put a scarlet robe on him, jammed a plaited crown of thorns down on His head, put a reed in His right hand, and kneeled before Him, mocking Him with the words, "Hail, King of the Jews" (Mt. 27:27-31; Mk. 15:16-20). They spat upon Him and struck Him in the head with a reed. Spitting in a person's face indicated gross contempt (Num. 12:14; Deut. 25:9; Job 30:10; Isa. 50:6; Mt. 26:67; 27:30), and when performed by an "unclean" person it produced defilement (Lev. 15:8). This psychologically demeaning and abusive experience, following the mock trials and the scourging constituted a terrible prelude to the excruciating spiritual struggle and physical torture of the cross.

As they led Him away to be crucified, they seized a bystander by the name of Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. Jesus probably bore the cross Himself until they neared the gate in the northern wall of the city. It was Roman practice to make the accused bear a 300 pound cross to the place of execution. The accused usually wore a sign announcing his crime. As the accused proceeded through the city bearing his cross he was often flogged by Roman whips and pelted with rocks and other missiles from the gaping multitudes along the way to execution. Apparently Jesus was going too slowly or He may have fallen under its weight. The latter would be more likely when one considers the devastating tortures He endured for hours and hours prior to this experience. The man pressed into service to carry His cross was from North Africa (Cyrene) but he was evidently a Jew (named, Simon). Alexander and Rufus were his sons and probably Christians (Rom. 16:13). Simon may have later become a Christian himself. A scene as this would call forth the natural tender-sympathies of women.

These were women of Judea or Jerusalem—not of Galilee. They were wailing out of pure feminine pity and empathy for Him. The wells of human pity almost always overflow the feminine heart in the presence of suffering. But, almost incredibly, Jesus warned them, "Do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." He was not spitefully slighting their sympathy but He knew that His death was going to result in something even more terrible for Jerusalem and its inhabitants (cf. Lk. 19:41-44; 21:3-32). He is repeating, in capsule form, what He had already announced—the doom of Jerusalem and Judaism. The Romans will crucify Jesus (at the insistence of the Jews) who is The Green Wood but which will *not* be consumed because there is no real crime in Him. The Romans will *destroy* the Jewish nation which is The Dry Wood because it is guilty of killing the Son of God. The time will come to these wailing Jewish women when they will wish they had not borne any children.

Evidently these Jewish women were not believers—only sympathizers. They weiled because they took pity on His fleshly torture. His physical weakness is all they saw, however. They had not seen His deity. May we suggest that we too may be overly inclined to show pity only for the physical torture Jesus had to endure and may miss focusing our contrition in the right place. What we should lament is our sin and the injustice of the perfect Son of man having to be “made sin on our behalf.” If we come to the cross and pity His physical suffering primarily, we have not really grasped the deepest truth concerning His sorrow. As G. Campbell Morgan said: “In the last analysis, Jesus is never an object of pity on the part of sinful, condemned humanity. He is the Object of wonder and of true worship, as He is seen moving in regal splendor towards His Cross.” It is nothing short of awesome that Jesus, in these hours of severest psychological and physical torture, could take time to show concern and deep sympathy for the Jewish nation and warn them once more of the heinousness of their evil. These are the only words He spoke between Pilate’s judgment and the cross!

23:32-34 Execution: Now Luke tells the story of the crucifixion. Along with the other gospel writers he states the facts with incredible brevity! This brevity is for a purpose. Had the gospel writers gone into great detail about the physical aspects of the crucifixion, it would only have intensified the human inclination to concentrate on the physical and miss the spiritual.

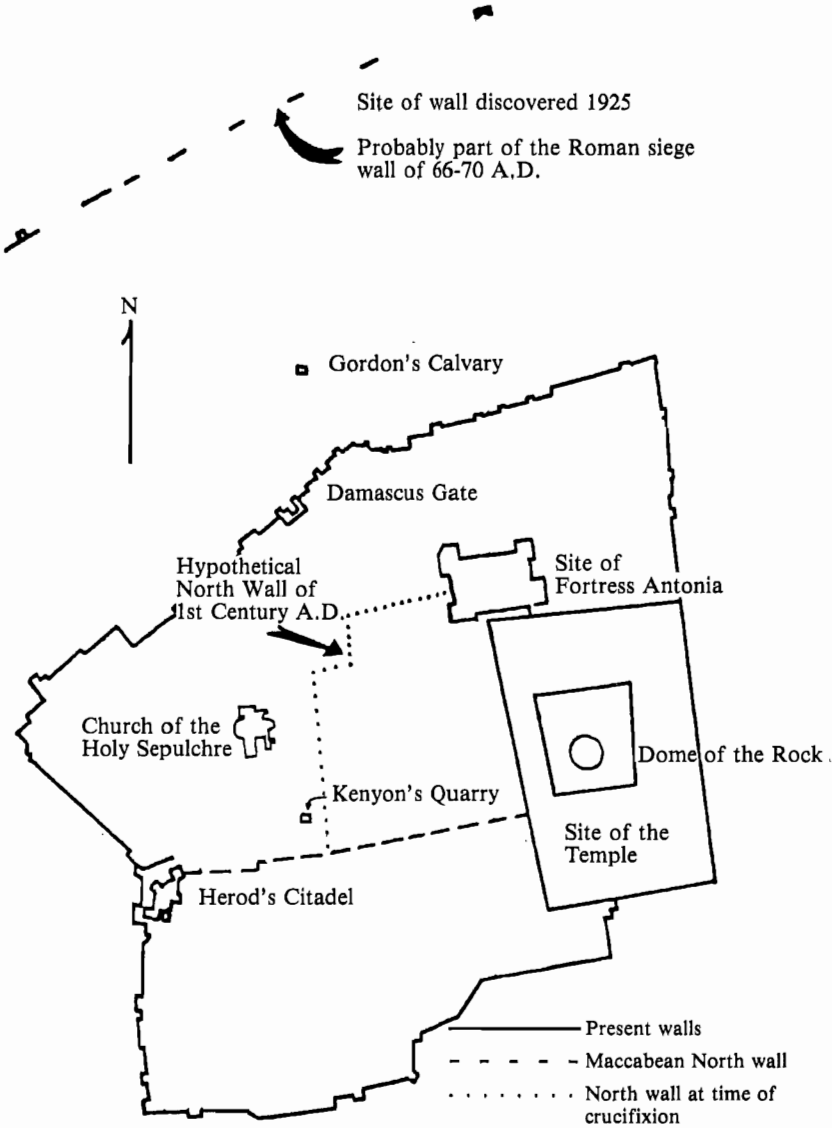
They took Jesus out, His only companions were two criminals (Gr. *kakourgos*, lit. “evil-workers”), and proceeded to a place called, “The Skull.” Matthew and Mark call it in Greek, *Golgotha*, (Mt. 27:33; Mk. 15:22) which is a transliteration of the Hebrew word, *gulegolet*. The Hebrew word means, “bald, round, skull-like mound or hill.” Luke calls it in Greek, *kranion*, which is simply, “Skull.” The KJV in Lk. 23:33 follows the Latin Vulgate and translates, *Calvary*. The Latin word *calvaria* is a rendering of the Greek *kranion*, both of which mean “skull.” A fourth century tradition says Golgotha was where the Church of The Holy Sepulchre now stands (within the city walls at Jerusalem). The more likely site is “Gordon’s Calvary” discovered in 1849, a few hundred feet northeast of the Damascus Gate—sometimes known as the “Green Hill” (outside the ancient walls of Jerusalem). Hebrews 13:12 may indicate (unless it is to be interpreted symbolically) Jesus was put to death “outside” the city. The traditional site for Golgotha was for many years associated with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre marking the spot where Constantine, in dismantling a pagan temple, allegedly found the sepulchre where Christ had been buried. Constantine’s mother, Queen Helena built a Christian church there in 326-330 A.D. Recently, Miss Kenyon, an archaeologist, discovered the ruins of an ancient stone quarry near the Church. The quarry could be dated from 700 B.C. to sometime after 70 A.D. Some have theorized,

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

that a quarry would necessarily be outside the ancient city walls and, therefore, the location of ancient Golgotha may very well have been near where the Church is now (see map on page 471). We prefer Gordon's "Calvary" because of the following reasons:

- a. The place of executing, both with the Romans and the Jews was customarily outside the city or camp (Palutius, a Roman general wrote of this in his *Military Glories*, 2:4:6; see also Deut. 17:5; I Ki. 21:13; Acts 7:58; Heb. 13:12; Lev. 24:14; Num. 15:36).
- b. John 19:20 says the place where Jesus was crucified was "near the city . . ." and apparently where passers-by would be able to see clearly the spectacle . . . even those afar off (Mk. 15:40).
- c. Gordon's Calvary is only a few hundred feet northeast of the Damascus Gate.
- d. Prevailing archaeological opinion is that the wall of Jerusalem is now just where it was in Jesus' day.
- e. There is only one place around Jerusalem which has borne, and still bears, the name "Skull Hill," that is Gordon's Calvary.
- f. Gordon's Calvary is near where the Tower of Antonia was (Pilate's judgment hall) and Gordon's Calvary would appear to be the most readily accessible place (away from crowded streets of the city) to carry on the act of crucifixion.

The origin of crucifixion as a method of execution may be traced to the Phoenician, Carthaginian, Persian and Median civilizations. Syrians and Greeks also used this barbaric instrument of death. The Romans adopted the practice because of the unparalleled suffering it inflicted and the spectacle it presented. It was inflicted on vicious criminals and slaves. It proved to be an effective deterrent to widespread crime or sedition. A Roman citizen could choose execution other than by crucifixion. The Jews would impale a *dead* man to signify a curse upon him (Gal. 3:13; Deut. 21:22-23) but never would they execute anyone by crucifixion. Their profound hatred of Jesus is intensely revealed in their cry, "Crucify him!" An article in *Time* magazine, January 18, 1971, brought to light some new and important information on the method of crucifixion by the Romans. In June 1968, thirty-five human skeletons were found by archaeologists in Israel dating back to the first century A.D. near the old Damascus Gate of Jerusalem. Among them the skeleton of a young adult male whose name, Yehohanan (John, in Aramaic), was inscribed on a burial ossuary. The man's heel bones were penetrated by the rusty remains of a seven-inch long nail. The nail had been bent by trying to force it into a knot. The only way to get the body down from its cross was to cut its feet off and remove the entire complex—piece of wood, nail, feet and the rest of the body—for burial.



See article "Where Did Jesus Die?" by Wm. Palmer in *Christian Standard* 3-19-78.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

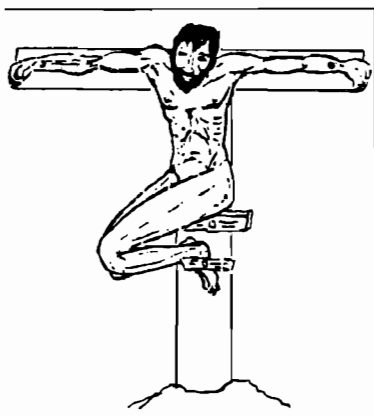
This is the first firm physical evidence of an actual crucifixion in the ancient Mediterranean world. It is very significant because: It tends to revise classical artist's concepts of the manner of crucifixion.

The crucified Jesus is usually shown in an erect position, fastened to the cross by nails driven through hands and feet. To some scholars, that interpretation seemed highly implausible. With the bulk of the victim's weight suspended from his hands, his body would sag; it would become extremely difficult for the breathing muscles to operate, and death would follow rapidly. The delicacy of the hand-structure would also tend to tear and come loose from the nails supporting all the body weight.

According to a reconstruction of Yehohanan's crucifixion by Nicu Haas, anatomist and archaeologist, the nails were driven through the forearms to provide greater support. The victim's legs were twisted to one side and folded up, then a nail and a piece of wood forming a cleat were nailed into his feet near the heel bone. This unnatural position served the purpose of the executioners very well: it would have prolonged both the victim's life and his agony. Incidentally, Yehohanan's skeleton gave evidence that the traditional *coup de grace* (a blow breaking both legs to hasten the victim's death by hemorrhage and shock) had been administered.

Usually an anesthesia was given to the victim of crucifixion, a mixture of wine and myrrh (Gr. *smurna*, a gum-resin from a tree which grows in Yemen—an astringent, antiseptic and stimulant) and also mixed in with this was "gall" (Gr. *chole*, which some think may have been a small dosage of reptilian venom). But Jesus refused to be anesthetized! He was determined to drink the "cup" of God's wrath upon sin to the full, (see Mt. 27:34; Mk. 15:23).

With cold-blooded detachment the Romans would securely fasten the mutilated body to the cross. The ringing hammer against nail, mingled with shrieks of pain (from many other victims) produced a chilling sensation in the bystanders. With a dull thud and more screams from the victim the cross would be dropped into a hole with the victim nailed to the wood, suspended between earth and sky. All that remained was the wait for death. The pain of tearing flesh and muscle cramps became unbearable. Many victims fainted, revived, and fainted again, often, before death. Severe inflammation of open wounds from scourging and the nails occurred.



Exposure to the elements of heat and cold (at night); rain and sunshine; insects and birds pecking at the helpless victims, created agony beyond comprehension. The arteries of the head and stomach were surcharged with blood creating excruciating headaches and stomach cramps plus psychological trauma. Tetanus with attendant convulsions often set in. Death rarely came before thirty-six hours elapsed. Nine days is the longest record of torturous endurance on a cross. This form of execution engulfed the victim not only with pain, but with moral reproach and public humiliation!

It was 9:00 a.m. in the morning (Mark 15:25 calls it "the third hour") when Jesus was nailed to the cross. Placing Jesus between two thieves was intended to humiliate Him further. All manner of derisive, abusive and mocking taunts were probably being hurled at Jesus as He was being nailed to the timbers. There was not one sympathetic, helpful word or touch until the word of one of the thieves. Of course, His mother, other women and John the apostle were there, but they were not allowed near Him. And what was Jesus doing as the Roman soldiers were driving the spikes into His hands and feet? He was praying for the "forgiveness" of His executioners. The Greek verb *aphes* is in the imperfect tense meaning Jesus kept on saying, "Father suffer them (or, wait for them) for they know not what they are doing" Lk. 23:34. This is the *first* "word from the cross"—there will be six others. Luke records three of the seven words from the cross, John records three, and Matthew and Mark record the other one. These words are precious revelations of what was passing through the mind of our Savior in these final hours.

The Greek word *aphes* ("forgive") is the same word used in Mt. 19:14, *aphete*, where it is translated "suffer" or "allow," and in Mt. 27:49 where it is translated "wait." Jesus was *not* asking God for blanket forgiveness here, nor was He praying for the immediate forgiveness of His executioners without their repentance. No where in the scriptures is such a doctrine taught. What Jesus was praying was that God would "wait" with divine forbearance, put off His wrath upon these who were unaware of their heinous crime, until they might have an opportunity to respond to a better knowledge of what they had done. These Roman soldiers were under military orders, carrying out an assignment given them by their superiors. They would assume Jesus to be guilty, unless they were privy to Pilate's statements to the Jews. Paul says if the rulers had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (I Cor. 2:8). Peter said the same thing in Acts 3:17. But *now* God commands all men everywhere to repent—and He has given assurance by raising Jesus from the dead (Acts 17:30-31). After Jesus' resurrection these executioners, and all men everywhere (Col. 1:23), *did* have an opportunity to know for Paul said the gospel was preached to the whole world in his lifetime. At that time they must respond in repentance and obedience to covenant terms (immersion in water) to

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

have the forgiveness Christ prayed they *might have opportunity* to choose. No man should take sin lightly. Jesus was not praying for indiscriminate forgiveness or universal salvation. Jesus was pleading for *time* for men who had no opportunity to know of Him as the vindicated, validated Lord of glory.

Pilate had written a placard with the title, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," (cf. Jn. 19:18-22). It was written in the three main languages spoken or read then, Hebrew, Latin and Greek. Pilate probably did it more to express his contempt and spite toward the Jewish rulers than for anything else. It may have been for the sake of the Roman official records since "blasphemy" of a *foreign* god would not be a capital crime by Roman law. The Jews objected but Pilate said it would remain that way, so the soldiers nailed the sign to the cross. Next, the soldiers divided His garments (plural). He probably wore a turban, a cape or cloak, a girdle or belt, sandals and the under-garments. They divided these among themselves and decided to "cast lots" for the seamless tunic (cf. Jn. 19:23-25) which was of extra-ordinary workmanship. This action was foreknown by God and predicted about a thousand years before it occurred (cf. Ps. 22:18).

23:35-39 Excoriation: The people stood by watching. The extreme cruelty of crucifixion often left those who witnessed it in speechless shock. The Jewish rulers, however, were so filled with raging malice they were impervious to the inhumanity of it all and scoffed as they heaped verbal abuses upon Jesus. Matthew says they cried blasphemous words (Gr. *eblasphemoun*, "derided") at Jesus (Mt. 27:39), wagging their heads or nodding in the direction of the cross as if sneering at this end for the alleged Messiah. Their taunt, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One," was a verbal reinforcement of their disbelief and maliciousness. The soldiers "mocked" (Gr. *enepaizon*, "to play like a child, to sport or jest with") Jesus and so did the Jewish rulers (Mt. 27:41; Mk. 15:31). The rulers affirmed their opinion that God wanted nothing to do with Jesus by saying, "He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, I am the Son of God" (Mt. 27:43). One of the saddest spectacles about Jesus' crucifixion was the conduct of those around the cross. Rather than sit in silence and think or observe, they circled and paced about, spilling out venomous spite and hate like wild animals ("bulls," Ps. 22:12) circling around a wounded and dying prey. Note the admission of the rulers in their statement, "He saved others . . ." that Jesus had done miracles. Perhaps they were remembering the resurrection of Lazarus. Would they have believed had Jesus come down from the cross? Did they believe the miracles they admitted He did? Did they believe after He arose from the dead? Some did (Acts 6:7)!

Matthew and Mark indicate that *both* the thieves started reviling Jesus (Mt. 27:44; Mk. 15:32). Luke mentions the one because the other repented.

Perhaps the thieves felt they were dying before their time and Jesus was the cause—they were undoubtedly crucified with Jesus to bring additional shame upon Him. The one thief said much the same as the rulers, If you are the Christ as you allege, save yourself and us from this excruciating death. His concept of the Christ was carnal too. Luke uses the Greek word *ebblasphemei* to describe the thief's railing at Jesus, Lk. 23:39.

23:40-43 Exaltation: Suddenly, one of the thieves began to rebuke the other, "Do you not fear God!" Then he began to confess his sin, "... we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds. . . ." He then added his belief of Jesus' innocence, saying, "but this man has done nothing wrong." He repented, or changed his mind and actions, from that of blaspheming Jesus to asking for His help. The thief believed Jesus was going to somehow fulfill His claim of Messiahship and "come into His kingdom." He surely did not think Jesus would survive death on the cross, so he must have believed in some kind of spiritual or other-worldly kingdom. Jesus would have welcomed such faith in the multitudes to whom He preached so often and so intently. But how could this thief have come to such conclusions about Jesus?

- a. John the Baptist's preaching was *widely* known and heard.
- b. Jesus' teachings and miracles were even *more widely* known and talked about.
- c. If the thief was a Jew, he probably knew something of Old Testament prophecies and rabbinic traditions.
- d. Both these thieves may have heard about the things said at Jesus' trials, or they may have been onlookers at the trials.
- e. The one thief was impressed with the divine behavior of Jesus at His crucifixion like the Roman soldier was.

At that moment Jesus spoke His *second* utterance from the cross: "Today, you will be with me in Paradise" (Lk. 23:43). The word *paradeiso* is the Greek translation of a Persian word which originally meant "garden" or "park." It is found only three times in the New Testament (Lk. 23:43; II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7). There is a Hebrew word, *parades*, in Song of Solomon 4:13; Neh. 2:8; Eccl. 2:5 translated *forest* or *orchard*. In Jewish apocrypha the word is used extensively to denote the place of happiness to be inherited by the righteous. Jesus used the word only once. When Jesus spoke to the thief it was no time to use "theological" words so He used a word of the vernacular, "Paradise." No human being knows the location of Paradise—but wherever Jesus went *that very day*, this thief was with Him, (cf. also Phil. 1:21-23; Lk. 16:19-31). The question arises, how could this thief be saved without being baptized?

- a. Obviously Jesus could give salvation to anyone on any terms He wished so long as His last will and testament had not been probated by His death (cf. Heb. 9:16).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- b. While a man still lives he has the right to dispense his possessions as he may see fit (cf. Mt. 9:2-8; Lk. 7:48). But after his death, his property must be dispensed according to the terms of his will (cf. Heb. 9:15-28).
- c. Christ's last will and testament was *probated* (from Latin, *probare*; "to prove or establish") on the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 30, when its divine authority was attested to by His resurrection and subsequent miracles of the Holy Spirit. On that day the Lord's executors gave the terms of Christ's will—"repent and be immersed, every-one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins . . ." (Acts 2:38).
- d. Since that time, everyone who wishes to be in Paradise with Christ must obey the terms of His probated will!

23:44-49 Exclamation: John records the third utterance from the cross: "Woman, behold your son!" (the apostle, John); and, "Behold your mother!" (Jn. 19:25-27). Four women; Mary, Jesus' mother; Mary Magdalene; Mary, mother of James and Joseph (also wife of Clopas); and Salome, mother of the sons of Zebedee (James and John) (also Jesus' aunt); and John, the beloved apostle, stood with the crowd around the cross. It was blazing noon-day (Luke calls it, "the sixth hour"); Jesus had been on the cross three hours. Now is fulfilled Simeon's prediction (Lk. 2:35), "a sword will pierce your (Mary, the mother) heart also." Jesus is Mary's Lord, to be sure, but just now He is her son, the baby who lay upon her breast long ago, the lad of Nazareth, the good, true, holy boy who grew into manhood under her loving eyes. From that hour John the apostle took Mary into his home (Jn. 19:27).

Luke (as well as Matthew and Mark) document for us the fact that there was an unnatural darkness, at midday, over the whole land, which lasted for three hours. Luke, according to the Nestle text, used the Greek word, *eklipontos*, from which the English word *eclipse* comes, to describe this darkness. It was, however, no natural eclipse because it was "full-moon" time (being Passover time). This was a miraculous *darkness* (Gr. *skotos*, the word which all three of the Synoptics use to describe the phenomenon). The darkness probably did not cover the whole earth. One pagan historian, however, does discuss it. Phlegon, Roman astronomer, speaking of the fourteenth year of the reign of Tiberius (29-30 A.D.) says, ". . . the greatest eclipse of the sun that was ever known happened then, for the day was so turned into night that the stars appeared."

The supernatural rending of the veil of the Temple is recorded by Luke (23:45) here. Matthew and Mark (Mt. 27:51; Mk. 15:38) place it at the moment of Christ's death. A careful examination of Luke's account indicates he is making a summarization for he says that the darkness and the rending of the veil took place sometime, and Luke is not intending to

be exact, during the three hours from the sixth hour (noon) until the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.). The veil was apparently torn in two (from top to bottom, Mt. 27:51; Mk. 15:38) at the ninth hour when Jesus "breathed his last" (Mt. 27:50; Mk. 15:37; Lk. 23:46). This incident was very evidently a miracle. It was not caused by the earthquake because Matthew says that happened *after* the veil was rent (Mt. 27:51-53). Edersheim says this veil was 60 ft. long (that is six stories), 30 ft. wide, and the thickness of the palm of a man's hand (about 4-5 inches). It was a composite of 72 equal squares of material and took scores of priests to manipulate. Rabbinical literature tells of two veils in Herod's Temple, one before the doors into the Holy Place, and one before the entrance to the Holy of Holies. The one torn in two was undoubtedly the veil before the Holy of Holies. Hebrews 9:1-28 is clearly a reference to this historic event as symbolizing the spiritual reality that was accomplished at the death of Christ. This miracle, witnessed no doubt by many priests, may be part of the reason many priests became followers of Christ later (see Acts 6:7).

Between noon and 3:00 p.m. Jesus made four more utterances from the cross:

- a. "Eli, Eli, lama sa-bach-thani?" this is Aramaic meaning, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (cf. Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34).
 1. It is the cry of God, Himself, on the cross coming into identification of Himself with the issue of the sin of man.
 2. God "interposed Himself" with an oath (Heb. 6:17) at the cross, and took man's place.
 3. It is God-man entering into the experience of both at the point where reconciliation must be achieved.
 4. It is the Incarnate God becoming His own *curse* upon sin and sinners (Gal. 3:13).
 5. It is Him who knew no sin, being made to be sin on our behalf (II Cor. 5:21).
 6. It is God being both Just and the Justifier of those who believe in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:26).
 7. It is the cry of a soul at the uttermost of sin—separating the soul from its Creator. It is the cry of the agony of absolute estrangement from God and all its consequences.
 8. It is the cry of a soul at the uttermost of sorrow—sorrowing over its loss of identity because forsaken by God, the soul is *lost* even to itself!
 9. It is the cry of the soul in the presence of the Divine silence. God withdraws—darkness and silence like no one has ever experienced. It is the silence and withdrawal of Hell!
 10. It is a word from the lips of God. God is expressing from the

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

human lips of His Son the fact that the pains and penalties of human sin were His—He took them for us!

11. It was all the cries of all the doubts of all humanity at the seeming injustices and incongruities of life and death. "My God, why? . . ." Is there any answer? Yes! If Calvary raises these questions, Easter morning answers them! *God has not forsaken man!*
- b. "I thirst . . ." (Jn. 19:28)
 1. Six hours of physical and psychological torture more severe than any person has ever known is what Jesus has endured thus far.
 2. His tongue probably was swollen, his lips parched and cracked, and his every nerve crying out for the relief of a cooling drink.
 3. Soldiers say that on the battlefield all other agony of torn bodies and severed limbs is forgotten in the agony that exceeds them all—that of thirst.
 4. And someone gave Him vinegar on a sponge, attached to a reed or a limb off an hyssop shrub.
 5. How could Jesus drink the wine-vinegar now after refusing the wine and myrrh at first. Vinegar alone (soured wine) has no anaesthetic value, and, now He has tasted to the full His primary "cup" and it is now "finished."
 6. He who is the "Water of Life" drank the bitter cup of sin for the whole world there so those who believe and obey Him may drink the sweet wine of victory and forgiveness.
- c. "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30).
 1. He cried it with a loud voice. It was a shout of triumph, not of defeat.
 2. The Greek word is *tetelestai*, a perfect tense verb meaning, "It has been brought to fulfillment with a continuing result of fulfillment." In other words, what Jesus completed on the cross will continue to stand as completed. It will never need to be completed again! (cf. Heb. 9:25-28; 10:12-14, etc.).
 3. The word of God for the redemption of mankind—so far as the Son's part was concerned—was completed.
 4. All the types, symbols and prophecies of the Old Testament pointed to this moment (Dan. 9:24-27; Isa. 53:1-12; Zech. 13:1ff)
—FINISHED!

Luke alone records the last utterance from the cross (Lk. 23:46): "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" The Greek verb, *parathesomai*, is the same word as its noun form in II Tim. 1:12 where Paul says he is persuaded God is able to keep that which he has "committed" to Him. It is a word which means "deposited with" or "entrusted with." Matthew says

Jesus cried again with a loud voice and "yielded up" His spirit. Matthew uses *apheken*, a Greek word which means Jesus "released, delivered, dismissed or yielded up or let go" His spirit. Jesus finished His work in the earthly body given Him (see Heb. 10:5-10), dismissed His spirit, and deposited it, along with His redemptive work, with the Father for safe-keeping and use as the Father intended it. Jesus was in control all the way. He did not release His spirit until "it was finished." He was King. No man took His life—He gave it! Matthew records (Mt. 27:51-53) that when Jesus breathed His last, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they went into Jerusalem and appeared to many.

The centurion (Matthew adds, and those assigned with him) and all the multitudes assembled to see the sight of the crucifixion, saw sights they had not expected. Darkness for three hours, earthquake and other phenomena (about which they all heard) were things which flooded their minds with awe and agitated anxiety (Gr. *sphodra*, "violent restlessness"). The women stood at a distance and saw these things (Mt. 27:55-56). The "on-lookers" returned home beating their *chests* (Gr. *stethe*, "chest"—is the word from which the medical term, *stethoscope*, comes). It was customary to display publicly such emotions as grief, anguish, remorse or shock (see Lk. 18:13). It is still a custom of the people of the Middle East. Perhaps some of the on-lookers, having had time to be away from the mobs shouting, "Crucify Him," and having seen His divine behavior, had begun to realize Who this was and what they had done! Luke says the centurion "praised God" and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." Matthew and Mark report that the centurion said, "Truly, this man was a Son of God!" The Greek phrase in Matthew and Mark is *alethos theou huios en houtos*. Literally that would be translated: "Truly, of a god, a son was this man." The absence of the definite article in Greek constitutes, where the context indicates, the equivalent of the indefinite article in English. We believe the context indicates that here. Furthermore, in Greek, the noun with the definite article identifies, but the noun without the definite article *qualifies*. In this phrase we have the noun (*theos*) without the definite article. This centurion was a pagan and probably had no concept of monotheism. Romans often made their emperors and other famous men gods and worshiped them. Especially did the Romans idolize stoic endurance of suffering. The centurion was honest-hearted enough to recognize Jesus' innocence (Gr. *dikaio*s, "justness"). So what he is exclaiming is that Jesus' behavior, and the signs he had seen, indicated to him Jesus was probably a son of a god! He knew Jesus was different from any other human beings he had ever known.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

John notes that it was the day of Preparation (Gr. *paraskeue*, "Friday"), Mark expressly says "Preparation" was the day before the Sabbath (Mk. 15:42), and the Jews, meticulously careful that no bodies be left hanging after sundown Friday (which would be the beginning of Sabbath), encouraged Pilate to speed up the execution (Jn. 19:31-37). Romans employed a very grim method of hastening execution by crucifixion—they smashed the legs of the victim with an iron hammer. This kept the victim from being able to support himself so his body sagged and cut off his breathing and he suffocated. Also, the utter shock of such treatment usually precipitated immediate death. John emphatically states as an eyewitness that Jesus was dead. John notes that the soldiers did *not* break the legs of Jesus *because He was already dead*, (Jn. 19:33). One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear (Jn. 19:34) and at once there came out blood and water. It is very important that we mention John's eyewitnessed testimony here, for if Jesus did not really die, He was not really raised from the dead. In fact, that is the primary thesis of Dr. Hugh Schonfield's celebrated book, *The Passover Plot*. He theorizes that Jesus did not really die on the cross but He had plotted earlier with some of His friends that they should drug Him while He was being crucified. Then when He appeared dead, they should ask for His body and put Him in a tomb so that He might later come out and appear to have risen from the dead. We prefer to accept the testimony of an eyewitness, John, rather than the theory of someone writing two thousand years removed from the actual event.

SECTION 3

Interred (23:50-56)

50 Now there was a man named Joseph from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹who had not consented to their purpose and deed, and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud, and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and saw the tomb, and how his body was laid; ⁵⁶then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

23:50-52 Compassion: The fact of Jesus' death is of such importance we here summarize the gospel's testimony to it:

- a. "He gave up His spirit" (John 19:30).
- b. The centurion stood facing Him and saw that He had breathed His last (Mk. 15:39).
- c. The soldiers came to break His legs but saw that He was already dead (Jn. 19:33).
- d. John saw Him die and claims to be an eyewitness (Jn. 19:35).
- e. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus knew He was dead, Mt. 27:57ff., Jn. 19:39, two council members of the Jewish Sanhedrin.
- f. Pilate made sure by questioning the centurion that Jesus was dead (Mk. 15:44-45).
- g. Joseph and Nicodemus put His body in a tomb and rolled a stone against the door (Mt. 27:59ff.; Mk. 15:46ff.; Lk. 23:50ff.; Jn. 19:38ff.)

Joseph's home town, Arimathea, was fifteen miles east of Joppa. Joseph was a rich man, indicated by the fact that he had a tomb hewn for himself out of solid rock. He was a *respected* member of the Sanhedrin (Mk. 15:43) and "was looking for the kingdom of God." This undoubtedly infers he believed the prophets of the Old Testament and believed Jesus was the fulfillment of them. He was a *good* man (Lk. 23:50-51) who had voted contrary to the Sanhedrin's sentence of death for Jesus. G. Campbell Morgan notes: "It is an interesting fact that on that day, when He was dead, those who cared for His final burial were secret disciples. . . . In the hour of crisis, it is often some loud-voiced Peter who says, Though all forget Thee, yet will not I, who fails, while the secret disciples suddenly gain courage." It was Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, men who loved, and men who believed in the coming of the kingdom, who buried Jesus. No hand but the hand of love ever touched the dead body of Jesus. Those who loved and believed Him took Him down from the cross, and put His body in a grave they provided. It was those who loved Him and believed Him who anointed His body with spices. God would not give the body of His Son to the pagans or the Jewish rulers to desecrate further.

23:53-56 Crypt: Just down the slope west from Gordon's Calvary is a garden. At the north end is a rock wall with an opening. One must stoop to enter. There is a runway there where a large round stone might be moved back and forth. Within the opening is a room, nine or ten feet square. There is a ledge on the east side of the room just large enough to hold a human body for burial. Many scholars believe this is the actual tomb of Joseph where Jesus' body was interred. It does seem to fit every specification of the scriptural account. Note the following:

- a. He was buried in a tomb no one else occupied ever before.
- b. One hundred *litras* (80 lbs. U.S.) of burial spices were used.
- c. There was no time for hired mourners or the other customary rites of Jewish burial at the home.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- d. The body was wrapped limb by limb with spices sprinkled profusely upon each bandage.
- e. The body was not carried on a bier to the grave as was customary.
- f. Everything was hurried and without ceremony.
- g. It was in a rich man's tomb (fulfillment of Isa. 53:9).
- h. His body did not see corruption (decay) according to prophecy also (Psa. 16:10).

Because it was late Friday evening, and the sabbath began at sundown, the women (those who had come with Jesus from Galilee) simply followed Joseph and Nicodemus to the tomb to make certain they could find it after the Sabbath to anoint it with spices. Luke says, "they *saw the tomb*, and how his body was laid . . ." then they returned to the city to prepare spices and ointments. This is significant. There have been many theories attempting to explain away the testimony of the empty tomb where the dead body of Jesus had been interred. These are attempts to deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. One of those theories is that the women got lost on their return to the garden, after sabbath, and came to a tomb which was empty, but it was not the tomb where Jesus had been buried. The information Luke recorded was that the women took dangerous but exacting measures to be certain they would *not* return to the wrong tomb. In light of Luke's record which, according to his own preface (Lk. 1:1-4), was written only after the most extensive accumulation of eyewitnessed testimony, it seems ludicrous to try to explain the empty tomb by theorizing these women went to the wrong tomb!

Now the enemies of God have done their utmost. The pretended "ruler of this world" thinks he has "devoured the man-child" (cf. Rev. 12:1-6). If God is to be dethroned, this will be the hour, for His Son has been put to death and buried. The greatest power-confrontation of all time has come to a head. The battle has been fought! But who is victor? Not Satan. He has, in fact, sealed his own doom. He has suffered final and absolute defeat. He has been "cast out" (Jn. 12:31), "destroyed" (Heb. 2:14-15), "judged" (Jn. 16:11), and "bound" (Mt. 12:29, etc.). Death has no power over Jesus (Jn. 14:30)—it cannot hold Him! His followers will go to the tomb to see Him but they will be told they are seeking the "living" among the dead! God is victor! He took the worst the devil could ever do to both God and man, the death of the Son of God and man, and made it the justification of both God and man!

We cannot here continue commenting on the *meaning* of the death of Christ. That remains for the epistles of the New Testament. The purpose of the gospel records was simply to document the facts of His death as written testimonies of eyewitnesses. It is nothing short of supernatural that those who wrote these gospel accounts, some twenty years after the events, did not indulge in expansive interpretations of the facts they recorded.

It should be considered proof that the gospels were written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that they do not regale the reader with interpretations of events as most human reporters do.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. What kind of pressures would Pilate be under that would make him want to appease a vanquished Jewish hierarchy? Didn't Pilate have freedom to override their demands if he wished? Is Pilate the only political official ever to feel this kind of pressure? How should we expect politicians to react under such pressure? How does God expect them to react?
2. Does it appear to you that Pilate began his review of the charges against Jesus with honesty and justice in mind? Or, maybe he thought he could use this incident to torment his Jewish tormentors? What do you think? In light of unchristian human behavior, what do you think of Pilate?
3. Why didn't Jesus talk to Herod? Does it bother you that Jesus did not even try to get Herod to repent? May we use Jesus' conduct as an example to follow in certain confrontations we may have?
4. What does the demand of the Jews to have Bar-Abbas released instead of Jesus show about their purposes and relation to God's Word?
5. What does the scripture say about those who violate their own conscience? (cf. Romans 2:12-16; 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 10:23-30). Is that what Pilate did?
6. What is your reaction to Jesus' compassionate warning to the women of Jerusalem as He, Himself, was being abused on the way to Calvary? Could you be like Him in such circumstances? Are you supposed to be?
7. What do you think of the method of execution by crucifixion? Do you think it had a deterrent-value? Is execution necessarily supposed to be humane? Is crucifixion any less humane than Jewish death by stoning?
8. When Jesus prayed for the forgiveness of those crucifying Him, did God answer His prayer? When? How?
9. Where is "Paradise"? When did Jesus go there? Is that where all believers go after death?
10. How could a "secret" disciple of Jesus like Joseph of Arimathea get such courage to ask Pilate for the body of Jesus and bury it in his own tomb? What had he done at the Jewish trials of Jesus? Why? Should Joseph have done more in Jesus' defense?
11. What is significant about all the documented details of Jesus' death and burial? Did Jesus really die? What if He did not?
12. What about the importance of the women *seeing* where He was buried?

Chapter Twenty-four (24:1-53)

THE SON OF MAN RISEN FROM THE DEAD

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Is there an alternative explanation for the empty tomb of Jesus besides the actual, bodily resurrection of Jesus from death?
2. Why did the angels have to remind the women of His prediction of resurrection?
3. Why did the apostles look upon the women's report as "an idle tale"?
4. Why didn't the two disciples on the road to Emmaus recognize Jesus?
5. Since the women and others had already reported an empty tomb, why were these two disciples so despondent?
6. Where do the Old Testament prophets write about the Messiah's death and resurrection? Why didn't the Jews believe what the prophets wrote?
7. How were the eyes of the two disciples "opened"?
8. When did the Lord appear to Simon?
9. Why were the disciples startled when Jesus appeared among them?
10. How is it possible to "disbelieve for joy"?
11. What was the promise of the Father yet to come upon the apostles?

SECTION 1

The Empty Crypt (24:1-12)

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared. ²And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³but when they went in they did not find the body. ⁴While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; ⁵and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise." ⁸And they remembered his words, ⁹and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told this to the apostles; ¹¹but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

24:1-7 Dramatic Decree: More authentic detail is available on the death and burial of Jesus than of any other great man of the ancient world. There was no doubt in the minds of both His associates and His enemies that He had died and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. And the women who had watched where He had been buried came, very

early, on the first day of the week (Sunday), after the Sabbath was over, to anoint His body in the tomb. We now summarize a chronological order of the preliminary "watching" of the tomb by the women:

- a. Friday afternoon, "the sabbath was beginning" Lk. 23:54 Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of Joses saw the tomb and "how His body was laid."
- b. Friday evening Lk. 23:56a They returned and prepared spices for embalming His body
- c. Friday after sunset and up to sunrise Saturday, Lk. 23:56b They rested "according to the commandment"
- d. Saturday before noon Mt. 27:62-66 Jewish rulers and soldiers secured the tomb—sealed it and set a guard.
- e. Saturday night, before sunset, Mt. 28:1 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb (Wieand says the Greek word *opse*, (translated "after" in RSV), may be translated "late," (Arndt and Gingrich say the same).
- f. Saturday, after sunset Mk. 16:1 They purchased additional spices (after sunset on Saturday, sabbath restrictions are lifted since it is no longer the Sabbath). They went home for the night (not definitely stated but necessarily implied).
- g. Sunday, before sunup Lk. 24:1; Mk. 16:2; Jn. 20:1 The women *started* for the tomb Before sunup the women started for the tomb. Lk. 24:1 reads literally, "And on the one of the week, deeply early (very early) in the morning." Mk. 16:2 reads, "and extremely early." Jn. 20:1 reads, "early darkness."
- h. Sunday morning, sunrise Mt. 28:2-4 Nisan (April) 17, A.D. 30 At sunrise a great earthquake; Jesus raised from the dead; an angel rolled back the stone; the soldiers fell down as if dead, then they ran off to report to their superiors.
- i. Sunday morning, just after sunrise, Mk. 16:2; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1a John 20:1 says, "while . . . still dark" but the Greek verb *erchomai* may be translated either "came" or "went."

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

The women *arrived* at the tomb.

Wieand suggests *switching* John's usage to "went" (while still dark) and Mark's usage to "came" (when the sun had risen). The original authors, for all we know, may very well have intended such usage. And, after all, it is a matter of English translation as to which word should be used—and that should be determined according to parallels and harmonization.

The women saw the tomb already opened.

j. Sunday morning, Mk. 16:3-4,
Lk. 24:2; Jn. 20:1b

k. Sunday morning, still early,
John 20:2

Mary Magdalene is shocked; believing someone has taken Jesus' body from the tomb, she runs to tell Peter and John. John 20:1a mentions only Mary Magdalene as going to the tomb. This is *not* a contradiction since John does not *say* she was the *only* woman who went. John mentions her specifically because she is the one who ran to him and Peter with the report of the empty tomb. The Synoptic gospels were already in existence when John wrote (95 A.D.) so he simply supplies material the Synoptics omitted.

l. Sunday morning, Mt. 28:5-8

An angel appears to the other women; calms their fear; announces Jesus' resurrection from the dead; invites them into the tomb to see for themselves; tells them, after they have seen, to go tell His disciples they will see Him in Galilee.

m. Sunday morning, Mk. 16:5-8
Lk. 24:3-8

They entered the tomb and another angel was there. They looked at the empty burial clothes, were exceedingly frightened, and hurried away with fear, and yet with great expectancy of joy. There appears to be some lapse of time before they told the disciples. They were afraid to tell

anyone at first (cf. Lk. 24:8 as it qualifies Mt. 28:8). This lapse of time would explain how Mary Magdalene could run away to tell Peter and John, run back to the tomb with them, have Jesus appear to her there, and still be found with the group of women later when Jesus appeared to the group. (This will be discussed further in the chronology of appearances).

n. Sunday morning, Lk. 24:9-12
Jn. 20:3-10

Peter and John, having been told by Mary that Jesus' body was missing from the tomb, ran to the tomb. Peter entered, found the facial cloth rolled up neatly apart from the rest of the burial wrappings. John then entered, saw, and confirmed for himself that the body was gone. As yet they are *not* convinced Jesus is raised from the dead.

Luke reports the women found the stone rolled away upon their arrival at the tomb. It is probable that Christ arose from the dead at the moment the earthquake occurred (Mt. 28:2). Often in Scripture the earthquake signifies a divine visitation (Mt. 27:51, 54). But we cannot be dogmatic about the exact time of His resurrection. No one saw it or recorded it. The angel came to roll away the stone, not to allow Jesus to leave the tomb, but to let men and women see with their own eyes the empty tomb. Jesus did not need the stone rolled away or doors opened for Him to leave or enter any place (Jn. 20:19) after His resurrection. There was no need for anyone to be present at the exact moment of His resurrection, either, since He appeared afterward in His glorified body to many eyewitnesses. That is the proof of His resurrection.

The women entered the tomb and found the body of Jesus gone. They had seen, themselves, His body placed in that very tomb by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. They were perplexed; Luke uses the Greek word *diaporeisthai*, which means literally, they were "searching for a way through" their confusion. They could think of no explanation at this moment for the body being gone. There are really only four possible explanations: (a) Jesus did not die and was not buried; that has already been disavowed by enemies and associates alike, if the records are authentic; (b) the women went to the wrong tomb; but the gospel accounts document

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

the meticulous efforts of the women to determine exactly where He was interred, even to going to the tomb at the moment of burial and returning once again; (c) either friends or enemies stole His body and placed it elsewhere; we will deal with the allegation that His friends stole His body, later, but most assuredly the enemies of Jesus were *not* interested in seeing His body stolen from that tomb and letting anyone get the idea that He had risen from the dead—they took every human precaution they could to preclude that possibility; (d) He actually arose from the dead, in His crucified and buried body, and came forth from the tomb by His glorified, supernatural power, as the gospel accounts declare. If the gospel accounts are authentic and credible (and they certainly are that), the last possibility is the only one acceptable.

While the women were in a state of confusion, two men (Gr. *andres*) stood beside them. These “men” were angels (Mt. 28:2, 5). Luke describes them as clothed in “dazzling apparel” (Gr. *astraptousais*, the same word used to describe the appearance of Jesus at His transfiguration, Lk. 9:30). These were heavenly beings who looked like men. Matthew and Mark mention only one—they do not say there is just one. The women were terrified. This is the normal human reaction when confronted by angels (cf. Dan. 10:7-9; Rev. 22:8-9). But these men said to the women, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?” More literally, the angels said, “Why are you seeking the living *one* among the dead ones?” The phrase “he is not here, but has risen” should, we think, be a part of the text. Most of the earliest and most significant ancient manuscripts contain the phrase. Only a few manuscripts omit it. The women still did not understand. Finally, the angels said, “Remember how He told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, *and on the third day rise.*” Jesus made this prediction a number of times in Galilee (Mt. 16:21; 17:23) and in Judea (Mt. 20:19). When Jesus had said it before, those who heard it, because of prejudice and because of its non-experiential nature, did not let it register. They could not conceive of such a thing so they did not believe it. But now, the drama of the angelic presence and the empty tomb and the message of the angels force them to remember and accept the predictions of Jesus as the possible answer to the empty tomb.

24:8-12 Doubting Disciples: Jesus never referred to His cross without declaring also that He would rise again. The angels remembered; men and women did not! Human beings heard, but they did not comprehend—because they did not believe. It was not until Jesus appeared, bodily—in the same body laid in the tomb with nail prints and all—that His own followers believed:

- a. Sunday morning (John 20:11-17): *First appearance:* All the women, except Mary Magdalene (who had gone to tell Peter and John), left

the tomb and started back to Jerusalem. Peter and John, and probably Mary Magdalene following them, must have gone to the tomb by another way. Mary Magdalene stood near the tomb weeping, after Peter and John had returned to the city. Jesus appeared, there in the garden, some distance from Mary. In the early morning she could not distinguish who the person was. Jesus spoke her name and she recognized Him and grabbed Him. Jesus informs her that she cannot keep Him on earth any more—she must prepare herself for His return to Heaven.

b. Sunday (Mt. 28:9-10; Lk. 24:9-11; Mk. 16:10-11; Jn. 20:18): *Second appearance*: Mary Magdalene apparently caught up with the group of women as they were returning to the city. Jesus then appeared to the whole group of women, Mary Magdalene included (Lk. 24:10), as they were on their way to tell the disciples gathered in a secret place in Jerusalem. The women finally arrived (Mary Magdalene appears to be the spokeswoman) and told the apostles they had seen the risen Lord. Mark tells us the apostles were mourning and weeping (Mk. 16:10). When the women (led by Mary Magdalene, John 20:18) told the apostles their story, the apostles would not believe (Mk. 16:11) and thought that the women were making up some fairy story! (Gr. *leros*, a medical term describing giddiness, delirium or hysteria). These apostles were hard-headed, logically-thinking men who insisted on a world of reality. That is the way they had lived their whole lives as fisherman and tax-collectors. They knew Jesus had died; they knew He had been buried; they would not believe He was alive again unless they could see Him up, walking and talking and eating in that same body (as they had seen Lazarus, earlier).

Sometime that same Sunday the guards who fled from the tomb reported to the officials of the Sanhedrin *all* that had taken place (cf. Mt. 28:11-15). What the “*all*” includes we may only speculate. We wonder if the guards knew more about the resurrection than that an earthquake had taken place. We wonder what they thought about the stone being rolled away—perhaps they, too, saw the angel. They knew enough that they had to be bribed. Not only so, but a story was fabricated for them in order to *explain away* the truth. The “stolen body theory” is as ludicrous now as it was then!

c. Sunday (I Cor. 15:5): *Third appearance*: Jesus appeared to Peter alone somewhere in Jerusalem. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus mention it (Lk. 24:34) as having already happened when Jesus walks with them. Peter was the acknowledged “leader” of the apostolic band. Jesus had already exhorted Peter to strengthen his brethren when he should repent of his denial. Peter would welcome special indication from Jesus that he had been forgiven and was still trusted to be an apostle. Peter would be one of the first to proclaim the resurrection (Acts 2) and one of the first to defend it before Jewish enemies—he must be *certain* of it!

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

SECTION 2

The Emmaus Conversation (24:13-32)

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, "What is this conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened. ²²Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning ²³and did not find his body; and they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said; but him they did not see." ²⁵And he said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further, ²⁹but they constrained him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight. ³²They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?"

24:13-24 Dark Despondency: Luke gives a very condensed account of the first day (Sunday) of the resurrection. He mentions the empty tomb, two appearances of Jesus, and then, omitting all the intervening thirty-nine days, describes the ascension (Lk. 24:44-53; Acts 1:6-11). But Luke's account is of great significance. He was a physician. All his scientific

training would have prejudiced him against a bodily resurrection. The two appearances he records are uniquely suited to supply evidence to this physician (and any other scientist) of the reality of a phenomenon outside his human experience! Luke traced all things accurately. He has the facts. Here they are:

d. Sunday afternoon ("that very day . . .") (Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-35); *Fourth appearance*: Two disciples of Jesus had left Jerusalem and were headed for the little village of Emmaus. Emmaus may be derived from an Aramaic name meaning, "bath" or "wells"; it was about seven miles northwest of Jerusalem. One of the disciples was named *Cleopas*. Lightfoot believes Cleopas to be Alpheus, the father of the apostle James (cf. Mt. 10:3). It is not the same person as Clopas, the husband of Mary (Jn. 19:25), in Greek the two names are spelled differently—*Kleopas* and *Klopa*, respectively. Some think the "other" disciple might have been Luke, but that is highly improbable; other commentators think it may have been the wife of *Cleopas*. We do not know.

These two disciples were walking along the dusty road sermonizing to one another. Luke uses the Greek word *homilein* to describe their conversation—it is the word from which we get the English, *homiletics*, or sermonizing. They were analyzing all the things that had happened in Jerusalem concerning Jesus the last few days. The Greek word *suzetein* is translated "discussing" in verse 15, and means "debate, argue, reason, dispute." This was not a casual conversation! They were so engrossed in their discussion they did not even notice when Jesus joined them in their journey, nor did they notice who He was. There was nothing miraculous about their "eyes being kept from recognizing Him." Jesus certainly had no purpose in keeping them from knowing who He was—in fact, His purpose was to *get* them to recognize Him. They were depressed. They had no more anticipation of a bodily resurrection than the apostles back in Jerusalem. Jesus asked about their discussion. The Greek literally reads, "What are these *words* (*logoi*) which you are *throwing* back and forth (*antiballete*) toward one another?" It was an animated conversation! They stopped and looked out of their eyes sadly (Gr. *skuthropos*)—probably looking toward the ground. Perhaps without even looking up, Cleopas answered, "Are you the only *stranger* (Gr. *paroikeis*, lit. "one who dwells parallel to; or, alien") to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" They thought it incredible that anyone, even an outsider or a visitor, should not have heard something of what had transpired recently. So they related to this fellow traveler all the information they had, adding their interpretation. Their information was:

- a. Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet; mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.
- b. The chief priests and rulers delivered Jesus up to death by crucifixion.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- c. Three days had gone by since that had taken place.
- d. Some women disciples of Jesus, gone to the tomb, found the body of Jesus gone, reported back that angels told them He was alive.
- e. Other disciples they knew personally had gone to the tomb and found it just as the women had said—empty.
- f. But no one had seen Jesus.

Luke's Greek is interesting as he reports their statement: "*But* (Gr. *de*) we were hoping that He is the one going to redeem Israel." "*Yes, and* (Gr. *alla ge*) besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened." "*Moreover* (Gr. *alla kai*) some women amazed us. . . ." These hesitating, vacillating words imply emotional confusion. "We wanted to believe . . . but then He has been dead three days . . . but on the other hand we have this incredible story by the women. . . ." They had seen His mighty deeds and heard Him prophesy; they knew what the Old Testament prophets had written about the Messiah; they had heard the accounts of the empty tomb and the angelic announcements; still they did not believe! One of the greatest proofs of the resurrection of Jesus is that none of His followers expected it to happen!

24:25-32 Delirious Delight: Jesus rebuked them for their absence of understanding (Gr. *anoetoi*, "without comprehension"). He told them they were too hesitant (Gr. *bradeis*)—they should believe the facts testified to by the women as the fulfillment of what their prophets predicted and not let their human rationalizations hinder them from faith. Jesus asked the rhetorical question, "Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" He expected them to answer, "Yes!" But they did not answer. So He began with Moses (the Pentateuch) and went through all the prophets, interpreting to them in all the scriptures (including the books of poetry too) the things concerning Himself. This would involve instruction in all the *types* and *prophecies* and *symbols* in the Old Testament which point directly or indirectly to the Messiah's redemptive suffering (Gr. *pathein*, "pathos"). The limitation of space does not permit us here to list all the types and symbolisms of the Messiah's suffering and glorification. We trust the following references to prophecies will suffice to explain Jesus' exhortation:

Isaiah 52:13—53:12

Zechariah 11:7-14

Zechariah 13:1-9

Psalms 110:1-7

II Sam. 7:12

Daniel 9:24-27

Zechariah 12:10-14

Psa. 16:1-11

Psalms 22:1-31

Psalms 89:3-4

The tenth verse of Psalm 96, according to some ancient Christian scholars, has been corrupted. Jerome, Augustine, Tertullian and others

make this charge. Justin Martyr, 100-167 A.D., stated his belief that the Jews, out of hatred for Christ, tampered with the text because it prophesied the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom by means of His suffering and death upon the cross. Our modern versions read: "Say unto the peoples: the Lord reigneth." In the version called *Italica Antiqua*, which was in use during the first centuries of the Church, and also in the *Psalterio Romano*, the verse is rendered: "Say unto the peoples: the Lord reigneth *from the tree*" or *a ligno*, as it is in the Latin. For the Psalmist to say that the Lord God Himself—the Almighty—was to establish His government in the hearts of men on the basis of a cursed cross was something so horrifying, so unthinkable and so repulsive to the human rationalizations of the Jews they simply refused to accept the idea. The cross of Christ became a stumbling block to the majority of them (cf. I Cor. 1:23).

Jesus did not merely recount all the Old Testament predictions of the Messiah, He "interpreted" (Gr. *diermeneuen*, the word from which we get "hermeneutics") to them the things concerning Himself. What a lesson that must have been! Beginning with the "seed of the woman" (Gen. 3:15) He would proceed through the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant, into the monarchy and David's throne, and concluding with all the prophets. Still mastered by their despondency more than His teaching, they do not yet recognize Him. He has done nothing yet to give them evidence He is Jesus, risen bodily from the dead.

When they drew near to Emmaus Jesus gave some indication that He was going to travel on. Perhaps they were intrigued and deeply interested in what He was saying, perhaps they were simply exercising the importance placed on hospitality to strangers, so they "constrained" Him to stay with them. So He went in to abide (Gr. *meinai*) with them. When it came time for the evening meal, they all reclined (Gr. *kataklithenai*) on their couches about the table and Jesus took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. Here, as a guest, Jesus takes the part of the host or the "Master" of the meal. The Greek phrase would read literally, "And it was, in the reclining of Him with them, taking the loaf He blessed, and having broken He gave to them." This was just the way He had acted with them so many times before. As He broke the bread, they may have seen the nail prints in His hands; as He prayed, they may have recognized familiar phrases or urgency of voice. Whatever the evidence they now had, it was enough to make them recognize Him (Gr. *epegnosan*, "fully perceive, discern, recognize"—from the Greek verb, "to know"). No sooner did they discover it was Jesus, risen bodily from the dead, eating supper with them, than He vanished out of their sight. The Greek phrase is, *autos aphantos egeneto*, "He, non-visible, became." Barnes thinks there was nothing miraculous in this, but He simply withdrew from their presence while they were still stunned by the surprise. On the other hand,

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

it is possible that it was a miraculous disappearance to give them evidence of His glorified state. All the disciples must understand that He is not risen bodily for the purpose of remaining on earth. He told Mary she must not "hold onto Him" as if to keep Him on earth (cf. our comments, *Gospel of John*, pg. 426, College Press). Later, He will appear suddenly to the apostles in the room where they had closed all the doors for fear of the Jews (cf. Mk. 16:13-14; Lk. 24:36-42; Jn. 20:19-20). In His glorified body He was able to appear and disappear, to materialize and dematerialize, to go through closed doors or walls—and why shouldn't He if He was earlier able to walk on water, read minds, predict the future, raise the dead, cast out demons and be transfigured to talk with Moses and Elijah!

Whatever happened, it so excited these two disciples, they exclaimed, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?" The Greek word for "burned" is *kaiomene* and is often used metaphorically of spiritual light (cf. Lk. 12:35; Jn. 5:35). Jesus had turned on the light of truth about the Messiah's death and resurrection in their hearts that day. Their gloom was gone. They were no longer despondent and without hope. Now they were filled with faith and joy. They could not contain themselves.

SECTION 3

The Eleven Confronted (24:33-43)

³³And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, ³⁴who said, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

³⁶As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them. ³⁷But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. ³⁸And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? ³⁹See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴¹And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate before them.

24:33-40 Disconcerting Demonstration: The two disciples in Emmaus rose from the supper table and returned (rapidly, no doubt) the seven miles back to Jerusalem. It took them about an hour to walk the road back.

e. Sunday evening, late (Jn. 20:19-20; Mk. 16:13-14; Lk. 24:33-43): *Fifth appearance:* To the apostles and disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas

absent. The Emmaus disciples arrived in Jerusalem and found where the apostles were hiding. John tells us the doors were shut where the apostles were for fear of the Jews (Jn. 20:19). They are now called by the title "the eleven" instead of "the twelve" since Judas had hanged himself. But there were not eleven of the apostles present—Thomas had absented himself for some reason (see Jn. 20:24). This also shows that the two Emmaus disciples were not apostles. There were others present with the apostles and some of them said, "The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon!" The Greek word translated "appeared" is *ophthe* and is a derivative of the words *horao* and *ophthalmos* and carries with it the definite connotation of something seen with the eyes. The Lord's "appearance" to Peter was objective, not subjective. The two disciples from Emmaus then related to the group their experience of seeing the risen Lord and gave the objective evidences which convinced them it was Jesus. The apostles did not believe even then (Mk. 16:13).

As they were talking, Jesus appeared suddenly in the room with them. They were terrified (Gr. *ptoethentes*, "in consternation, in paralyzed fear") and filled with fear (Gr. *emphoboi*, phobia). Apparently He did not come through a door as normally expected, but "materialized" right through the closed door. They thought (Gr. *edokoun*, stronger than "supposed") they were seeing a spirit (Gr. *pneuma*). Jesus chides them for having troubled minds and doubts and suspicions. They have the testimony of the women, the testimony of Peter and the testimony of the two Emmaus disciples—why do they still doubt? But with the patience and love He had always shown, Jesus offers further evidence. It is very important to note here that Jesus presented proof to three of the sensory perceptors of man—sight, hearing, touch. This is *scientific* evidence; it is what is called *experiential* and meets the demands of any honest-minded scientist to prove the fact beyond any reasonable doubt. The apostles appeal to this sensate evidence later as the very center of their gospel proclamation (Acts 10:41). The apostles did not seek to persuade men on the basis of their own faith, but on the basis of scientific, eyewitnessed evidence. Jesus invited them to "see and touch" the hands and feet which had the nail scars in them (as well as His side, Jn. 20:20).

"A spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have," said Jesus, and then He showed them His hands and His feet. That last phrase is omitted from our printed text (v. 40), but many ancient manuscripts include it (Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, et al.). We believe it to be textually verified.

24:41-43 Dazzled Disciples: They "disbelieved for joy." That is not an unusual reaction when surprised by a visit from someone one thinks is dead. Many people have had the same experience with returned prisoners-of-war or with "miraculously escaped" victims of natural disasters and

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

have said, "I see you, but I just can't believe you're alive—is it really you—say something or do something so I will know it is you!" The apostles were wondering and Jesus asked for something to eat to prove to them "He was Himself" (Gr. *ego eimi autos*, 24:39). They gave Him a piece of broiled fish (some manuscripts add, "and honeycomb") and He ate it. Once again, Luke the physician has traced accurately all things and documented evidence of the bodily resurrection of Jesus experiential enough to satisfy his own scientific mind and any other fair-minded person who will investigate the authenticity and credibility of Luke's record.

- f. One week later—Sunday (Jn. 20:26-29): *Sixth appearance*: Jesus appeared to the apostles again in Jerusalem. This time Thomas was present. Thomas was invited to touch the nail prints in Jesus' body. Thomas was convinced. The only way to call this an hallucination is to call John a liar. The gospel account plainly states it as an *empirical event*.
- g. Sometime later—unknown time (Jn. 21:1-25): *Seventh appearance*: Jesus appeared to seven of the apostles while they were fishing. They did not recognize Him at first. He worked a miracle and invited them to breakfast. John then recognized Him. Peter jumped out of the boat and hurried to shore ahead of the others. This is the *third* revelation of Himself to the apostles. After breakfast, Jesus challenges Peter's concept of "love."
- h. Still later—unknown time (Mt. 28:16-20; Mk. 16:15-18): *Eighth appearance*: Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles on a mountain in Galilee and gave them the Great Commission. Some make this the same as the appearance to the "five hundred brethren at once" in I Cor. 15:6. The text seems to imply this appearance was restricted to the eleven apostles.
- i. Still later—unknown time (I Cor. 15:6): *Ninth appearance*: Jesus appeared to over "five hundred brethren at once" in a place unknown, but testified to by the apostle Paul. Many of those people were still alive when Paul wrote to the Corinthians.
- j. Still later—unknown time, at Jerusalem (I Cor. 15:7): *Tenth appearance*: Jesus appeared to James. We are not certain which James, but probably Jesus' half-brother—the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15).

SECTION 4

Eleven Commissioned, Again (24:44-53)

44 Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the

law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹While he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

24:44-49 Divine Declaration: In Jerusalem, at some time between His appearance to James and His ascension, Jesus met with His apostles and reiterated His commission to them. We do not know how much time elapsed. We do know it was forty days between His resurrection and His ascension.

k. Still later—unknown time, at Jerusalem (Lk. 24:44-49): *Eleventh appearance:* Both Wieand in his, *A New Harmony of The Gospels*, and Shephard, in his, *The Christ of the Gospels*, place this appearance separate from fifth appearance (Lk. 24:36-43). The same appearance is described in Acts 1:3-8. Evidently Jesus spent many hours during these forty days in intense instruction to the apostles and disciples concerning the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in His redemptive incarnation. The two great lines of evidence appealed to in apostolic preaching (Acts) and apostolic writing (Epistles) are the empirical facts witnessed in His death, burial and resurrection, and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in His deeds and teachings.

It is interesting to note that Jesus summarized the entire message of the Old Testament as a prediction that the Messiah should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Yes, that was what God was saying in the Old Testament—redemption and evangelism. There is little doubt that the Old Testament is filled with predictions that God's redemptive deeds will be to all people when one reads the prophets—especially Isaiah (cf. Isa. 2:1-4; 19:16-24; 25:6-9; 42:1-4; 49:5-7; 51:4-6; 60:1-3; 61:1-9, etc.). All this God chose Israel to do. It was Israel's destiny to give birth to the Redeemer and to be a kingdom of priests in order to take the message of redemption to the whole world. The majority of the Israelites defaulted on that destiny. But God's redemptive program was not thwarted. He called upon a small minority, a remnant, eleven apostles and a few disciples, and they answered.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

He sent them to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the nations. And that message of repentance and forgiveness was validated by the testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (cf. Acts 2:22-42; 3:12-26; 17:30-31, etc.). There is no reason for men to repent if Christ is not raised; there is no hope for forgiveness if Christ is not raised. So Jesus said, "You are witnesses of these things." They witnessed only His death, burial and resurrection. They preached repentance and forgiveness because He promises it and His promises are absolutely trustworthy *because* of His resurrection. Repentance (a change of direction, both in mind and deed) and forgiveness of sin (release from guilt and reconciliation to God) is man's most fundamental need. Jesus says it is available "in His name"—that is, by His authority, and in His way of life.

Jesus said to the apostles He would send the "promise of the Father" upon them. That "promise" was, of course, the supernatural powers and privileges enumerated by Jesus at various times (Mt. 16:17-20; 19:28-30; John 14-17; Jn. 20:20-23, etc.). These eleven apostles (and one to be added) would open the doors to the kingdom, establish it, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, and leave with the infant church an infallibly inspired set of documents known as the New Testament. To these apostles would be granted great privilege, great responsibility and great persecutions (Mk. 10:30). All those were promises of the Father.

This same conversation in the book of Acts reveals to us that the apostles were still clinging to the materialistic view of the kingdom of God. They asked Jesus if He were, at this time, about to restore the kingdom to Israel, (Acts 1:6). They must, therefore, have the power of the Holy Spirit to accompany their preaching. The Holy Spirit's miraculous powers working through the apostles would be necessary not only to keep them aware that the kingdom was spiritual and to guide them inerrantly in their teaching, but also to verify their message of the spirituality of the kingdom for the whole world. The spiritual nature of the kingdom of God is foreign to the carnal mind of man. Without the inspired revelation of the Holy Spirit, men would not believe it!

24:50-53 Dedicated Devotees: After admonishing them to stay in the city of Jerusalem until they were "clothed" with power from on high, He led them out as far as Bethany (on the Mount of Olives, cf. Acts 1:12), and lifting up His hands He blessed them.

1. Last of May (Hebrew month, Iyyar), A.D. 30: *Twelfth appearance:* While He blessed them, He parted from them. Greek manuscripts Alexandrinus, Vaticanus, Ephraemi, Washingtonius and Koridethi, et al, add, "and was carried into heaven." We do know that He ascended into heaven because this same gospel writer, Luke, records the event in his Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:9-11). The apostles saw Him go, bodily, up into the heavens and disappear from their sight. He appeared, once more, bodily, to Saul of Tarsus, near Damascus, Syria (I Cor. 15:8; Acts 9:3-9).

For a while the apostles remained, staring into heaven, awed, shocked, wondering and probably confused. But two angels appeared and directed them, "Why are you standing here staring into the heavens, this same Jesus who was received up from you into heaven, will come back from heaven in the same manner you saw Him go." This filled them with great joy, and they returned to Jerusalem in obedience to their Lord's word, worshipping in the Temple as they awaited the beginning of their great task to preach His name to the whole world.

The record of God's redemption according to Luke does not really end here. It continues through the Acts of the Apostles, for the good news resulted in the establishment of Christ's church first at Jerusalem, and then in the uttermost parts of the civilized world. The Holy Spirit did empower the apostles; He did validate their message with miracles and signs (cf. Heb. 2:3-4; Acts 2:1ff.). The Holy Spirit did call to their remembrance all Jesus taught them as recorded in this Gospel and the others; He did lead them into all the truth necessary for the establishment and satisfaction of the church. And the apostles (and thousands of other believers) did go and bear witness to the redemptive plan of God as it was accomplished in Christ.

Jesus did and said many other things than those recorded in Luke's gospel or John's gospel or in the other two (cf. Jn. 20:30-31; 21:25), but all that is necessary for any man to believe and obey Christ unto salvation is recorded in the New Testament. What is recorded in the gospel accounts is sufficient to produce faith in Christ as the Son of God in the heart of any honest-minded individual. We will discuss the matter of believing the gospel accounts in the addendum to this chapter. You will want to read that next!

Tradition says that Luke lived until he was 84 years of age never marrying, and after his death he was buried in a city called Thebes, in Bithynia. We do not know the certainty of all that but we do know Luke's name will live on while this earth remains and his great faith and dedication to produce an "orderly and accurate" account after having "followed all things closely" has resulted in millions of people coming to believe Jesus is the Son of Man and the Son of God and may result in millions more believing also. We here express our gratitude to God for His divine providence that would call and empower such a man as Luke to put into writing the deeds and sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ. The uniqueness of Luke's record, compared to the other three records, is a classic example that God wishes to communicate His good news to all men, whatever their culture or whatever their inclinations.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

ADDENDUM ON THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the fundamental fact of Christianity. Without it there can be no Biblical Christianity. Without it there is no hope for mankind. Paul makes it the one absolute essential to faith, morals, brotherhood and proclamation (I Cor. 15:1-58). Without the bodily resurrection, in time, in space, in history, established on empirical evidence, the death of Christ is vain, the faith of the Christian is vain, the preaching of the church is vain, and Christians are, of all men, most to be pitied. So we here offer this study in the hope that believers will have their faith founded on this fact of history and that unbelievers will, in honesty and openness, be persuaded to believe in the living Christ.

I. BASIC ATTACKS ON THE RESURRECTION

- A. Denial of the authenticity of the gospel accounts, or a denial of their credibility.
- B. Explaining the gospel miracles as myths.
- C. Making faith in God a matter of subjective experiences or feelings and, therefore, declaring the factuality of miracles and the bodily resurrection irrelevant to being a Christian.

II. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE LAWS OF EVIDENCE APPLIED TO THE QUESTION OF THE FACTUAL TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY (excerpts from an article by John Warwick Mont- gomery, entitled, "Legal Reasoning and Christian Apologetics," *Chris- tianity Today*, 2-14-75).

- A. The "ancient documents rule:"
 1. Ancient documents will be received as competent evidence if they are fair-on-their-face (i.e. if they offer no internal evidence of tampering) and have been maintained in reasonable custody (i.e. if their preservation has been consistent with their content).
 2. Applied to the gospel records, and reinforced by responsible lower (textual) criticism, this rule would establish their competency in any court of law.
- B. The "parol (i.e., oral, word of mouth) evidence rule:"
 1. External, oral testimony will not be received in evidence to add to, subtract from, vary, contradict an executed written instrument such as a will.
 2. Applied to the Biblical documents which expressly claim to be "executed" and complete (Heb. 9:15-17; Rev. 22:18-19), this rule insists that Scripture be allowed to interpret itself and not be twisted or contradicted by external, extra-biblical data (such as comparative New Eastern religious texts and practices, "new" hermeneutics, Form Criticism methods, etc., etc.).

C. The "hearsay rule:"

1. A witness must testify of his own knowledge, not on the basis of what has come to him indirectly from others.
2. This demand for primary—source evidence is fully vindicated in the New Testament documents by the constant claim of its authors to be setting forth that which they have "seen and heard and handled (touched) concerning the Word of Life. . ." (I Jn. 1:1-4).
3. In the document of Luke, he nowhere claims for himself eye-witness primacy, but he does so for his sources, (Lk. 1:1-4).

D. The related "cross-examination" principle:

1. All trials proceed upon the idea that some confidence is due to human testimony, and this confidence grows and becomes more steadfast in proportion as the witness has been subjected to a close and searching cross-examination.
2. Applied to the New Testament message of the first century, this rule underscores the reliability of testimony to Christ's resurrection which was presented in the very teeth of opposition (in Jewish synagogues and among Greek and Roman philosophers and rulers) among hostile cross-examiners who would certainly have destroyed the case for Christianity had the *facts* been otherwise.

Just such rules of evidence sufficiently settle issues of life and death in human society—and always have—even in the most "primitive" societies. They are sufficient for believing in historically documented facts upon which to establish faith and action in religion (as they are for scientific and legal matters).

III. TREATISE ON THE LAW OF EVIDENCE (excerpts from the writings of Simon Greenleaf, 1783-1853, U.S. legal educator, head of Harvard Law School in 1846; drafted original constitution of Independent Republic of Liberia; classed with the world's greatest legal minds such as Kent and Blackstone; president of Massachusetts Bible Society for many years; wrote, *the Testimony of The Evangelists*).

A. Principles

1. To establish the historicity of the facts of Christianity, nothing more is demanded than is readily conceded to every branch of human science!
2. Christianity does not profess to convince the perverse and head-strong, to bring irresistible evidence to vanquish every question. All it professes is to propose such evidence as may satisfy the disciplined, teachable, honest, serious searcher for truth.
3. The foundation of Christianity is based on facts. These facts are testified to as having occurred within the personal knowledge of

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

the Gospel writers. Christianity, then, rests upon the credibility of these witnesses. Are they worthy of implicit belief? This is the question in all human tribunals in regard to persons testifying before them.

B. Precepts

1. Every document apparently ancient, coming from the proper custody, and bearing on its face no evident marks of forgery, the law presumes to be genuine, and devolves on the opposing party the burden of proving it to be otherwise. We are entitled to assume the texts of the Gospels are genuine until the contrary is shown conclusively with empirical evidence.
2. If it be objected that the originals are lost, and that we have only copies, the principles of municipal law apply here also. For if any ancient document concerning our public rights (our Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc.) were lost, copies which had been as universally received and acted upon as the four Gospels have been, would have been received in evidence in any court of law without the slightest hesitation.
3. In trials of fact, by oral testimony, the proper inquiry is *not* whether it is possible that the testimony may be false (as critics approach it) *but* whether there is sufficient probability that it is true!
4. In weighing the evidence of any proposition of fact, the question to be determined is, *when* may it be said to be proved. A proposition of fact is *proved*, when its truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence beyond *reasonable* doubt.
 - a. Competent: Such as the nature of the thing to be proved requires. (seeing, hearing, touching, etc.).
 - b. Satisfactory: Amount of proof which ordinarily satisfied an unprejudiced mind beyond any reasonable doubt.
 - c. Sufficiency: Enough to satisfy the mind and conscience of an honest man and cause him to act upon that conviction.

When one has this degree of certainty, it is unreasonable to require more.

5. In the absence of circumstances which generate suspicion, every witness is to be presumed to be credible, until the contrary is shown. The burden of impeaching his credibility lies upon the objector.
6. Honesty: All witnesses are entitled to the benefit of the axiom that men ordinarily speak the truth, when they have no prevailing motive or inducement to the contrary. If the testimony of the gospel writers is false why would they have lied to bring

upon themselves all the misery and persecution of Christianity's enemies?

7. Ability: The ability of a witness to speak the truth depends on the opportunities he has had for observing the fact, the accuracy of his powers of observing and discerning, and the faithfulness of his memory in recalling the facts. We can at least grant to the gospel writers the abilities of most human beings until the contrary is shown. This is the procedure of legal justice. Matthew was a tax-collector; Luke was a physician; both were trained in such abilities to remember and record facts.
8. Number and consistency of witnesses: Enough disparity is needed in the witnesses (as to time separations, geographical separations, etc.) to show there was no collusion. Enough agreement in the documents of the witnesses is needed to show they were independent recorders of the *same* great events.
9. Conformity of testimony with experience: What the gospel writers witnessed and testified to was experienced or seen and heard by others (cf. Acts 2:22, etc.).
10. Coincidence of testimony with collateral and contemporaneous facts and circumstances:
 - a. Had the evangelists been false historians, they would not have *committed* themselves on so many *particulars*.
 - b. Had the evangelists been false historians, they would not have furnished their enemies with such documents for bringing them into discredit with their audiences.
 - c. It is not possible for the wit of man to *invent* a story, which if closely compared to the actual occurrences of the *same* time and place, may not be shown to be false.
 - d. Comparing the gospels to the histories of that era proves their authenticity.
 - e. False witnesses will not willingly or *consciously* detail any circumstances in which their testimony may be open to contradiction. Nor will they *multiply* circumstances where there is danger of comparisons that could be made and exposure made.
 - f. False witnesses deal in *general* statements and broad assertions. When forced to use names and particular circumstances they will try to invent such as will be out of reach of all investigation and opposing proof. THIS IS NOT SO WITH THE THE GOSPELS!

It should be clearly settled in the mind of honest investigators that the Biblical documents known as the Gospels meet all the principles and rules of legal and scientific evidence herein proposed.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

IV. THE GOSPELS ARE NOT MYTHS

- A. Rudolph Bultmann, celebrated theologian, says, the message of Christ provides religious truth, but *not* historical facts.
 - 1. Jesus of Nazareth, according to Bultmann, was merely a man about whom we know very little.
 - 2. Whatever the Gospels say about Jesus cannot be taken as historically true except for a few facts such as his life in first century Palestine, his trial under Pontius Pilate, and his death by crucifixion. The rest must be myth and fable *created* and compiled by the early Christian believers.
 - 3. These early believers used the "religious myths" of the virgin birth and the resurrection to ascribe divinity to Jesus. The "myth" concept is popularized in books like *The Passover Plot*.
- B. Myths compared to the Gospels
 - 1. In Homer's *Odyssey* there is the myth of Circe, an evil enchantress who lured men into her garden and then changed them into pigs. In the same Greek mythology is the myth of Polyphemus, the one-eyed Cyclops who killed and ate some of Odysseus' men who hid in his cave. Aesop's Fables are a form of myth.
 - 2. But the gospel accounts are factual documents describing a man named Jesus who lived and died and was resurrected completely and *bodily within the realm of history*.
 - 3. Mythological gods lived in the imaginary realm of the unseen on Mount Olympus or some other unknown and unseen place, and never performed their alleged deaths or resurrections in real life as real-bodied beings. They could never be verified historically.
 - 4. Christ's resurrection happened only once! Mythological gods were resurrected constantly, according to the annual changes in seasons.
 - 5. J. Gresham Machen in *The Origin of Paul's Religion*, says, most of these mystery religions did not exist in the form which the critics say is like Christianity.
 - 6. Only some forty days after the death of the historical person Jesus, His disciples were proclaiming to their contemporaries the detailed facts of His return to life in the same body buried in the tomb. Mythological characters took many generations and often, centuries, to develop and gain followers.
 - 7. Even if the disciples of Jesus had borrowed (which no evidence shows they did) from the myths prevalent in their day it would have taken longer than forty days to establish the "Jesus-myth." Extant portions of copies of manuscripts of the Gospel accounts date back to within 50 years of the eyewitnesses of Christ's life!

8. The history of the Jews (and Jesus' apostles were Jews) during the first century A.D. and before shows they were *violently opposed* to Greek and Roman religious mythology. So Jesus' apostles would have been seriously anti-mythology.
 9. If the resurrection of Christ was a myth, why encumber it with the details of a common human existence which made it open to investigation by its enemies! Placing the hero of this alleged "Christ-myth" in their own time, instead of saying it happened centuries before their time, these apostles would have robbed their story of the enormous prestige of antiquity. Surely, they would have been as intelligent as other myth-makers.
 10. If the resurrection of Christ had been nothing more than a myth, the witness to it would have been just as *palatable* as the hundred other myths were to the pagan civilization of their day. Myths required no sacrifice to believe, hardly ever did they involve persecution, and they usually permitted gross indulgences of the flesh. History shows that the message of Christ's atonement and resurrection was *not* palatable to those devotees of contemporary mystery religions and the same is still true today!
- CHRIST'S RESURRECTION IS NO MYTH!

V. SUBJECTIVE OR "FEELING" RESURRECTION IS ALL THAT IS NEEDED

- A. "We cannot prove the resurrection as an historical fact and we do not need to . . . what the church needs . . . is the testimony of persons who . . . say that Christ has appeared to them . . . and that they have experienced his presence in some of the crises of meaningful experiences of their lives." by Dr. J. Daniel Joyce, dean of the Graduate Seminary, Phillips University, in *The Christian*, 3-30-1969.

"Christians need not affirm that Christ rose from the dead at all . . . so far as its having literal historical significance, it has become excess baggage for most of us . . ." Dr. D. W. Ferm, Presbyterian minister in *Newsweek*, 3-3-1972.

Rev. John Burke, P.O., executive director of the Word of God Institute, a Catholic organization, quoted in the Los Angeles Times, 9-5-1977: "said he did not know of 'any credible biblical scholar who would hold for a bodily Resurrection.'"

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume, article by F. W. Saunders says the earliest form of Resurrection accounts among the first Christians "may have been the experience of Peter and his brethren in coming to faith, 'seeing' that Jesus was not a martyred prophet but in very fact Lord and Christ

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

enthroned in glory. The mystery of that conviction is the mystery of faith."

ALL SUBJECTIVE! NOW CONTRAST THESE STATEMENTS . . . WHICH DO YOU THINK REPRESENTS WHAT, USING THE NORMAL RULES OF UNDERSTANDING HUMAN LANGUAGE, THE GOSPEL WRITERS INTENDED THEIR READERS TO UNDERSTAND?

- B. "The greatest derangement of the human mind is to believe because one wishes it to be so." Louis Pasteur

"The heart cannot delight in what the mind rejects as false. . . . The beauty of the gospel in the avalanche of competing religious claims is precisely the possibility we have of checking it out historically and factually." Clark Pinnoch, in, *Set Forth Your Case*.

"The gospel is good news of God, not news of man . . . it has as its first concern not what man must do, but what God has done. It asks, Since God has so acted, what ought we men do? The Christian message demands attention not because it may be helpful, but because it is true. . . ." Sidney Cave, in, *The Christian Way*.

- C. Facts → Testimony → Faith → Feeling, in that order and none other! "Because the power of faith (like prayer) rests not in the faith (or in prayer) itself but in the *object* (God and Christ) of the faith.

"It is not choosing nor refusing; it is not loving, hating, fearing, desiring or hoping; it is not the nature of any power or faculty or capacity of our being, nor the exercise of them but the *objects* or *things* upon which they are exercised which give us pleasure or pain; which induce us to action, or influence our behavior.

"The nature of God, demonstrated by the deeds of God, transmitted to us and imprinted upon our nature through the testimony of language transforms us into His image." Alexander Campbell, in, *The Christian System*.

- D. "The validity of Jesus rests *not* on how he makes us feel but on the historical facts of the first century. Getting high on Jesus is a dangerous step toward emotional insecurity. Christianity is not limited to our subjective feelings . . . else whenever we are depressed or frustrated, our faith is almost worthless. Christianity is sure no matter how many times we fail because it is factual. Christianity is not invalidated by our lack of success." Dr. James North in San Jose Bible College *Broadcaster*, March 1974.

- E. Our hope in the resurrection is not based on subjective feelings.
1. Christianity based on subjectivism or existentialism is like impressionistic art—its beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Such Christianity is validated by feelings, not by facts.

2. Any outlook which over emphasizes the subjective in religion and disregards rational objectivity can neither invalidate a false revelation nor validate a true one. If you are sincere in your search for the Real, you must not repudiate the Rational.
3. Man trusts, has assurance, loves, acts morally, and hopes on the basis of what God has done, historically, in the past. God has given man a trustworthy record of His redemptive action.
4. Validating one's religion primarily by one's subjective feelings makes one his own god and that is no better than any other form of idolatry.

F. The Gospels (and the whole New Testament) are authentic, trustworthy historical records by eyewitnesses that God entered history in the Person of Jesus Christ, died to atone for sin, arose from the dead bodily, and ascended into heaven. The Bible does not ask us how we feel about that, but rather, do we believe it and are we willing to obey it! Redemption does not depend on what one feels about these things, but on what one believes and does about them. This is objective faith.

G. The difficulty many people face is that subjective faith is almost like objective faith in what it professes. But subjective faith shifts faith to feeling and says we really don't have to concern ourselves with the historical details of the gospel so long as we *feel* all right inside. It shifts faith from what God *has* done, as its focus, to what God *is* doing now inwardly. Salvation has changed focus, here, from the cross and the resurrection to the emotional experience of the person. This is the "existential leap in the dark" whether preached by Barth or Graham!

VI. REFUTATIONS OF ATTACKS ON THE HISTORICITY OF THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD

A. The Empty Tomb

1. *Attack:* The earliest attempt to explain away the empty tomb was that of the Jewish leaders giving money to the guards to say the apostles had come and stolen His body while they slept (Mt. 28:11-15).

Refutation: To imagine that the disciples could have done that without waking the guards is incredible. To imagine the guards could verify the disciples had stolen the body "while they slept" is unacceptable. To imagine the disciples did steal the body and then laid their necks on the block for what they knew was a hoax is postposterous!

2. *Attack:* Another attempt to explain the empty tomb is that Jesus' enemies (the Jewish rulers) or Roman officials removed His body.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Refutation: Seven short weeks after His death Jerusalem was seething with the preaching of the resurrection. If the Jews or Romans had known where His body was it was rather stupid of them to keep it hidden and allow credence to this uproar. And the Jews were *upset* about this preaching! Why didn't they produce His body and squelch that preaching once for all? Quite clearly, they could not because His body was not in the tomb and they did not know where it was!

3. *Attack:* Another theory is that the women, strangers in Jerusalem, half awake, half scared, blinded by tears, went to the wrong tomb. A young man was hanging around there, and guessing what they wanted, said, "You seek Jesus . . . He is not here (pointing to the tomb they were looking at) . . . Behold the place where they laid Him (pointing to another tomb). The women became frightened and ran away. Subsequently they decided that the young man was an angel proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus.

Refutation: First, this attack is a dishonest statement of what the gospel record says—it leaves out the statement of the angel, "He is risen!" As we see from the gospel records the women were at the tomb more than once and knew precisely where it was. They witnessed the burial. Joseph knew where his own tomb was. Why did he not come forth and correct the women if the resurrection story was built on a simple mistake about the place of burial?!

4. *Attack:* Finally, there is the theory that Jesus did not die, but fainted. They thought He was dead so they allowed Him to be taken down, placed in a cool tomb where He revived and was able to come out of the tomb and appear to His disciples. They, being the ignorant men they were, could not believe that He had just fainted and gotten over it so they went out preaching that He was raised from the dead.

Refutation: If Jesus had not died on the cross He would have to have died eventually of some cause, so the enemies of Christianity merely had to take note and point out the dead body to stop the story of a bodily resurrection. Furthermore, a man already physically exhausted, hanged on a cross for 6 hours, run through with a spear, allegedly gets up after three days and nights in a tomb and rolls back a huge stone that several women could not handle—again it is incredible! The crucifying soldiers declared Jesus dead. How could men whose business was execution make such a mistake—when their own reputation, and perhaps their lives were at stake with their superiors. Pilate

checked their report and was satisfied Jesus was dead. The Jews were satisfied He was dead and not merely swooned when the soldiers reported all that had happened.

The record says there was an empty tomb. Either it was or the documents are false. The record says the reason the tomb was empty was that its occupant arose from the dead and was seen alive after dying. This is the record of eyewitnesses. Some have *theorized* explanations for an empty tomb other than a resurrected occupant. The gospel writers claim to be writing eyewitnessed accounts—which are most believable to you? In the public preaching to non-believers in the book of Acts there is enormous emphasis on the resurrection but *not one reference* to the empty tomb. Why? Because there was no point in proving the empty tomb since everyone, friend and foe alike of the first century, *knew it was empty*.

B. The Appearances of Jesus After His Resurrection.

1. *Attack:* Unbelieving critics explain the gospel accounts of Christ's appearances as hallucinations or some form of psychological or pathological experience.

Refutation:

- a. Hallucinatory experiences commonly conform to certain rules which do not apply in the case of Jesus' appearances:
 - (1) Only certain types of persons have experiences called hallucinatory (the type we call "high-strung"—highly emotional, nervous). Do all the hundreds of eyewitnesses to the appearances of Jesus (over 500 at once) fit into this category?
 - (2) Hallucinatory experiences are highly individualistic (that is, "private") because they are linked to the subconscious and the peculiar past of individuals. Two different people, with different pasts, will not have the same hallucination. Yet over 500 plus the eleven, plus the ten (Thomas absent), plus the seven, plus three or four women, plus Peter, had the *same* hallucination, all within forty days, and over 500 all at the *same* time! More difficult to believe than the actual bodily resurrection!
 - (3) Hallucinations commonly concern some expected or eagerly anticipated experience. Yet the gospel's are emphatic in declaring the witnesses did *not* expect a resurrection.
 - (4) Hallucinations usually occur in suitable surroundings and circumstances. But look at the resurrection appearances: one at the empty tomb, very early in the morning; one during an afternoon walk in the countryside; one or two in the full light of day.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- (5) Hallucinations usually keep appearing to individuals over and over until some crisis occurs. At the end of forty days not one of these men or women claims to have had such an experience again, until we come to the one-time appearance of the risen Christ to Saul of Tarsus.
2. *Attack:* Unbelieving critics try to explain the gospel accounts of Christ's appearances as the practice of spiritism, seances, etc.
- Refutation:* There is not one "medium" mentioned or anything resembling a "seance." Jews were strictly forbidden to practice necromancy. When Jesus appeared, according to the record, He was not some ghost-like apparatus like smoke or a sheet, but a real-life person in a body who ate with them and showed them the scars in His hands and side and feet. Such an attempt to explain away the bodily resurrection of Jesus as it is recorded in the gospels is desperate grasping at straws.
3. *Attack:* The Telegram Theory which says "The ascended Lord (ascended in His spirit, not in his body) *telegraphed* back pictures of Himself to the minds of the apostles in such a vivid way they were led to believe they had seen the risen Lord in their midst."
- Refutation:* This is almost more miraculous than the actual resurrection. It makes Christ a deceiver of the apostles and the apostles deceivers of the whole world. Then the apostles and millions more of Jesus' followers gave up their lives gladly for such a deception.

Through the twenty centuries since Jesus arose, attacks upon the gospel records have come and gone. They keep repeating themselves. There is really nothing new under the sun from the unbelieving attacks upon the gospels. If an unbeliever says Jesus was not raised from the dead, bodily, I say, prove it! The burden of proof is with the doubter—he must produce evidence, historical, empirical, scientific evidence which, beyond any reasonable doubt, contradicts the eyewitnessed testimony of people who were there, who saw and heard. Theories, assumptions, speculations and philosophies will not be satisfactory. It is not a question of whether a resurrection could or could not occur. The question is, did it or didn't it. The question is not to be resolved theoretically or philosophically, but scientifically, empirically and legally—on the basis of evidence and testimony. The answer is, Yes, beyond any reasonable doubt, the resurrection, bodily, of Jesus Christ, did occur.

VII. RELEVANCY OF THE RESURRECTION

- A. If Christ arose from the dead, then the Bible is God's revelation of Himself and His redemptive system for man and creation.

1. The Bible is the *only* direct revelation of God to man, and it is the final one.
 2. Both Old and New Testaments are confirmed, verified and fulfilled in Christ and His redemptive work.
 3. All of this is established on the basis of Christ's historical, bodily resurrection.
- B. If Christ arose from the dead, then the Church of the New Testament is God's divinely appointed institution on earth in which His redemption is to be appropriated.
1. Without the resurrection of Christ as its basis, the church becomes simply another social institution founded by unredeemed and dying men.
 2. There is only one church sanctioned in the New Testament—that is the one obeying the precepts and principles of the New Testament.
 3. Any man or woman in the world may become a member of that church by believing that Christ is who He claims to be and by being immersed in water in obedience to Christ's command.
 4. There is no promise of redemption to anyone not a member of Christ's church.
- C. All that men do as members of the church is relevant only because Jesus arose from the dead (I Cor. 15:58).
1. There is no psychological benefit to anyone in baptism, or the Lord's supper, or stewardship or prayer, if Christ is not alive and if His resurrection is not an historically provable event.
 2. His death on a cross in Palestine in the days of Pontius Pilate is not only tragic, but irrelevant to me or anyone else if He is still dead, and not bodily resurrected from the dead.
 3. There is no reason for me to be immersed in water, attend worship services, live a morally clean life, pray or read the Bible if He is not risen from the dead.
 4. In fact, there is no such thing as any moral absolute if He is not risen from the dead.
- D. Jesus is coming again, bodily, as the apostles saw Him go into heaven.
1. The only verification that He is coming again is His resurrection—not "signs of the times" (cf. Mt. 24:36, 42, 44; 25:13, etc., with Acts 17:30-31).
 2. Heaven *is* real, hell *is* real, justice *will be* done, men and women *are* lost, the world *is* doomed to destruction supernaturally.
 3. Evangelism *is* imperative.
 4. If Jesus had not risen bodily from the dead, none of the above would be worth believing or doing.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

5. The resurrection of Christ is the message, redemption is the result.
- E. Man has one alternative to the imperatives of the resurrection.
 1. That alternative is not stoicism—the “grin and bear it” way. There is too much trouble and injustice for that way.
 2. It is not Pharisaism—“the playing like I’m holy” way. That does not get rid of guilt, hopelessness or frustration—it only intensifies it.
 3. It is not humanism or altruism—believing in the prevailing goodness of man. Man is *not* prevailingly good. That is demonstrated every day of man’s existence. He is not creating any utopias for himself—only problems.

SO WHAT IS THE ONE ALTERNATIVE?

- F. The one alternative to believing and living in accordance with the way of the resurrected Jesus is:
 1. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (I Cor. 15:32).
 2. If Christ is not raised, let’s not “play church” or “play good” or play anything but self-indulgence.
 3. Barbaric, animalistic hedonism is the only alternative to faith in Christ.

But in Christ, living by faith in the testimony of His bodily resurrection, and living in the hope of your own resurrection to eternal life, my friend, there is fulfillment, satisfaction, joy and accomplishment.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (I Cor. 15:58).

May God make this the blessing of your life for having studied and believed the gospel, according to Luke.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. Name the four possibilities the women might have considered as an answer for the empty tomb. Are there any other possibilities? Which do you think you would have thought about had you been one of the women?
2. Why did the apostles and other disciples of Jesus not remember His predictions of His resurrection? Why do people not believe it today?
3. Why were the two disciples on the way to Emmaus so despondent?
4. Would you walk seven miles to tell someone you had evidence that Jesus was arisen from the dead? Why?
5. What do you think about the idea that Jesus “materialized” and/or became invisible instantaneously as He wished to after His resurrection?

6. What did Jesus spend His time doing during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension? Does this give us any clue how important such activity is?
7. What were the "powers" the Father promised the apostles? Are they promised to any other Christians?
8. When Jesus parted from the apostles, where did He go? Do you think of Jesus as alive now—as much alive as He was when He companied with the apostles in a fleshly body?
9. If someone said to you that religion's faith is different than matters of proving something scientifically or legally, what would you answer?
10. What if your brother or sister, or your child, returned from college and told you he/she had been taught by a religion professor that Christianity is based on ancient myth—what would be your answer?
11. Has one of your neighbors ever told you that religion is all feeling and the facts do not really matter? How did you answer? What do you think now—is it important to answer that allegation?
12. If you were challenged with the proposition that the tomb where Jesus had been buried was never empty, but that the women went to the wrong tomb, how would you answer?
13. What would you say if someone said that what the disciples saw when they reported having seen Jesus, were hallucinations?
14. What about all these theologians, churches and "christians" who deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus but continue to go to church and consider themselves followers of Jesus? If you did not believe Christ actually arose from the dead, bodily, would you be a Christian? What would you live like if you didn't believe it?

FIRE IN MY BONES

(Jer. 20:7-8, 14-18)

A Biographical Sermon on Jeremiah for OBC Chapel, Dec. 4, 1979

by Paul T. Butler

I preached this sermon 16 years ago in Chapel, September 24, 1963. There is some revision now, but since only about 6 or 7 of you could possibly have heard it then, its repetition should not offend too many of you.

INTRODUCTION

I. DISCOURAGEMENT AND DESPONDENCY

- A. About 2600 years ago a discouraged, despondent, despairing preacher (the son of a clergyman—priest) sat struggling with the innermost conflicts of his soul.

He was ready to quit the ministry! In fact he was cursing the fact that he had ever been born.

He felt like he was at the breaking-point—that he could go on no longer. He would prefer to give up and be done with the overwhelming feeling of failure.

- B. There are a lot of people who ask, "How can a preacher ever get discouraged?" There is a lot of pseudo-Christianity being hawked by the hucksters today which gives the impression that being a Christian is one continual "high"—if ever you have a "low" you cannot be a man of God.

1. Francis Schaeffer has this to say: "Anybody who asks that has never been in the midst of the battle; he understands nothing about a real struggle for God."

2. And . . . "It is possible to be faithful to God and yet to be overwhelmed with discouragement as we face the world. In fact, if we are never overwhelmed, I wonder if we are fighting the battle with compassion and reality, or whether we are jousting with paper swords against paper windmills."

Death In The City, p. 68.

II. DARKNESS

- A. From a human perspective, Jeremiah had every reasonable, justifiable, emotional excuse possible for doing just that—GIVE UP, QUIT THE MINISTRY!

- B. Political darkness: He probably was born and reared in the reign of Manasseh—the most ungodly king Judah ever had; lived through the so-called reforms of Josiah's reign; prophesied during the reign of the weak, worldly-minded, compromising Zedekiah.

FIRE IN MY BONES

The powerful, pagan empire of Babylon was poised to destroy Jeremiah's homeland and carry his family, friends and countrymen far away into exile. Jeremiah knew it was inevitable and plead with all his soul but no one would believe him.

- C. Social darkness: Widespread exploitation of the poor; sexual promiscuity (each neighing for his neighbor's wife); civil justice totally corrupt; materialism rampant; murder, robbery, cruelty, indifference everywhere. *Do not trust your family or your neighbors* Jeremiah was told.
- D. Religious darkness: idolatry; Canaanite naturism; Phoenician Baalism; Babylonian astrology; and an utterly meaningless Jewish formalism; SACRIFICE OF HUMAN BEINGS (CHILDREN).

Priesthood dedicated to making money by urging people to sin. False prophets crying "peace, peace" when there was no peace.

III. DIABOLICAL DANGER

- A. Jeremiah takes 18 chapters (2-20) to characterize the ungodly people to whom he was sent to preach.

He characterizes them as: idolatrous, stupid, adulterous, liars, obstinate, deluded, untrustworthy, malicious, good for nothing, backsliders, stubborn.

Ezekiel says of the very same people: stubborn, rebellious, impudent, hardheaded, stiff-necked, flint-faced.

THAT WAS HIS CONGREGATION. NOT ONLY IS IT DIFFICULT TO PREACH TO SUCH A CONGREGATION . . . IT IS DANGEROUS!

- B. Consider these personal tribulations of the man himself:

Read also Lamentations 3.

1. His message was almost totally unpopular—even hated; ridiculed (20:7-12).
2. His own family sought his death (12:6).
3. He was forbidden the possible support of marriage (16:1-4); and social life (16:8).
4. His countrymen continually clamored for his death (18:18f.—26:7f.).
5. His book of warnings from God was cut to pieces and burned (36:21f.).
6. He was arrested as a common criminal (26:7-12).
7. He was locked in the stocks and beaten (20:1-2).
8. He was pronounced a traitor and hunted by all the authorities (32:2-3; 33:1).
9. He was thrown into a pit to starve to death (37:11-16).
10. He was later thrown into a cistern up to his chin in mire and muck and left to die (38:4-6).

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

11. Later, in his old age, he would be kidnapped and forced to flee as a hostage with his wicked countrymen to Egypt (43:1f.).
12. So far as we know, he had only one person in the whole nation he could call friend and trust—Baruch, his secretary. Perhaps one other prophet or two (Uriah 26:20) and Ezekiel.

One biographer says of this man: "A more crushing burden was never laid upon mortal man. In the whole history of the Jewish race there has been no such example of intense sincerity, unrelieved suffering, fearless proclamation of God's message, and unwearied intercession of a prophet for his people. But the tragedy of his life is this, that he preached to deaf ears and reaped only hate in return for his love to his fellow-countrymen. He was lightly esteemed in life, and sank into the grave a broken-hearted old man. From being of no account as a prophet, he came to be regarded the greatest of them all."

EVERY STUDENT-MINISTER OUGHT TO BE REQUIRED TO SERVE A SUMMER-INTERNSHIP WITH JEREMIAH. EVERY NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTIAN CONVENTION OUGHT TO HAVE A JEREMIAH PREACH TO IT. EVERY BIBLE COLLEGE STAFF MEMBER OUGHT TO HAVE AN ANNUAL VISIT FROM JEREMIAH.

IV. DETERMINATION

- A. This is not the end of the story. Hear Jeremiah again:

"If I say, I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name, there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot" (20:9).

"O Lord of Hosts, who triest the righteous, who seest the heart and the mind, . . . to thee have I committed my cause" (20:12).

- B. Not since the days of Noah (when every thought of man was evil continuously) had morality and the fear of God ebbed so low on the entire face of the earth.

1. Yet this preacher, in the face of monstrous adversity, was *compelled* by a fire in his bones to preach—he could *not* quit—he *must* go on!

2. The fire in his bones was the Word of God!

"Thy words were found, and I ate them, and thy words became to me a joy, and the delight of my heart . . ." (15:16).

3. "Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer which breaks rocks in pieces?" (23:29).

4. ". . . behold, I am making my words in your mouth a fire . . ." (5:14).

NO SLICK PSEUDO-ENTHUSIASM HERE . . . NO FACADE OF SUCCESS-ORIENTATION OR POSSIBILITY THINKING HERE . . . JUST PLAIN OLD, "GUT-LEVEL"—LAST RESORT DEPENDENCE ON THE REVELATION OF GOD.

HAD JEREMIAH DEPENDED ON HIS EMOTIONS, HE WOULD HAVE QUIT.

HAD JEREMIAH DEPENDED ON THE TESTIMONY OF OTHERS, HE WOULD

FIRE IN MY BONES

HAVE QUIT. (THERE WAS NO TESTIMONY OF ANOTHER'S GODLY LIFE TO PUT A FIRE IN HIS BONES.)

IT WAS THE WORD OF GOD. . . . IT WAS THE WORD OF GOD. . . . IT WAS THE WORD OF GOD!

In a world of idolatry, unbelief, moral depravity, violence and inhumanity today, Ozark Bible College dedicates itself to igniting a fire in your bones by the Word of God so that you, each in your own place and time, will become a Jeremiah, and when you say, "I will not mention him or speak anymore in his name . . . you cannot hold it in."

DISCUSSION

I. FIRE OF CONVICTION

A. There was a fire in Jeremiah's bones because he knew the word of God was true.

1. The veracity of God's word burned away all doubt. He did not conquer doubt by the power of positive thinking, but by conviction that God's Word was actually, literally, historically true and accurate.

2. Jeremiah based his message upon the historical deeds of God recorded as God's revelation (cf. Jer. 2:4-8; 7:21-26; 11:1-8, etc.).

3. Jeremiah appealed to the evidence from creation for argument against false religion and in support of God and his message (cf. Jer. 10:12-16; 32:17ff.; 33:19ff.).

4. The conviction that the Word of God was true was the fire in the bones of all the prophets.

a. When Isaiah wanted to save a remnant for the Messiah, he said to those who would listen, "To the teaching and to the testimony" (Isa. 8:20).

b. When Daniel wanted to encourage the people of the Babylonian captivity he went to the scroll of Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2).

5. The fire in Jesus' bones was the conviction that the Word of God was absolutely and unalterably true, "The Scripture cannot be broken . . ." (Jn. 10:35).

6. The fire in the bones of the apostles was their conviction of the historical certainties of the resurrection of Christ and fulfilled prophecy.

a. Evangelism, Acts 17:30-31 "... he was given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

b. Edification, I Cor. 15:1ff. (the historical certainties of the cross, the resurrection and fulfilled prophecy)

B. Jeremiah's fire was not based on feelings.

1. It was his feelings that kept trying to put out the fire!

2. Had Jeremiah allowed his moods and feelings to become his motivation he would have quit the ministry.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

3. If Jesus had let His feelings rule Him He would have refused to go to the cross. . . . "O Father, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42).
- C. Jeremiah's fire was not based on the pragmatic workability of religious activity.
 1. The Word of God is not relevant because it works, but because it is true.
 2. Jeremiah said, "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk in it" (6:16).

THINGS DIDN'T ALWAYS WORK FOR JEREMIAH! AND ONLY BECAUSE THE FIRE IN HIS BONES CAME FROM CONVICTION THAT THE WORD OF GOD WAS TRUE WHETHER THERE WAS ALWAYS VISIBLE SUCCESS OR NOT WAS HE ABLE TO STAY WITH HIS MINISTRY!

- D. There are two fundamentals necessary to bring man to God—neither of them have to do with emotions or pragmatics.
 1. He that cometh to God must believe that He is (exists).
 2. And that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
 3. The fire in men's bones is not a result of religious activity or the practice of a systematic religion. The Jews of Jeremiah's day were busier in religion than any people have ever been! BUT THEY WERE TOTALLY DEVOID OF THE FIRE IN THEIR BONES WHICH JEREMIAH HAD.
 4. The God who is There is the God of the Bible. He cannot be reduced to our moods and feelings nor to our systems and traditions.

If you want Jeremiah's fire in your bones you will not find it by conjuring up a god of your own moods and whims or a god reduced to religious activity—but in saturating your mind and life with Scripture for that is where He reveals Himself. It is in believing and obeying His Word that we come face-to-face, mind-to-mind, and heart-to-heart, Spirit-to-spirit with God.

About 120 years ago (January, 1856), a young lad was born to a wealthy manufacturer and his wife of Hoboken, New Jersey.

This lad grew up in a home where both mother and father believed the Bible. In fact the Bible (and other religious books) was read every Sunday afternoon after the family had come home from worship services.

This lad grew up and went off to Yale University to study for law. He was in school for a good time and the prestige he might gain, as he himself admits. "I can hardly believe what I know to be true about my own affections and about my likes and dislikes. . . ." He wrote later in life, ". . . In those days I hated the Bible. I read it every day, but it was to me about the most stupid book I read. I would rather have read last year's almanac

FIRE IN MY BONES

any day than to have read the Bible. . . . In those former days . . . I loved the card table, the theater, the dance, the horse-race, the champagne supper, and I hated the prayer-meeting and Sunday services. . . ."

In his Junior year, disillusioned with his frivolous life, and captivated by the lecturing of James D. Dana proving that geology verified the Genesis record and not evolution, this young man found a "fire in his bones" and dedicated himself to the ministry.

He went on to become the first president and really the builder of Moody Bible Institute. While doing that he also became the minister of the Chicago Ave. church and in six months had its membership from 2000 to 3000.

In four years of revivals in India, New Zealand, Australia and the British Isles 70,000 people became believers.

He wrote books and articles on the fundamentals of Christianity which were so influential he started the movement known as Fundamentalism.

He became convinced through a searching study of the Scriptures that immersion was the mode of baptism practiced by Christ and the apostles and he and his wife were immersed.

He was the first president and builder of Biola (Bible Institute of Los Angeles) and when it appeared the trustees of the college wanted to emphasize liberal arts and cut out some Bible courses, he resigned.

He made it a never faltering practice throughout his ministry to devote every morning from 5 till 11 a.m., 5 days per week, to Bible study.

He began every revival with the sermon "Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible is The Word of God."

All of these accomplishments without the aid of the Imperials back-up, radio, T.V., overhead projectors, microphones or speakers, testimonies of celebrities.

Lest you think this man was your regular, run of the mill sensationalist and crowd manipulator type preacher . . . his biographer, Roger Martin, says he appeared to many people to be stern, withdrawing, demanding, and cold. "He spoke primarily to the conscience and reason rather than to the emotions, and rarely raised his voice beyond a conversational tone."

He was more concerned with retention of converts than he was in counting numbers. His son wrote of him, "In the ensuing years I have met persons from England and Scotland who were converted in my father's meetings and frequently I have been told that the results of his meetings have stood and made a more permanent effect on the religious life of these countries than other such meetings. This they have ascribed to his logic, avoidance of emotionalism insistence on membership in the church and studying the Bible."

He was Reuben A. Torrey; he was a man with a "fire in his bones. . . ." BECAUSE HE WAS A MAN OF THE BOOK!

II. FIRE OF HOLINESS

A. Jeremiah was a man, a human being, not a robot.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

1. He had feelings, moods, physical drives, urges, temptations, trials, tribulations, ups and downs, just like any one else.
 2. He complained, doubted, cried, became angry, afraid, lonely one time and tired of having others always around on the other hand.
 3. He had to go through life without the strength and comfort of a wife, Jer. 16:1-2, so he had to control his sexual self.
 4. He had to go through life suffering persecution and defamation unjustly, so he had to control his urge to retaliate. 11:20 . . . "to thee have I committed my cause."
 5. He had to go through life without merrymaking or fun, 15:17 ". . . I did not sit in the company of merry-makers, nor did I rejoice." He sublimated the urge for fun for the higher goal of being found pleasing to his Lord.
 6. He had to go through life being very unpopular. He could not know the admiration or acceptance of his peers. They all shunned him. He had to forget about the human ego which demands to be recognized, appreciated and applauded!
- B. What was this fire in his bones that purged him of human weakness and gave him power to overcome temptation? IT WAS THE WORD OF GOD.**
1. "Who has commanded and it came to pass, unless the Lord has ordained it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and evil come?" (Lam. 3:37-38)
 ". . . my affliction and my bitterness . . . my soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me . . . but this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:19-23).
 2. Jeremiah knew a man could not trust in his own heart or feelings or reasoning:
 "Cursed is the man who trusts in man. . . . Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. . . . The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?" (Jer. 17:5-10)
- C. My friend, this is your only hope of overcoming; my only hope of overcoming—PUTTING THE WORD OF GOD IN YOUR MIND AND HEART THAT YOU MIGHT NOT SIN AGAINST HIM.**
1. It comes down to a "gut-level" faith. We refuse to fall into any temptation simply because the word of God says it is wrong!
 2. We may philosophize, analyze and rationalize adultery and fornication all we want, but the ultimate choice will be made against it by you or by me because God's Word forbids it; or for it because we do not care what God's Word says.

FIRE IN MY BONES

3. We may hold seminars, write books and pay psychiatrists to counsel people on marriage and divorce, but when it comes right down to it people will stay married because God's word commands it; or people will get divorced because they do not think God means what He says!
4. We either obey our feelings or the Word of God!
5. James Oppenheim, an American writer of the 1920s characterized the attitude of the man who refuses to let the Word of God be a fire in his bones.

"Let nothing bind you; if it is duty, away with it. If it is law, destroy it. If it is opinion, go against it. There is only one Divinity, Yourself; only one God, You."

HUMANISM HAS TRIED TO DEAL WITH THE SIN-HOLINESS PROBLEM BY PSYCHOLOGY, GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS, HUGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY FOR MATERIAL WELFARE, ENTERTAINMENT, COMMUNISM. . . . EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN EXCEPT THE WORD OF GOD.—AND NONE OF HUMANISM'S PANACEAS HAVE WORKED. . . . IN FACT, THEY HAVE ONLY INTENSIFIED THE PROBLEM OF SIN A THOUSAND-FOLD.

D. Jesus demonstrated that it is possible for human beings to resist sin and be holy by the fire of the Word of God in us.

1. Jesus was tempted to distrust God to feed Him after 40 days fasting and work a miracle, but He said, "It is written."
2. Over and over Jesus said, "It is written. . . ."
3. Although He was a son, he experienced obedience through what he suffered, and was heard for his godly fear.
4. Jesus did not feel like going to the cross. . . . "O, Father, I don't feel like going to the cross, nevertheless, not how I feel, but thy will be done."

"I believe that we can live on earth according to the teachings of Jesus, and that the greatest happiness will come to the world when man obeys His commandment, 'Love ye one another.'

"I believe that every question between man and man is a religious question, and that every social wrong is a moral wrong.

"I believe that we can live on earth according to the fulfillment of God's will, and that when the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven, every man will love his fellow men and act towards them as he desires they should act towards him. . . .

"I have four things to learn in life:

To think clearly without hurry or confusion;
To love everybody sincerely;
To act in everything with the highest motives;
To trust in God unhesitatingly."

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

If ever there was anyone with justifiable reason to be bitter, to hate, to be selfish and demand pity, it was the woman who said that—Helen Keller.

DO YOU FEEL LIKE LYING? GOD'S WORD SAYS NO!

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU NEED NOT GIVE YOUR MONEY FOR GOD'S WORK . . .
GOD'S WORD SAYS YES!

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU NEED NOT TEACH HIS GOOD NEWS TO OTHERS . . .
GOD'S WORD SAYS YES!

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT YOUR
EXAMPLE TO OTHERS? GOD'S WORD SAYS YES!

DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU DO NOT HAVE TO KEEP NATIONAL LAWS, SCHOOL
RULES, PARENTAL DISCIPLINE. . . . GOD'S WORD SAYS, YES, YOU DO!

AND IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, YOU WILL CHOOSE AGAINST YOUR FEEL-
INGS ONLY WHEN YOU TRUST GOD'S WORD UNHESITATINGLY.

God's word is the truth. . . . He will tell you the truth. . . . He even gives
you the motivation in the Good News to want the truth . . . but He will
not choose for you. YOU MUST CHOOSE THE TRUTH.

The OBC diploma has this statement first in priority. . . . "Be it known
unto all that _____ having shown possession of Christian char-
acter and refinement." etc.

Christian character and refinement come by self-control or control of
self. But self does not control self. There is absolutely no way the human
self can be controlled apart from the Word of God. It has been so ever
since the human being was created in Eden!

EVERY BIBLE COURSE OR BIBLE RELATED COURSE . . . EVERY RULE,
EVERY COUNSELING SESSION, EVERY CHAPEL, EVERY DEVOTION WHERE
THE WORD OF GOD IS EXERCISED IS TO FULFILL THAT NEED FOR CONTROL
OF SELF AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

YOU COULD LEARN EVERY HOW-TO-DO-IT COURSE BY MEMORY AND
BUILD UP A HUGE CONGREGATION, WITH A MASSIVE BUILDING COMPLEX
AND A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET, AND FAIL MISERABLY AS A
MINISTER OF GOD IF YOU DO NOT HAVE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER!

A great man once wrote: "Moral facts develop moral character . . .
all the works and words of God are moral facts and truths . . . you find
the works and words of God in the Bible . . . when these moral facts are
brought into immediate contact with the mind of man, they delineate the
image of God upon the human soul. . . ."

The man who said that remembered in his childhood that "It was the
rule that every family member should memorize, during each day, some
portion of the Bible, to be recited at evening worship . . ." and he said
later in life, "They (the scriptures) have not only been written on the tablet
of my memory, but incorporated with my modes of thinking and speaking."

IF THAT MOTHER AND FATHER HAD NOT PUT THAT FIRE OF HOLINESS,
HONESTY, INTEGRITY, GOODNESS AND LOVE IN THE BONES OF THEIR

FIRE IN MY BONES

CHILDREN THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD, YOU AND I MIGHT NOT BE HERE TODAY!

THAT MAN WAS ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

III. FIRE OF EVANGELISM

A. Jeremiah preached 23 years in Jerusalem before he was taken hostage down into Egypt and even from there he preached on, apparently until his death. He never retired. The fire of the word of God never went out or died down in his heart.

1. He ran through the streets of Jerusalem preaching, trying to locate one righteous man (5:1ff.; 11:6).
2. He preached in the Temple courts (20:1ff.; 26:1ff.).
3. He preached in the gates of the city (17:19).
4. He went to the Euphrates river in God's service (13:4).
5. He went to the shops of the craftsmen (potter) to preach (18:1).
6. He went to the city dump (Hinnom) to preach (19:1ff.).
7. He preached in the king's palace (22:1ff.).
8. He preached while imprisoned (32:1ff.).
9. He preached in war (while Jerusalem was under attack) (34:1ff.).
10. He preached in Egypt (43:8ff.).
11. He wrote sermons in letter form to the exiles in Babylon (29:1; 30:1).

In every place conceivable, in every circumstance, in every method possible, Jeremiah preached.

Nothing could stop him; not discouragement, not kings, not pagan rulers, not prison, not false religious teachers. When he had no audience, he went looking for one; when he could find none, he wrote letters.

B. Jeremiah's fire was kindled by his hope in the promises of God. He preached because he believed in *God's absolute faithfulness*.

1. Without the absolute faithfulness of God's Word there is no hope.
2. The fire in our bones for evangelism must be based on the absolute faithfulness of God's word—not in our religiosity, not in our ancestry, not in our human skills.
3. We are responsible only for sowing the seed; God is responsible for the success and the growth; God has put the growth factor in the seed (The Word) not in human skillfulness.
4. The world thinks there is hope only in the elimination of absolutes. The Christian must rest his only hope in the absolute God! and His absolute word.
5. Without the absolute faithfulness of the Word of God in our heart there would be no motive strong enough to keep any-one faithful in evangelism.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- C. "Christianity is not a modern success story," says Francis Schaeffer, in *Death in The City*, "It is to be preached with love and tears into the teeth of men, preached without compromise, without regard to the world's concept of success. If there seem to be no results, remember that Jeremiah did not see the results in his day. They came later. If there seem to be no results, it does not change God's imperative. It is simply up to you and to me to go on, go on, go on, whether we see the results or whether we don't. Go on."

1. Jeremiah saw by faith the fulfillment of God's promises to bring to his people a new David (the Messiah), a new covenant, a new nature. So he preached. And, as Hebrews 11:4 says of Abel, "he died, but through his faith he is still speaking . . ." it is true of Jeremiah.
2. And it may be true of You. Jenkin Lloyd Jones in an editorial in the Joplin Globe of Sept. 16, 1979, writing of the present trends all over the world of growing persecution of Christianity, wrote, "The missionary of tomorrow will be met, not by cringing awe, not by smiles and outstretched hands, not even by spears and leather shields, but by automatic weapons. Martyrdom is coming back, and it will be a testing time for Christianity."
3. No sooner had Martin Luther begun his great reformation of the church when he received word about the first Protestant martyrs. Some monks had read Luther's work, turned to this way of thinking, and were burned alive in the Grand Place in Brussels. When Luther heard that, he began to walk the floor and he said, "I can't go on. I can't do it any more. Because of me other men are being killed. I can't go on!" Then as he wrestled with it, he understood that because it was truth, no matter what the cost to himself or anybody else, he must go on. And so he did, and we follow in his train.

CONCLUSION

Dwight L. Moody tells of an aged missionary of the Free Church of Scotland named Duff who had been in India most of his life preaching the gospel and establishing schools. He came back to Scotland a broken man physically. He was permitted to address the Edinburgh General Assembly to make an appeal for men to go to the mission field.

He spoke with such passion that suddenly he fainted and dropped to the floor. They carried him into another room where doctors worked over him for some time until he began to recover. When he realized where he was, he sat up and said:

FIRE IN MY BONES

"I did not finish; carry me back and let me finish." They told him he could only do at the very peril of his life. He replied: "I WILL DO IT IF I DIE."

So they took him back to the hall. As the aged, white-haired man appeared at the door, every person sprang to his feet; the tears flowed freely as that great assemblage looked upon the grand old veteran. With a trembling voice he said:

"Fathers and mothers of Scotland, is it true that you have no more sons to send to India to work for the Lord Jesus Christ? The call for help is growing louder and louder, but there are few coming forward to answer it. You have the money put away in the bank, but where are the laborers who shall go into the field? When Queen Victoria wants men to volunteer for her army in India, you freely give your sons. You do not talk about their losing their health; and about the trying climate. But when the Lord Jesus is calling for laborers, Scotland is saying, 'We have no more sons to give.'"

Turning to the President of the Assembly, he said, "Mr. Moderator, if it is true that Scotland has no more sons to give to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ in India, although I have lost my health in that land and came home to die, if there are none who will go and tell those heathen of Christ, then I will be off tomorrow, to let them know that there is one Scotsman who is ready to die for them. I will go back to the shores of the Ganges, and there lay down my life as a witness for the Son of God."

GOD GRANT, THAT IN EVERYONE OF US HERE GATHERED THIS MORNING (AND THOUSANDS MORE).

". . . THERE IS IN MY HEART AS IT WERE A BURNING FIRE SHUT UP IN MY BONES, AND I AM WEARY WITH HOLDING IT IN, AND I CANNOT. . . ."

29

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Greek Texts:

1. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, D. Eberhard Nestle, 22nd edition, 1956
2. *Synopsis of the First Three Gospels*, by Albert Huck, Oxford, 1972
3. *The Interlinear Hebrew/Greek English Bible*, Volume Four, Textus Receptus, Jay Green, 1979
4. *The Greek New Testament*, by Aland, Black, Martini, Metzger and Wilgren, American Bible Society, 1975

Commentaries:

1. *Studies in Luke*, by T. R. Applebury, College Press
2. *The Gospel According to Luke*, I.C.C., by Alfred Plummer, T. & T. Clark
3. *Barnes Notes on the New Testament, Luke*, Albert Barnes, Baker
4. *Studies in the Four Gospels*, by G. Campbell Morgan, Revell
5. *The Pulpit Commentary, Luke*, two volumes, Funk and Wagnalls
6. *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*, by H. H. Hobbs, Baker
7. *The Christ of the Gospels*, by J. W. Shepard, Eerdmans
8. *New Testament Commentary, Luke*, by H. Leo Boles, Gospel Advocate
9. *New International Commentary on the New Testament, Luke*, by Norval Geldenhuys, Eerdmans
10. *New International Greek Testament Commentary on Luke*, by I. Howard Marshall, Eerdmans
11. *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, by R. C. H. Lenski, Augsburg
12. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, by Alfred Edersheim, 2 volumes

English Texts:

1. Revised Standard Version
2. King James Version
3. New American Standard Version
4. Today's English Version
5. The Berkeley Version in Modern English
6. The New International Version
7. The New Testament in Modern English, by J. B. Phillips

Dictionaries and Reference Works:

1. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, five volumes, Eerdmans
2. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, by Kittel and Friedrich, 10 volumes, Eerdmans
3. *Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, Zondervan
4. *New Testament Times*, by Merrill C. Tenney, Eerdmans
5. *New Testament Survey*, by Merrill C. Tenney, Eerdmans
6. *Everyday Life in New Testament Times*, by A. C. Bouquet, Scribners

BIBLIOGRAPHY

7. *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, D. S. Russell, Westminster
8. *Daily Life in The Times of Jesus*, by Henri Daniel Rops, Mentor-Omega
9. *Suetonius, The Twelve Caesars*, translated by Robert Graves, Penguin Classics
10. *The New Testament World*, by H. E. Dana, Broadman
11. *Greece and Rome, Builders of Our World*, by National Geographic Society
12. *The Parables He Told*, by David A. Redding, Revell
13. *Notes on the Parables*, by R. C. Trench, Baker
14. *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services*, by Alfred Edersheim, Eerdmans
15. *The Greek and Roman World*, W. G. Hardy, Schenkman
16. *Israel and The Nations*, by F. F. Bruce, Eerdmans
17. *The Testimony of the Evangelists*, by Simon Greenleaf, Baker
18. *Learning From Jesus*, by Seth Wilson, College Press
19. *The Gospel of Matthew*, by Harold Fowler, College Press
20. *The Gospel of Mark*, by Johnson and DeWelt, College Press
21. *The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus*, translated by Wm. Whiston, Winston
22. *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, edited by E. F. Harrison, Baker
23. *The Dictionary of Christ and the Bible*, Hastings
24. *The Training of the Twelve*, by A. B. Bruce, Harper
25. *Living Jewish*, by Michael Asheri, Everest House
26. *World Book Encyclopedia*, 1964 Edition
27. *Encyclopedia Britannica*
28. *Oxford Bible Atlas*, second edition, 1974, Oxford
29. *The Book of Knowledge*, 10 volumes, 1957 edition, Grolier Societ
30. *The Life of Our Lord*, by S. J. Andrews, Zondervan
31. *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, by William S. McBirnie, Tyndale

Harmonies of the Gospels:

1. *A New Harmony of the Gospels*, by Albert Cassel Wieand, Eerdmans
2. *A Harmony of the Gospels*, by A. T. Robertson, Harper and Row
3. *The Gospel, The Unification of the Four Gospels*, by Thomas G. Dietz, Eerdmans
4. *A Harmony of the Gospels*, by Robert Thomas and Stanley Gundry, Moody Press
5. *Harmony of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, an outline*, by R. C. Foster

INDEX

- Abraham: 19, 23, 54, 55, 60, 349, 363-364, 455
 abyss: 144
 access: 197-198, 569
 ambition: 177, 525-526
 am-haretz: 88, 129, 201
 angels: 11, 12, 14, 18, 27, 31, 33, 34, 35, 41, 487, 578, 580
 anger: 307, 400, 433, 435
 Anna: 41
 Annas: 4, 49, 50, 542, 546
 anxiety: 138, 205-207, 267-269, 491
 apocalyptic: 485-488
 apocrypha, Jewish: 55, 71, 73, 125, 173, 234, 292, 293, 305, 390, 461-466, 472-474
 apostasy: 478
 apostle(s): 83, 103-104, 158-160, 162-164, 165, 169, 177-179, 385, 407-410, 474, 478, 486, 525-526, 531-533, 537-538, 541, 586-591
 Archelaus: 422
 atonement: 167-170, 229, 535, 537, 569-570
 Atonement, Day of: 10, 13, 95, 472
 Augustus Caesar: 8, 27, 28, 29, 30, 49, 50, 165
 authority: 75, 83, 89, 113, 140, 142, 145, 195, 426, 431, 435, 438-440, 442, 450
 baptism: 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 60, 127, 233, 274-275, 439-440; in Holy Spirit: 57-58 in fire: 58
 Bar-Abbas: 556-557
 Bath-Kol: 240
 Beelzebul: 228
 beggars: 363-369, 413-416
 benevolence: 111-112, 113, 204
 Bethabara: 59
 Bethany: 205-207, 425-426, 590
 Bethlehem: 9, 27, 28, 30, 34, 35, 38, 41
 Bethphage: 426
 Bethsaida: 193
 betrothal: 15-16
 bibliography: 618-619
 blasphemy: 89-91, 260-262, 566
 blessedness: 107-109, 223-225
 blind: 413-416
 brotherhood: 335, 383-384
 burial: 121-122, 573-574
 Caesarea Philippi: 164-166, 170
 Caiaphas: 4, 49, 50, 542-543, 546
 Calvary: 562-563
 Capernaum: 75, 121, 129, 141, 147, 150, 162-164, 193-194
 celibacy: 360-361, 399
 centurion: 118, 571
 ceremonialism: 100, 101, 200, 201, 238-242, 530
 childlikeness: 178, 197-198, 399-401
 choice: 166, 198, 223-225, 282, 308-311, 333, 369, 405
 Chorazin: 193
 Christ: 166-170
 Christmas: 30, 31, 35
 church: 166, 169, 180, 308-309, 435, 451, 482
 circumcision: 22, 36, 482
 cleansing: 85-87, 238-242
 commands (of God & Christ): 22, 33, 37, 44, 60, 98, 173, 181-182, 199, 200, 403-405, 450
 commitment: 168-169, 181, 223, 308-311
 communion: 521-530
 compassion: 122, 203, 215-216, 286, 300-301, 415-416
 condemnation: 194, 209-212, 236
 conduct: 282, 312-323
 confess: 166, 260-262, 332, 401
 conscience: 374
 consolation: 38
 conversion: 212-215
 courage: 319-323, 531

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

covenant: 51, 55, 95-98
 covetousness: 264-267
 crucifixion: 166-170, 171, 173, 175-176, 274-275, 309, 410-412, 558, 560-572

Daniel: 11, 40, 244, 479-480, 482
 darkness: 568

David: 14, 18, 23, 27, 60, 100, 382, 457-458

Dead Sea Scrolls: 52

death: 152, 258-259, 266, 363-369, 561-573

Decapolis: 143

Dedication, feast: 291, 350

demons: 75-79, 143-146, 153-156, 174-176, 195, 226-232, 285-286

denarius: 131

devil: 65-69, 84, 111, 131, 176, 226-232, 302, 382, 450, 471, 522, 574

discipleship: 181-182, 206, 271, 308-311, 406-407

disobedience, civil: 445-451

divorce: 354-362

dogma: 134-135

dress: 147-148, 221

dumbness: 226-227

earthquakes: 476, 569, 577, 579

eating: 93-94, 129, 162-164, 205-207, 238-242, 298-300, 301-304, 305-307, 585

Elijah: 12, 57, 73, 165, 171-173, 469

Elizabeth: 7-10, 13-14, 17-18, 19-22

Emmaus: 583

emotion: 138, 149, 166, 182, 195, 227, 237, 272, 284, 308-311, 333, 350, 407, 429, 430, 435, 438, 597-598

enemies: 111

epilepsy: 175

Esau: 8

eschatology: 392, 470-489, 490, 492, 494-519

Essenes: 25, 52, 88

evangelism: 134, 146, 158-160, 192-196, 328, 369, 401-407
 excuses: 305-307

faith: 95-98, 119, 139, 141, 148, 163, 175, 221-225, 385-386, 394-396, 415-416

faithfulness: 351, 352, 385-387, 421-422

false-Christ: 474, 483-484

family: 140, 275, 308-311

famines: 476

fasting: 95

Father: 329-336

fear: 258-259, 423-424, 487, 587

feast: 307, 472-473

firmness: 314-316

fishing: 83-84, 141

flattery: 109, 242, 446

fool: 264-265

forgiveness: 50-51, 52, 89-91, 130-132, 167-169, 222, 260-261, 333-334, 336, 384-385, 565-566, 590

freedom: 330-331, 405

funeral: 121-122, 150-152, 363-364

Gadara: 143-144

Galilee: 15, 27, 43, 70, 147, 158, 160, 162, 226

sea of: 82, 141, 143, 147, 165

Gennesaret: 82

gentile: 73, 105, 119, 143-146, 158, 307, 410-411, 418

times of: 482-483

Gerasenes: 143

Gethsemane: 226, 534-538

giving: 268-269, 304, 419, 468-470

glory: 171, 402-403

Gog and Magog: 472-473

goodness: 288, 303, 402-403

government: 111, 445-451

grace: 96-98, 130-132, 196, 294, 386-387, 389, 442

INDEX

- gratitude: 130-131, 159, 221, 387-389
- Hades: 363-369, 373
- Hanukkah: 291-292
- Hasidim: 231-232, 239
- Hasmoneans: 8
- hate: 242-245
- healing(s): 78-79, 85-87, 89-91, 101, 102, 105, 118, 120, 125, 141-146, 147-152, 174-176, 226-232, 285-286, 300-301, 387-389, 412-416, 540-541
- hear: 137, 139, 173, 175, 205-207
- heart: 138, 139
- heaven: 363-369, 452-456, 489, 591
- hell: 169, 259, 363-369, 371-380, 473
- hemorrhage: 147-149
- Hermon, Mt.: 170
- Herod Antipas: 4, 43, 49, 50, 58, 124, 152, 160, 295-296, 475, 545, 555, 556
- Herod the Great: 7, 8, 9, 15, 34, 41, 42
- Herodians: 445-446
- Herodias: 58, 160, 295
- history (historicity): 4, 50, 123, 174, 445-456, 478, 587, 592-602
- Holy Spirit: 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, 30, 38, 39, 71, 222-225, 247-256, 458, 590, 591
- baptism of: 57
- sin against: 231-232, 260-262
- honesty: 34, 136, 139, 227, 261, 276, 406-407, 438-440
- hospitality: 205-207, 222, 298-399, 303-304, 585
- humanism: 452, 455
- humility: 118, 139, 223, 301-304, 398-399
- hunger: 107, 363
- hypocrisy: 102, 231-232, 238, 258, 288-289, 300-301, 335-336, 439, 547
- identity: 164-170, 458
- incarnation: 18, 60, 89, 123, 260-262, 276, 431, 457-458, 547-548
- indifference: 305-307, 395
- inspiration: 2, 262, 458, 590-591
- intermediate-state: 363-369
- Isaiah: 69, 71, 73, 83, 105, 123
- Jairus: 147-152
- James: 5, 83, 150, 180, 588
- jealousy: 263, 334-336, 525-526
- Jericho: 203, 412-416, 417-418
- Jeremiah: 606-617
- Jerusalem: 38, 41, 44, 169, 179, 226, 269-297, 426-429, 586
- destruction of: 430-431, 470-489, 560
- Jesus:
- agony; 536-538
- appearances; 580-591
- arrest; 539-541
- ascension; 590-591
- baptism; 59-60
- betrayal; 526-527
- birth; 27-41
- boyhood; 43-47
- brothers; 140, 179
- burial; 572-576
- death; 561-574
- denied; 541, 543-544
- genealogy; 60-62
- humanity; 43, 60-61, 65-68, 536-538
- name; 17, 36
- perfection; 46-47, 60-61
- resurrection; 576-591, 592-604
- scourging; 557-558
- temptation; 63-69
- transfiguration; 170-174
- trials; 542-558
- John, apostle: 150, 178, 180, 542, 568, 578, 579, 581

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- John, the Baptist: 11, 12, 19, 21-22, 23, 24, 25, 49, 50, 51, 52-55, 57, 59, 60, 96, 124-128, 160, 221, 352-354, 439-440, 555
- Jonah: 234-236
- Jordan, river: 59, 145, 179, 412
- Joseph, of Arimathea: 573, 576
- Joseph, husband of Mary: 16, 20, 27, 30, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 45, 46
- Josephus: 58, 124, 203, 463, 471, 474, 475, 476, 477, 484-485, 545
- joy: 327, 328, 333-334, 587-588
- jubilee: 71, 72
- Judaism: 231-232, 296-297, 470-489, 560
- Judas Iscariot: 103-104, 169, 522, 526-527, 539-540, 551
- judging: 113-114
- judgment: 236, 263-264, 273-274, 279-285, 296-297, 363-369, 459, 471, 473, 489-492
- justification: 127, 167-169, 398-399
- kingdom: 105-108, 127, 134, 136, 137, 139, 158, 160, 162-164, 173, 178, 198, 221, 237, 289-291, 302, 305-307, 352-354, 390-393, 407-410, 411-412, 427, 461-466, 482, 590
- knowledge: 244-245, 352, 411-412
- law of Moses: 37, 38, 44, 50, 70, 86, 96, 100, 106, 121, 148, 171, 173, 200, 239, 261, 286-289, 352-354, 387-389, 404, 439-440, 447-448, 453, 584-585
- lawyer: 199-200, 242-245, 457
- Lazarus of Bethany: 205-207, 387, 426, 492
- legalism: 95-98, 231-232, 240-242, 287, 528
- leprosy: 85-87, 387-389
- Levi: 92-98
- light: 236-237
- logic: 226-232, 276, 325, 351, 443
- Lord: 35, 39, 82, 84, 115, 122, 123, 137, 142, 144, 221, 424-425, 431, 457-458
- Lord's Supper: 525-530
- lost: 324-336, 376-380
- love: 98, 111, 200, 203, 308-311, 337-346, 407, 536
- Luke:
- authorship; 1
 - communicator; 5
 - date of gospel; 2
 - death; 591
 - historian; 3, 4, 5, 11, 29, 50, 582-583
 - home; 1
 - inspiration; 2
 - physician; 1, 2, 4, 16, 582-583
- Machaerus: 124
- magnificat; 19
- Mariamne: 9
- marriage: 354-362, 452-456
- Martha: 205-207, 426, 492
- Mary of Bethany: 205-207, 426, 492
- Mary, mother of Jesus: 5, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 27-28, 30, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 233, 568
- Mary Magdalene: 135, 231, 577-579, 580-581
- Messiah: 18, 19, 24, 28, 38, 39, 40, 53, 55, 57, 60, 62, 72, 93, 96, 105, 106, 123, 124, 125, 127, 166, 169, 172, 173, 175-176, 179, 228, 234, 244, 274, 289-291, 352-354, 390-393, 413, 426, 427, 428, 432, 439, 443-445, 456, 457-458, 461-466, 472, 482, 483-484, 547, 553-554, 567, 584-585, 589
- messianic age: 23, 24, 38, 71, 72, 73, 125, 160, 172, 179-180, 228, 234, 240, 289-291, 305, 390-393, 421, 428, 456, 461-466, 472, 482

INDEX

- miracles: 83-84, 89-91, 141-146, 147-152, 162-164, 165, 174-176, 178-179, 183-190, 195-196, 226-232, 234-237, 285-286, 295-296, 368-369, 385-386, 387-389, 412-416, 540-541, 568-569
- money: 112-113, 159, 263-269, 327-328, 347-355, 363-369, 401-407, 422-423, 467-468
- Moses: 171-173
- mourning: 122, 150-152
- mystery: 137
- myth: 596-597

- Nain: 121
- Nazareth: 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 41, 43, 44, 46, 69, 73
- neighbor: 200-204
- Nineveh: 235-236
- Noah: 391, 491

- obedience: 10, 22, 37, 38, 46, 51, 55, 59, 60, 65-69, 83, 119, 137, 139, 148, 151, 166-170, 181-182, 200, 221, 230, 233, 272, 275, 303, 332, 404-405, 424-425, 449-451
- offended: 125, 384

- parable: 130-131, 136-140, 305-307, 324-326, 348-355, 363, 394-399, 421, 423, 441-444, 491
- paradise: 366, 367, 567
- paralysis: 89
- parthenogenesis: 16, 17
- Passover: 44, 100, 161, 427-429, 432-433, 492, 521-525
- patience: 442
- Paul: 1, 2, 5, 17, 39, 94, 131, 168, 235, 290, 307, 529
- peace: 24, 72, 132, 149, 430
- persecution: 107-108, 258-260, 262, 477-478
- persistence: 222-226, 394-396
- persuasion: 307, 333
- Peter: 78-79, 82, 83, 84, 104, 148, 150, 166-168, 171, 172, 271, 408, 450, 531-533, 540, 542-544, 578, 579, 581
- Pharisees: 9, 34, 41, 51, 54, 70, 87-90, 93-98, 100, 101, 127-128, 129-132, 140, 165, 199, 201, 226, 238-245, 258, 298-301, 303, 324-327, 329, 334-336, 352-355, 396-399, 428-429, 445-451, 458-460, 471, 545
- piety: 241-242
- Pilate: 4, 49, 50, 278-279, 545, 551-558, 573
- politics: 445-451
- poor: 107, 304, 419, 468-470
- praise, God: 34, 35, 221, 402-403, 415, 429
- prayer: 221-225, 394-396, 532, 534-538, 585
- Preparation, day of: 572
- pride: 167, 242, 301-304, 396-399, 411
- priests: 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 40, 202, 203, 438, 486, 539, 541, 545-548, 554, 556, 558
- priorities: 205-207, 308-311
- prodigality: 329-336
- prophets (prophecy): 9, 12, 17, 19, 22, 23, 39, 40, 53, 71, 73, 96, 109, 127, 166, 171, 172, 198, 200, 235, 244, 274, 276, 287, 294, 304, 305, 353, 411, 427, 431, 433, 435, 443-445, 584-585
- providence: 222-225
- publican: 92-98, 324-326, 396-399, 417-420
- purgatory: 367-368, 473
- purification: 37, 38, 238-242

- Quirinius: 29
- Qumran: 25, 52

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- rabbi: 199, 201, 221, 231, 242, 263, 402
 rebellion: 230, 258, 329-336, 442
 Redeemer: 9, 11, 14, 19, 23, 60
 redemption: 20, 38, 487, 571, 591
 regeneration: 197, 333-334, 406-407
 remarriage: 354-362
 repentance: 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 196, 236, 279-285, 294, 327, 331-333, 384-385, 405-407, 419-420, 543-544, 590
 rest: 215-216
 resurrection: 122-123, 147-152, 173-174, 176, 179, 234-235, 260-261, 274, 393, 410, 411, 412, 452-456, 576-591, 592-604
 retaliation: 180
 revelation: 39, 40, 52, 196-197, 262
 rewards: 271-274, 407-410, 423-425
 rich: 363-369, 401-410, 418, 468-470
 righteousness: 10, 98
 Roman empire: 8, 9, 11, 28, 29, 30, 33, 41, 50, 92, 120, 144, 165-166, 170, 232, 417-418, 430-431, 445-451, 473, 475-489, 551-553
 sabbath: 100, 102, 285-289, 300-301, 572, 574
 Sadducees: 9, 41, 54, 87-90, 165, 201, 452-456, 542, 545
 salt: 311
 salvation: 132, 149, 150, 199-200, 292-294, 327, 369, 389, 408-410, 417-436, 567-568
 Samaritan: 158, 179-180, 201-204, 279, 387-389
 Sanhedrin: 299, 473, 522, 545, 551, 552, 581
 Satan: 167, 195, 226-232, 283, 382, 522, 531-533, 541
 Savior: 35
 scribes: 174, 199-200, 201, 242-245, 438, 444, 458-460
 Second coming: 169, 270-274, 389-393, 489-492, 494-519
 second death: 569-570
 sectarianism: 178-179
 self-denial: 168-169, 275, 308-311, 353
 self-righteousness: 95-98, 130-132, 167, 242, 335-336, 396-399
 servanthood: 270-274, 386-387, 526
 seventy, the: 192-196
 Sheba: 236
 sheep: 326-327
 shepherds: 34, 35, 326, 327
 showbread: 100
 signs: 234-237, 276, 390-392, 474-489, 490-492
 Simeon: 38, 39, 40, 41, 568
 sin: 94, 122, 129, 231-232, 234, 260-262, 279, 331-332, 376, 383, 403-404, 569-570
 sorrow: 107, 534
 sovereignty: 222-225
 spiritism: 368
 stewardship: 164, 266-269, 270-274, 347-355, 363-369, 423-424, 442-445
 stone: 443-444
 striving: 317-319, 525-526
 stumbling-block: 167, 381-384, 400
 success: 198, 308-311, 407
 superficiality: 308-311
 sword: 450, 533, 540
 synagogue: 70-71, 75, 118, 150, 242, 285-286
 tabernacle(s): 100, 172, 173, 179-180, 192
 Talmud: 13, 16, 202, 239-240, 302, 459
 taxes: 446
 Temple: 10, 13, 39, 40, 41, 43, 67, 70, 86, 180, 202, 221, 432-435, 438, 467-468, 471-489, 492, 545, 568-569

INDEX

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>temptation: 65-69, 222, 224, 381-384, 534</p> <p>Theophilus: 1, 5, 6, 106</p> <p>Tiberius Caesar: 4, 24, 29, 49, 50</p> <p>thieves: 567-568</p> <p>tomb: 573-574</p> <p>traditions: 75, 89, 96-98, 100, 101, 167, 169, 201-202, 230, 231, 234, 239-240, 242-245, 263, 279, 286, 287, 300, 472-474, 542</p> <p>transfiguration: 170-171</p> <p>travel: 30, 141, 179, 426</p> <p>trial (test): 224</p> <p>tribulations: 480-489</p> <p>trust: 83</p> <p>truth: 137, 139, 258-259, 261, 274, 290, 307, 325, 554</p> <p>Two-source theory: 413</p>
<p>unbelief: 175, 176, 194-195, 272-274, 584</p>
<p>values: 282, 304, 353, 469</p> <p>viewpoint: 281-282, 405</p> <p>vindication: 395-396</p> | <p>vine (vineyard): 441-445</p> <p>virgin-birth: 15, 16, 17</p> <p>visitation: 23, 24, 123, 431</p>
<p>war: 445-451, 475</p> <p>washing: 238-242</p> <p>watchfulness: 270-274, 348</p> <p>Way-Preparer: 9, 10, 23, 24, 50, 53</p> <p>weather: 141, 276</p> <p>wilderness: 24, 25, 50, 59, 64, 86</p> <p>will (of God): 222-225</p> <p>wisdom: 348-351</p> <p>woe: 108-109</p> <p>women: 130, 135, 467, 574-481</p> <p>word of God: 136, 138, 142, 233-234, 284-285, 290-291, 453, 455, 489</p> <p>worldliness: 138</p> <p>worship: 100, 101, 149</p> <p>worthy: 313-314</p> <p>wrath of God: 480</p>
<p>Zacchaeus: 417-420</p> <p>Zechariah: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23</p> |
|---|--|

.....